

**ADDRESS: 148, 150, 152, 154, 156, AND 158 N 2ND ST**

Proposal: Demolish two buildings and construct six-story building

Review Requested: Review In Concept

Owner: Balticorp, LLC

Applicant: Derek Spencer, Gnome Architects, LLC

History: c. 1800 (148), c. 1755 (150), c. 1925 (152)

Individual Designation: 12/31/1984 (148), 8/11/1982 (150)

District Designation: Old City Historic District, Contributing (148, 150, 152) and Non-Contributing (154, 156, 158), 12/12/2003

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

**BACKGROUND:**

This in-concept application proposes constructing a six-story building across six parcels in the Old City Historic District. Two of these parcels were individually designated, a third is Contributing to the district, and the remaining three properties are non-contributing to the district.

As proposed, the development calls for the full demolition of structures at 152 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street (Contributing) and 156 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street (non-contributing) as well as the rear portions of 148 and 150 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street (both individually designated).

In 2017, an application was made to reclassify 152 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street as non-contributing to the Old City Historic District. At that time, the Historical Commission determined that the building was constructed within the historic district's period of significance and denied the request, confirming its contributing classification to the district.

A 2018 proposal for development of the lots from 152 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street north to the lot now addressed 160-64 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street was reviewed in-concept by the Historical Commission. That application consisted of a six-story hotel building with a much taller tower set back from the street and proposed altering the building at 152 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street for use as an entrance lobby. The Historical Commission offered feedback on that proposal but declined to adopt a motion of approval or denial.

As part of the development, the applicant also proposes reconstructing the third floor and garret of 148 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, which were demolished sometime between 1915 and 1960.

**SCOPE OF WORK:**

- Demolish two buildings and construct a six-story building.

**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 will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new works shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.*
  - The use of brick and maximum height are compatible with the immediate surroundings within the historic district.
  - The proposed massing looms somewhat over the historic structures to be retained and its monolithic mass could be better broken up.

- *Standard 10: New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in a manner such that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.*
  - The proposal calls for significant demolition, including of the contributing building at 152 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street in its entirety and large portions of the rears of the buildings at 148 and 150 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, which appear to date from at least the mid nineteenth century.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** As currently proposed, the application includes demolition that could not be approved by the Philadelphia Historical Commission without a finding of necessity in the public interest or that the historic resource in question could not be used for any purpose for which it is or may be reasonably adapted. No such argument is put forward in the application.



Figure 1: Designation status of subject parcels. Base map from [Atlas.phila.gov](https://atlas.phila.gov).



Figure 2: Proposed massing with surrounding context.



**Figure 3: Existing conditions at the corner of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and Quarry Street.**



**Figure 4: Rendering of the proposed massing, including the reconstruction of upper floors on 148 N 2<sup>nd</sup> Street.**





Figure 5: Photo dated November 23, 1926, showing 152 N 2nd St (with billboard on its roof).



Figure 6: 152 N 2nd Street existing conditions.

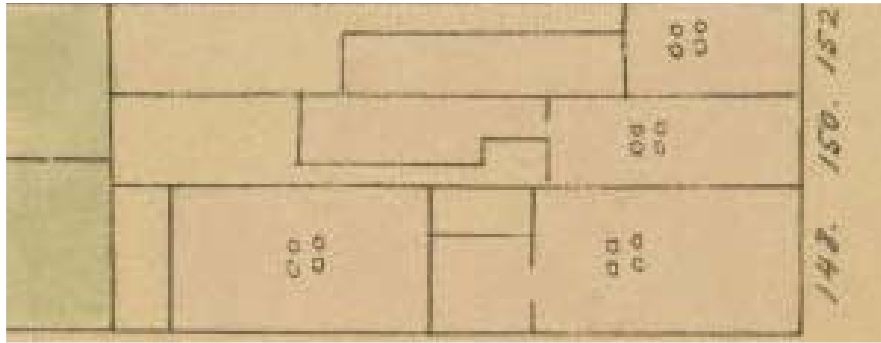


Figure 7: Detail of 1858-60 Hexamer & Locher map showing 148, 150, and 152 N 2<sup>nd</sup> Street.

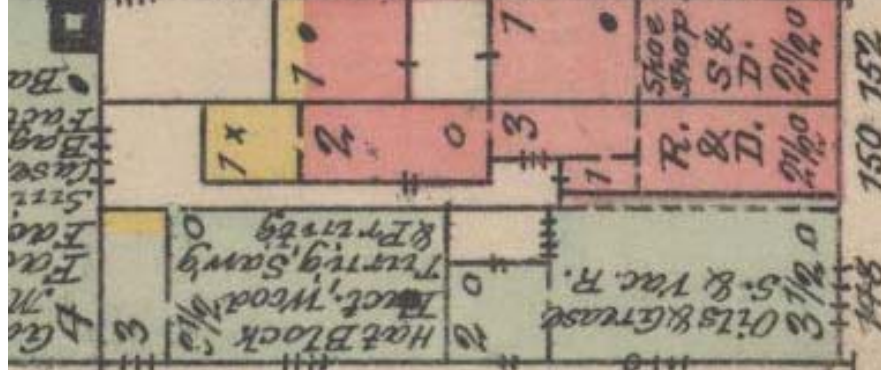


Figure 8: Detail of 1915-16 Ernest Hexamer & Son map.

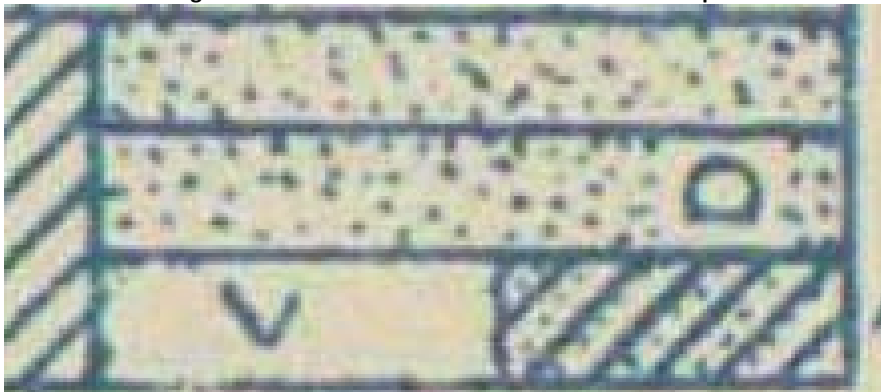


Figure 9: Detail of 1942 Land Use map, showing partial demolition of 148 N 2<sup>nd</sup> Street.

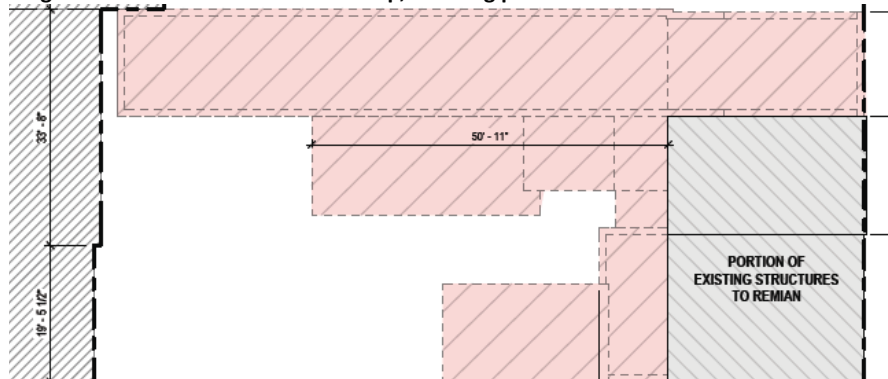


Figure 10: Plan of proposed demolition across 148, 150, and 152 N 2<sup>nd</sup> Street.



Gnome Architects LLC  
1901 S. 9<sup>th</sup> Street, Rm 302A  
Philadelphia, PA 19148  
(215) 279-7531  
[www.gnomearch.com](http://www.gnomearch.com)

July 8, 2025

Philadelphia Historical Commission  
1515 Arch Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19102

Re: 148-158 N 2<sup>nd</sup> St: In-Concept Application

On behalf of Balticorp, LLC, Gnome Architects is pleased to submit this in-concept application for the proposed development of the combined lots at 148–158 N. 2nd Street, located within the Historic District of Old City.

The project proposes the full demolition of the buildings at 152 and 156 N. 2nd Street, the partial rear demolition of 148 and 150 N. 2nd Street, and the preservation and restoration of the remaining portions of 148 and 150 N. 2nd Street. In addition, a new 6-story mixed-use building is proposed as part of the development.

The proposed project will include approximately 34 new residential units, served by 13 parking spaces and supported by dedicated lobby and amenity areas. The development will also include over 2,000 gross square feet of new commercial space along 2nd Street, as well as 3,000 gross square feet of commercial space within the restored historic buildings at 148 and 150 N. 2nd Street.

The massing of the new construction is deliberately pulled away from the historic buildings, creating interstitial spaces that serve as access points: a residential lobby entrance from 2nd Street and back-of-house access for the commercial spaces from Quarry Street. This approach is intended to preserve the historic character of the corner buildings while contributing to the vitality of the 2nd Street commercial corridor.

Please let us know if any additional information is required. We appreciate your time and consideration in reviewing this application, and we look forward to discussing the project with you.

Sincerely,

Derek Spencer, RA

Principal, Gnome Architects

# 148-58 N 2ND ST.

GNOME ARCHITECTS

PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION APPLICATION

07.22.2025







EXISTING SITE 148-158 N 2ND ST

LOCATION

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S P O C H D N.2 S  
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15 N.2 S  
152 15 N.2 S  
148 150 N.2 S

MASSING

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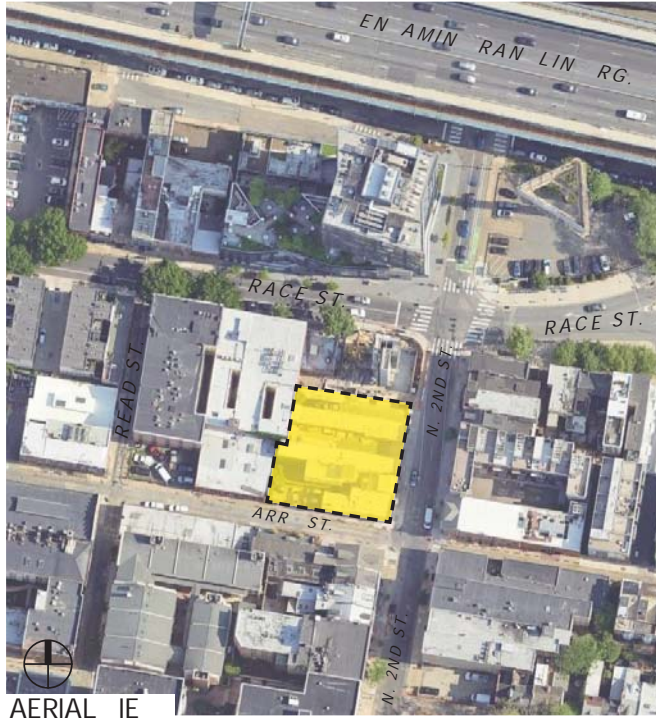
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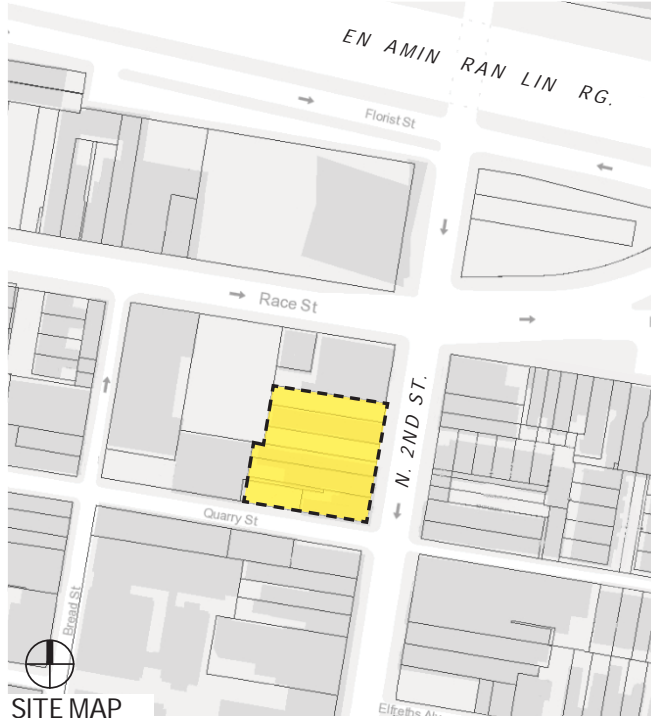
PARKING AND TRASH

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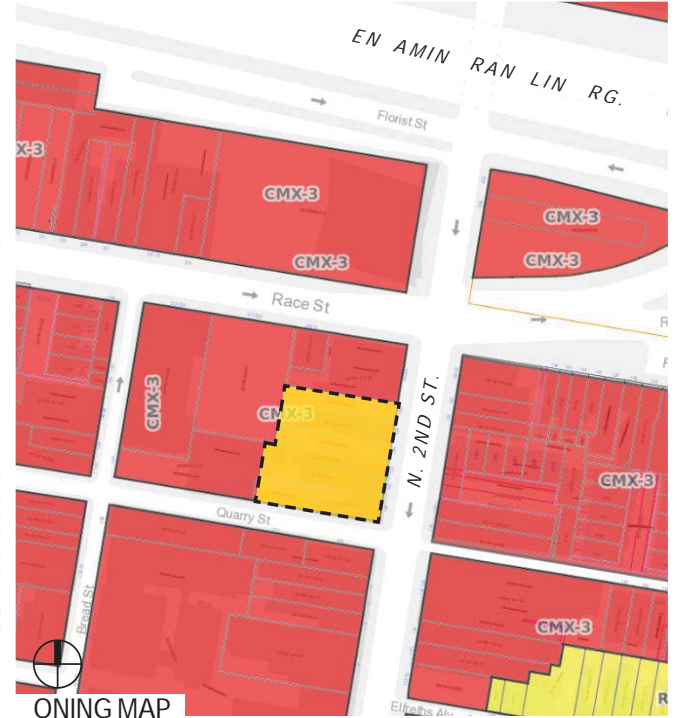




AERIAL VIEW



SITE MAP



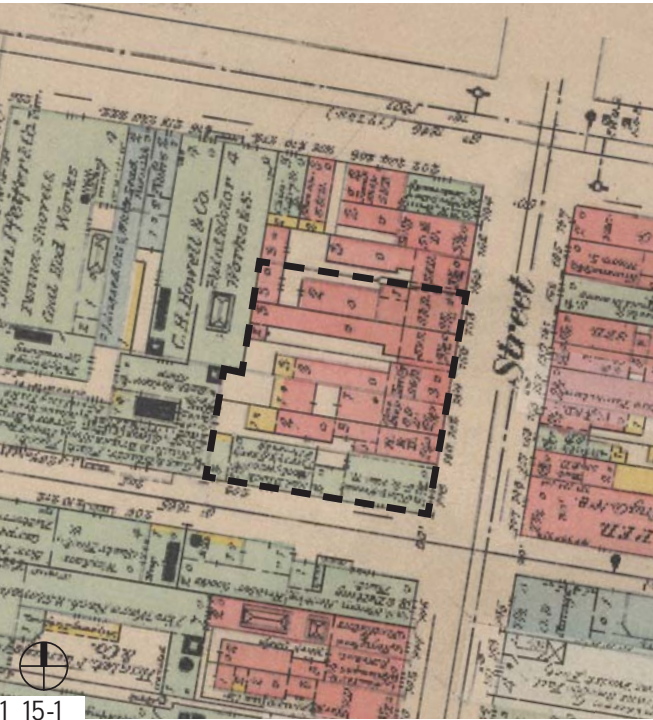
ZONING MAP

EARL COMMERCIAL SE



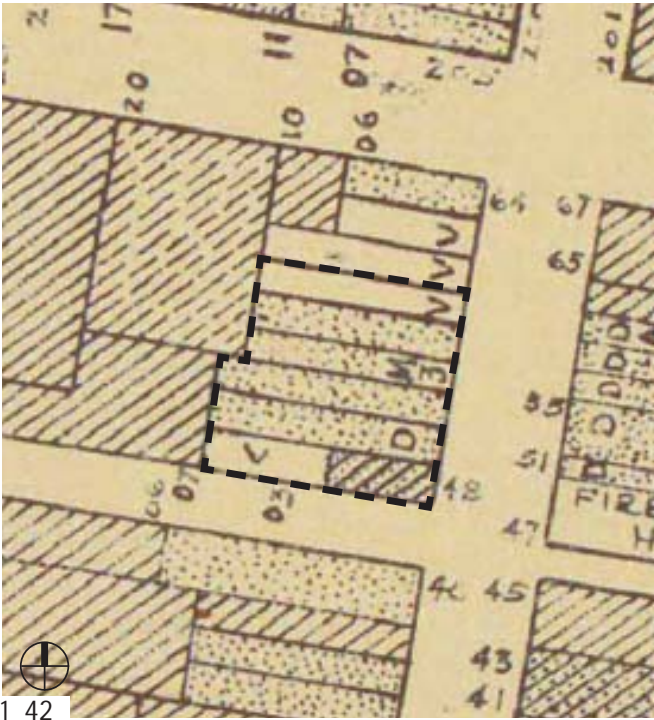
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PRINT SHOP AND OIL GREASE STORE RONT  
OCC P SITE 1 1



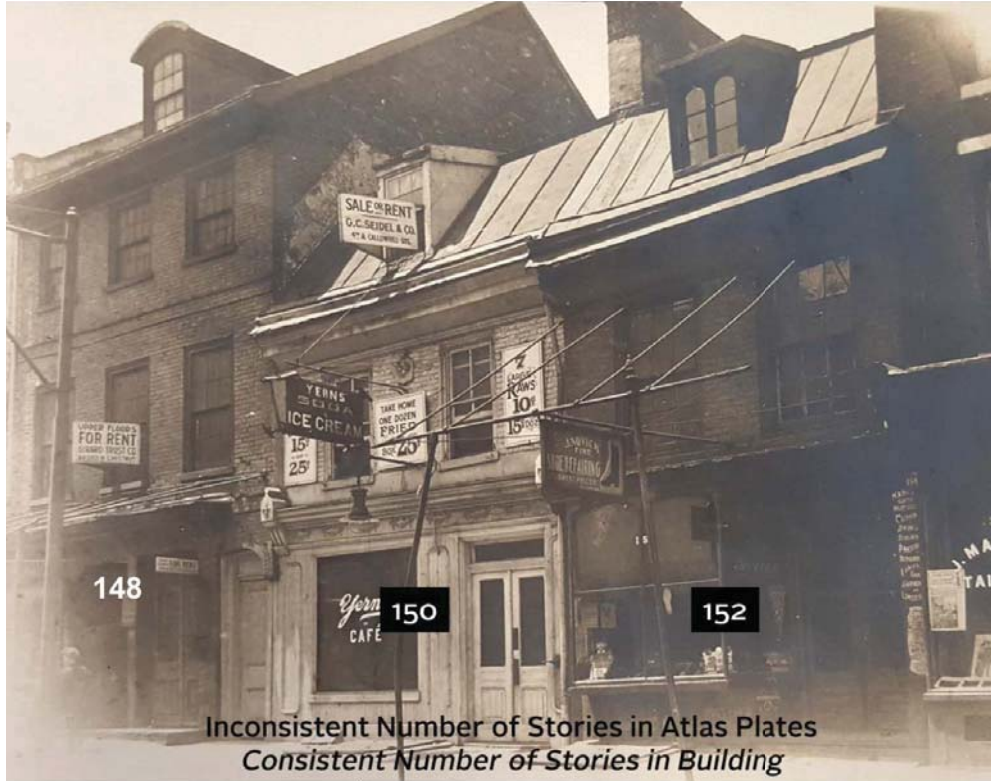
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PRINT SHOP ON S CORNER DEMOLISHED AND T RNED INTO PAR ING  
PARCELS 154 AND 158 CLEARED 1 2



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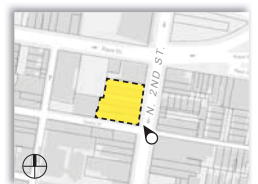








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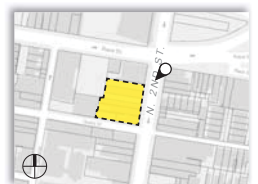
E ISTING SITE CONDITION

PAGE 7



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SITE



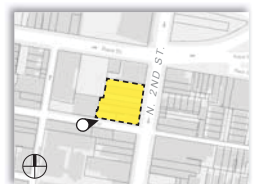
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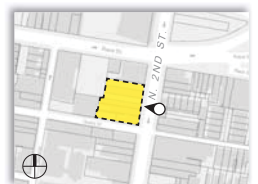
VIEW NORTHEAST ON PARK ST.



EXISTING SITE CONDITION  
PAGE



ELEVATION VIEW ON N 2ND ST.



EXISTING SITE CONDITION





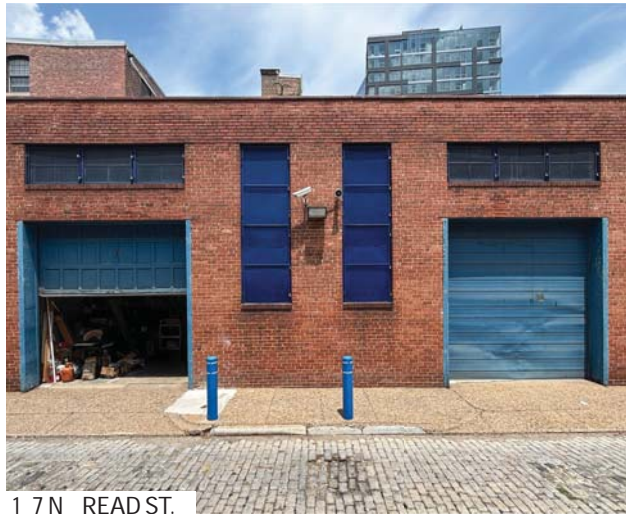
10-14 N 2ND ST.



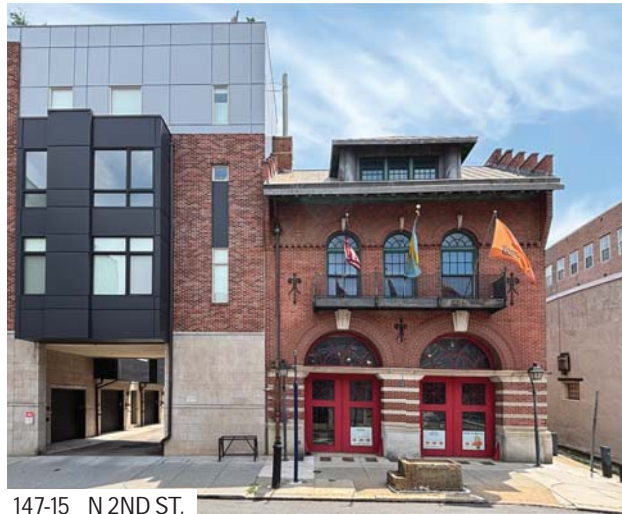
144 N 2ND ST. 200 ARR ST.



210 ARR ST.



17 N READ ST.



147-15 N 2ND ST.



145 N 2ND ST.

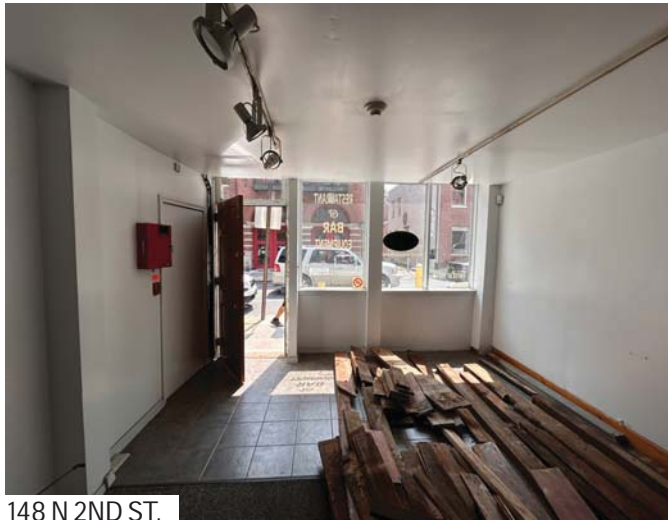




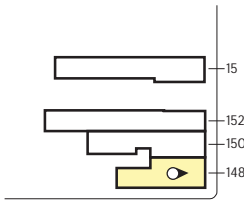




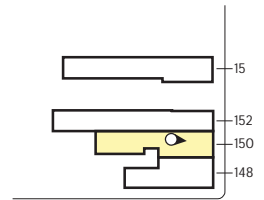




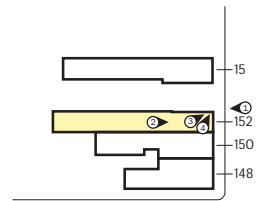
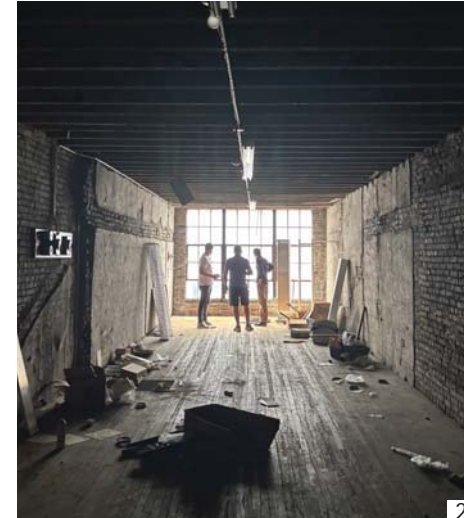
148 N 2ND ST.

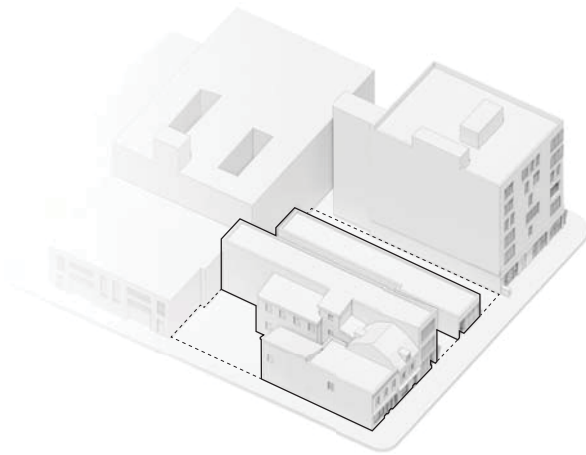


150 N 2ND ST.

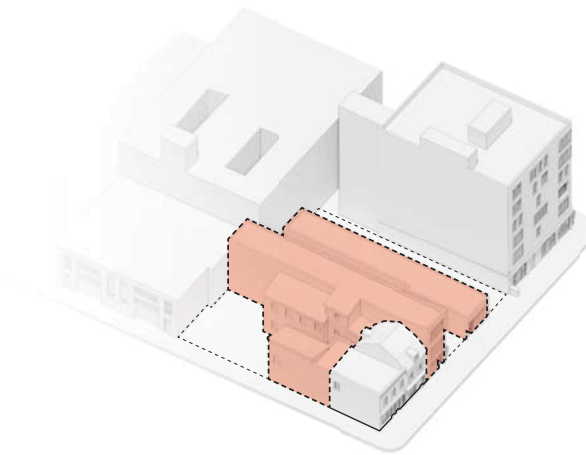




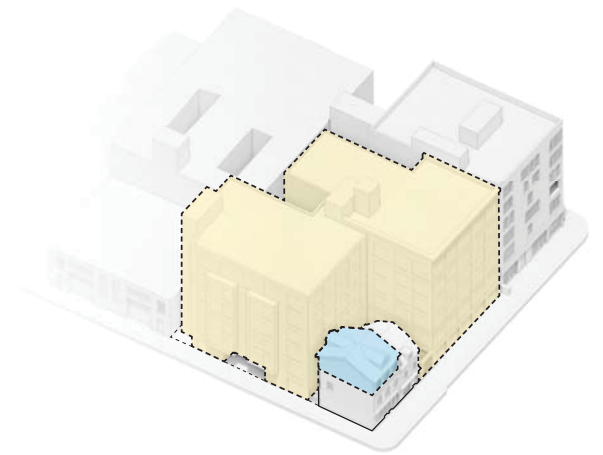




EXISTING



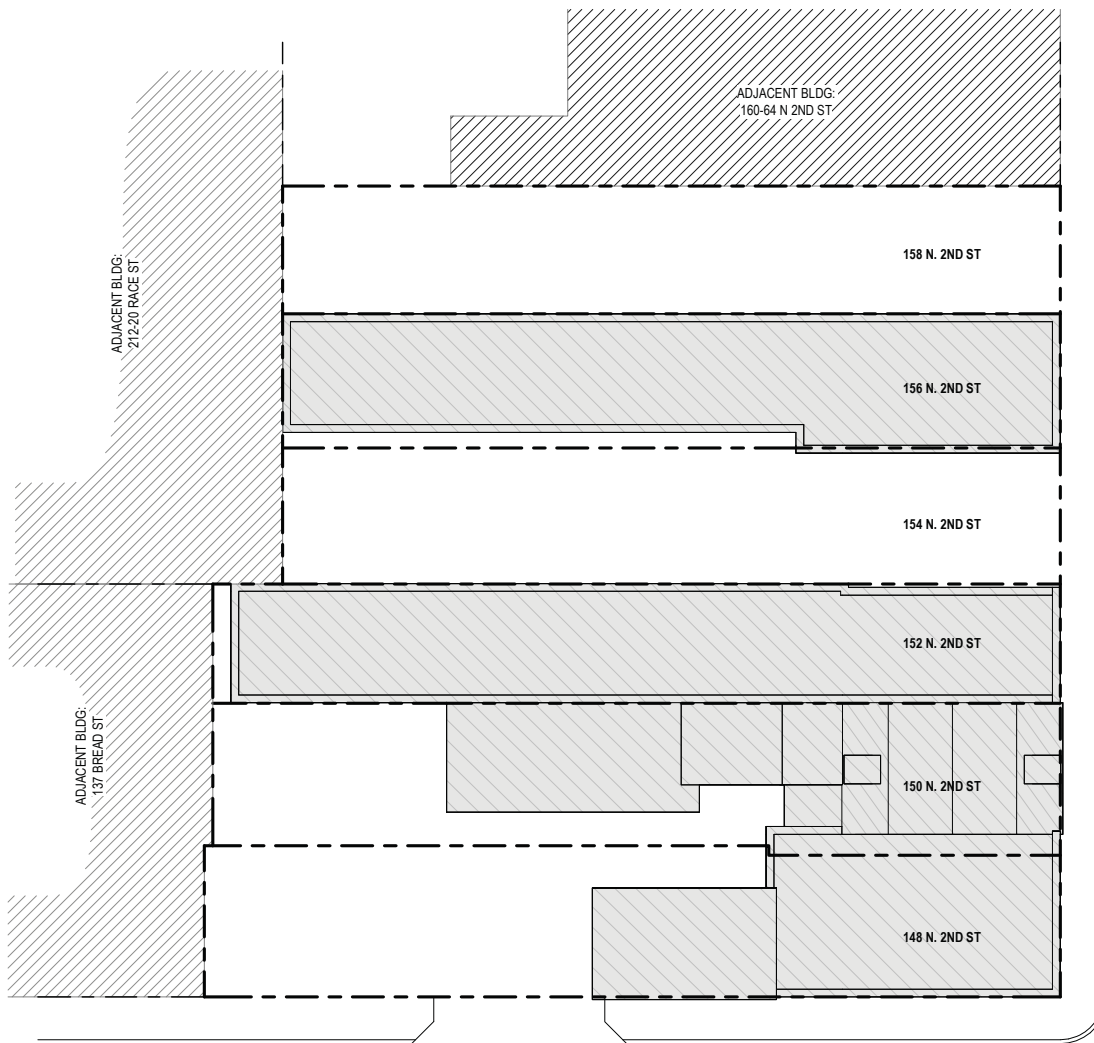
DEMOLISHED



PROPOSED

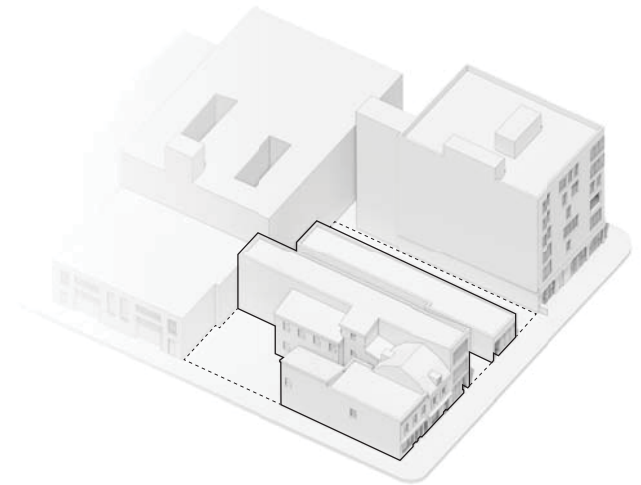
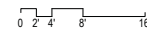
- EXISTING BUILDING TO BE DEMOLISHED
- PROPOSED HISTORIC IN-Kind ADDITION
- PROPOSED NEW STRUCTURE

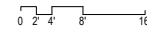
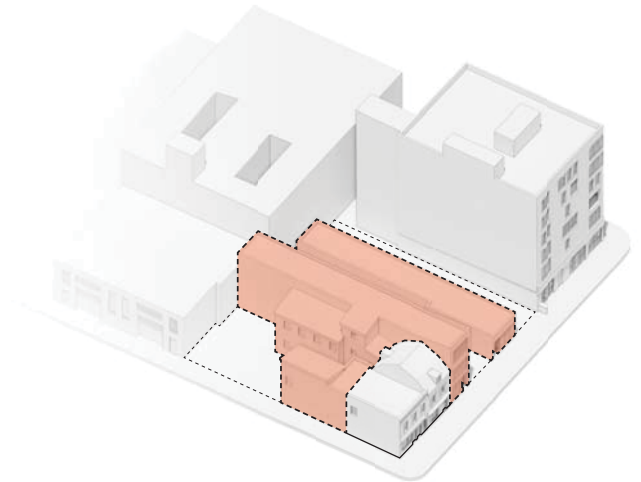
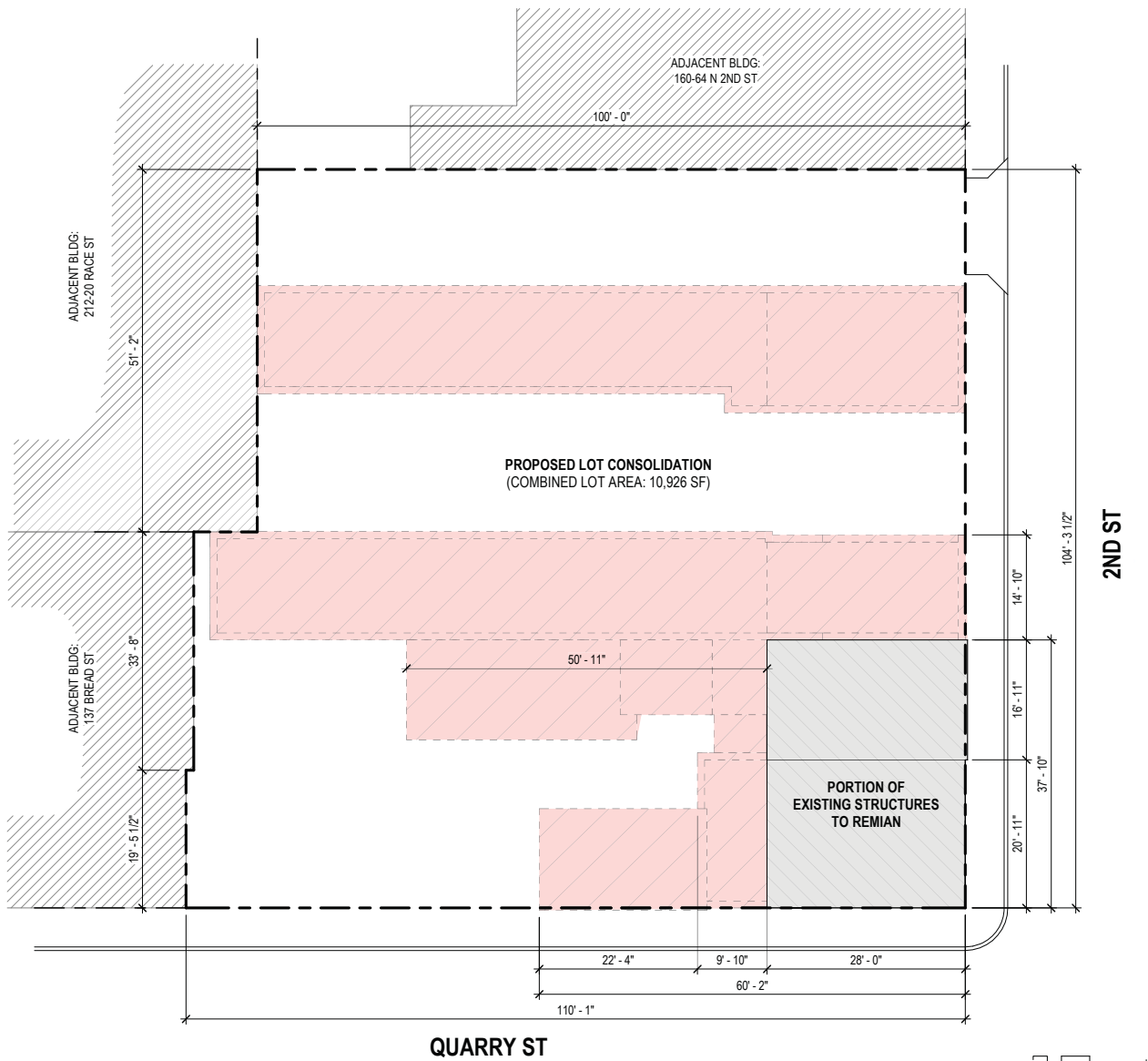




2ND ST

QUARRY ST



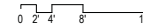
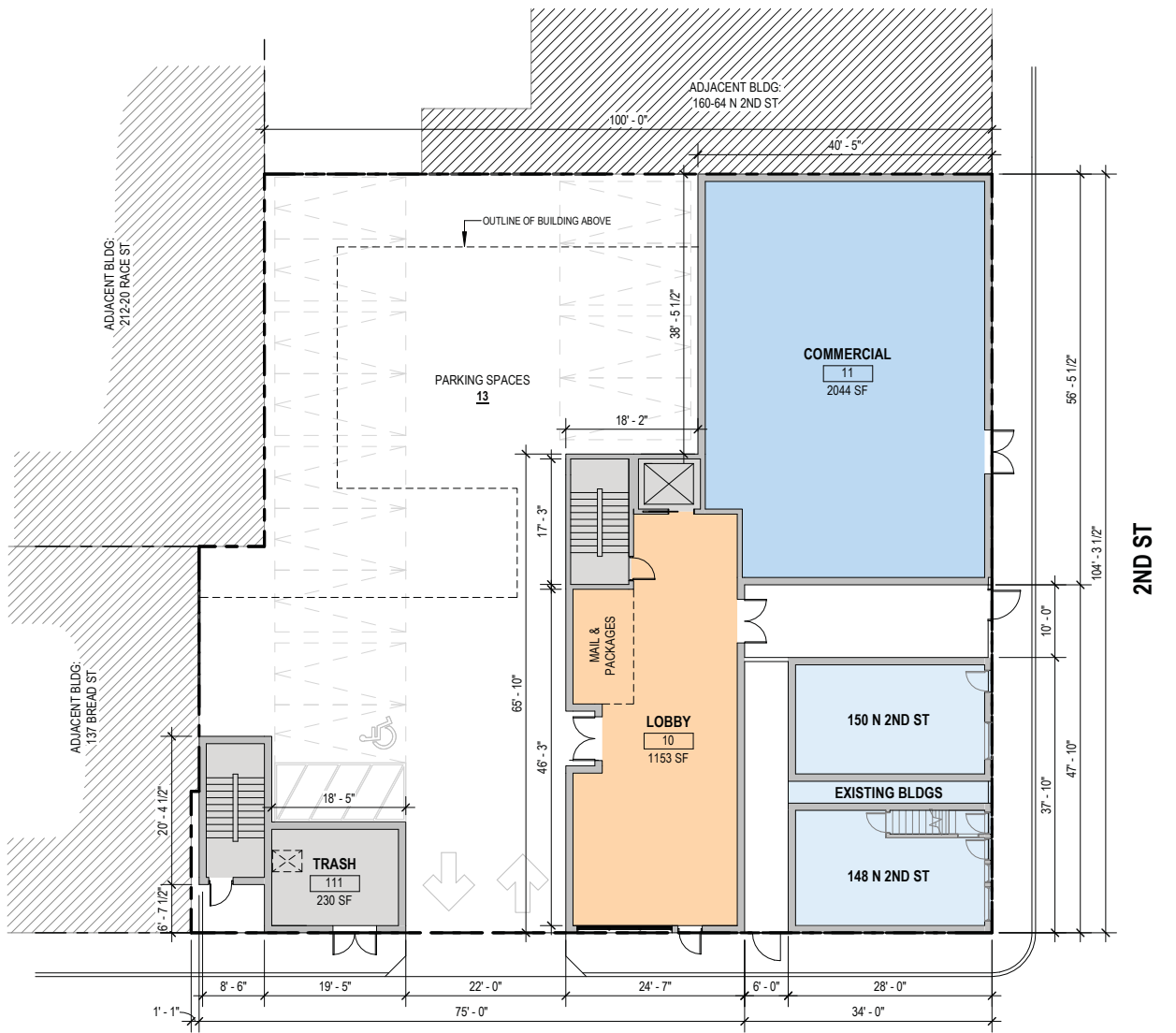


SITE PLAN - DEMOLISHED

PAGE 18

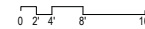
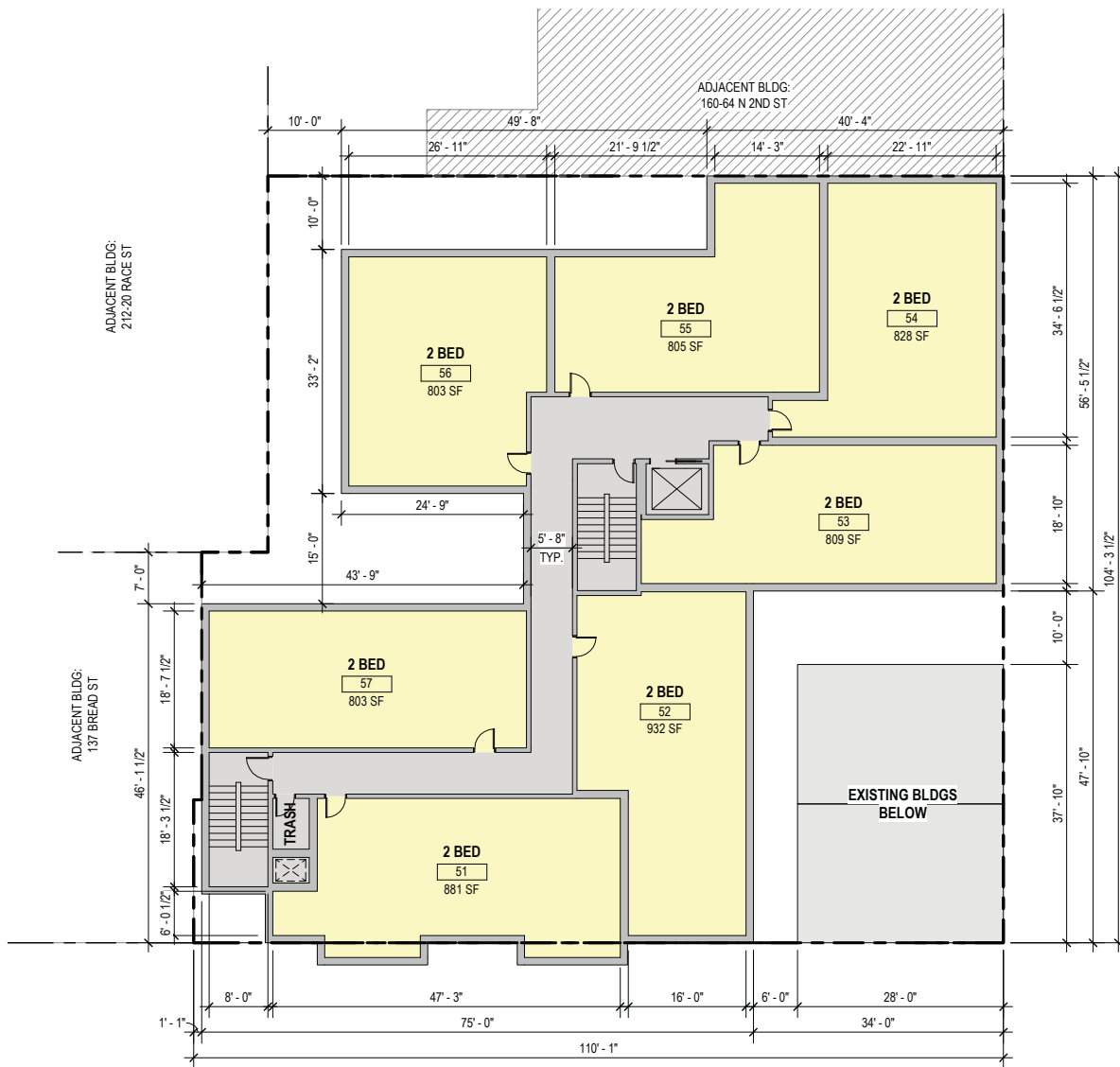






PROPOSED LOOR PLAN  
GRO ND LOOR  
PAGE 20

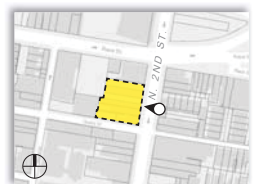




PROPOSED LOOR PLAN  
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PAGE 21







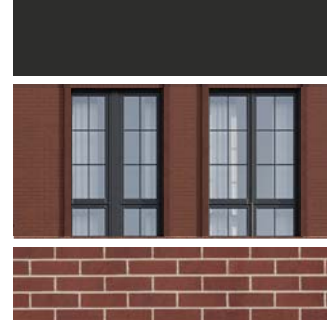
SITE CONDITION - WITH PROPOSED MASSING



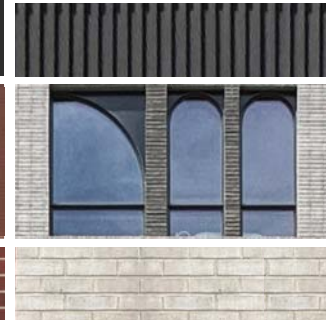
EXISTING  
MATERIAL PALETTE



EXISTING  
MATERIAL PALETTE



PROPOSED CONCEPT  
MATERIAL PALETTE

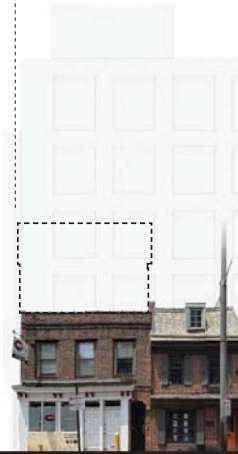


EXISTING  
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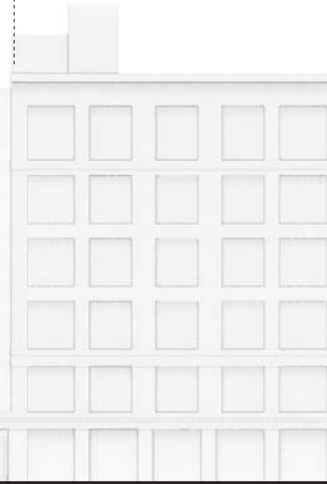


138 140 142 144 200  
QUARRY ST.

QUARRY  
STREET



148 150



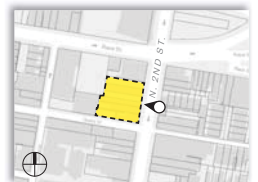
152-158



200  
RACE ST.

RACE  
STREET

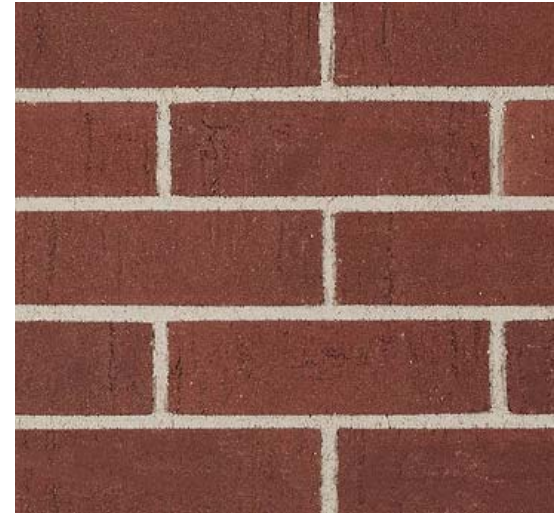
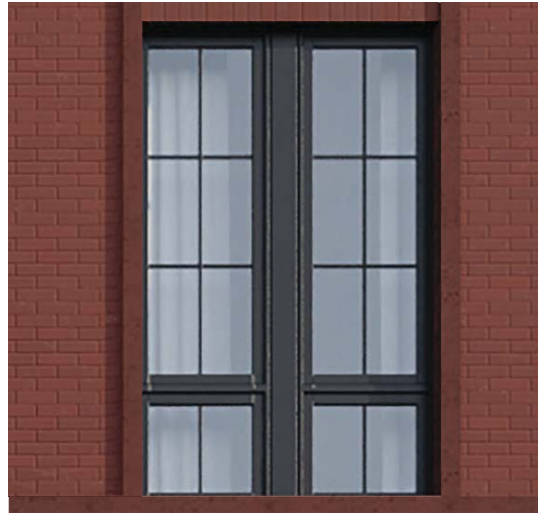
ELEVATION VIEW ON N 2ND ST.



MATERIAL PALETTES

PAGE 24



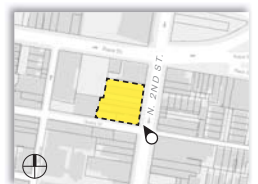








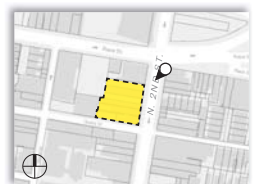
VIEW NORTHWEST ON N 2ND ST.



SITE CONDITION - WITH PROPOSED MASSING



VIEW SOUTHWEST ON N 2ND ST.

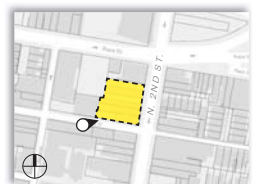


SITE CONDITION - WITH PROPOSED MASSING





VIEW NORTHEAST ON QUARRY ST.

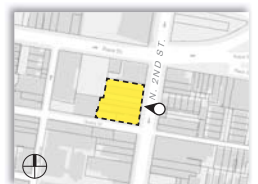


SITE CONDITION - WITH PROPOSED MASSING

PAGE 29

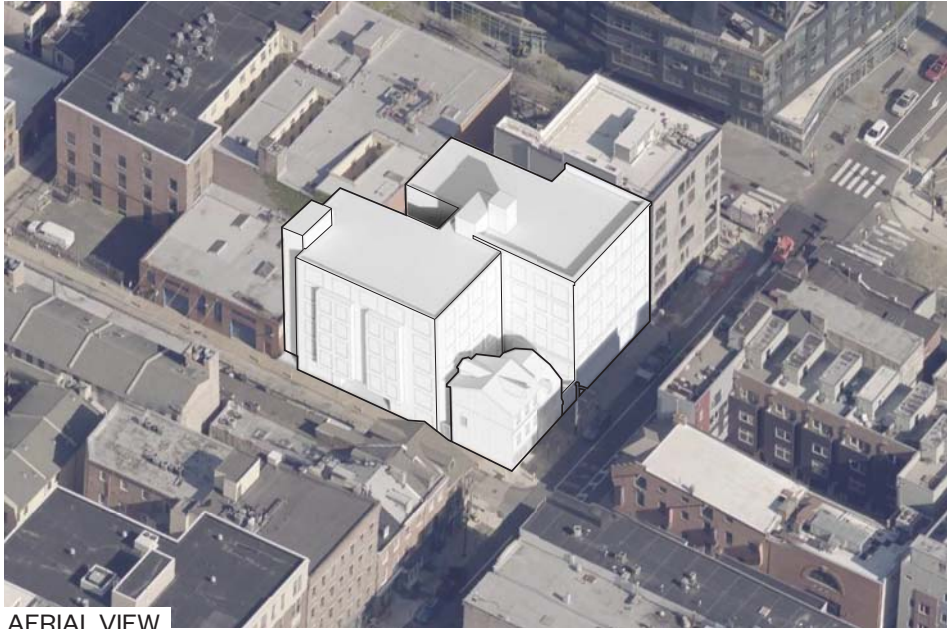


ENTRY VIEW FROM N 2ND ST.



SITE CONDITION - WITH PROPOSED MASSING





AERIAL VIEW



PERSPECTIVE VIEW

# JDM Engineering LLC

Structural Engineering Consultants  
815 RT 54  
Williamstown, NJ 08094  
(856)264-3851  
Email: [mikecmota@gmail.com](mailto:mikecmota@gmail.com)

July 15, 2025

L&I District: CENTRAL EAST  
OPA Account #: 882028443

RE: 152 N 2ND ST  
Philadelphia, PA 001:

An inspection of the building located at 152 N 2<sup>nd</sup> Street was conducted by Miguel Mota on July 14, 2025 as requested by the owner. The purpose of the inspection was to assess the condition of the front wall.

## Observations:

- The existing building is a three-story masonry and timber structure built approximately 100 years ago.
- Based on pictures of the front wall circa 1915, the existing wall was built after.
- The wall does not appear to be structurally attached to the existing building.
- The front wall is separating from the building as can be seen by cracks at the roof level.
- The masonry wall is bulging excessively and the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor levels.
- The masonry mortar joints are showing signs of moisture rot and are not structurally adequate.

Based on this inspection, it is my professional opinion that the front wall should be completely removed.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Miguel Mota, PhD, SE, PE  
JDM Engineering LLC  
Williamstown, NJ 08094  
PA PE License # PE052118E (Exp 9/30/25)  
Special Inspector License 050800 (Exp 10/9/26)  
Special Inspection Agency 051274 (Exp 2/5/27)  
City Account # 4562325  
ICC Certified Special Inspector (Concrete and Structural Steel)





Photo 2 – Front wall





Photo 3 – Cracks noted in front wall



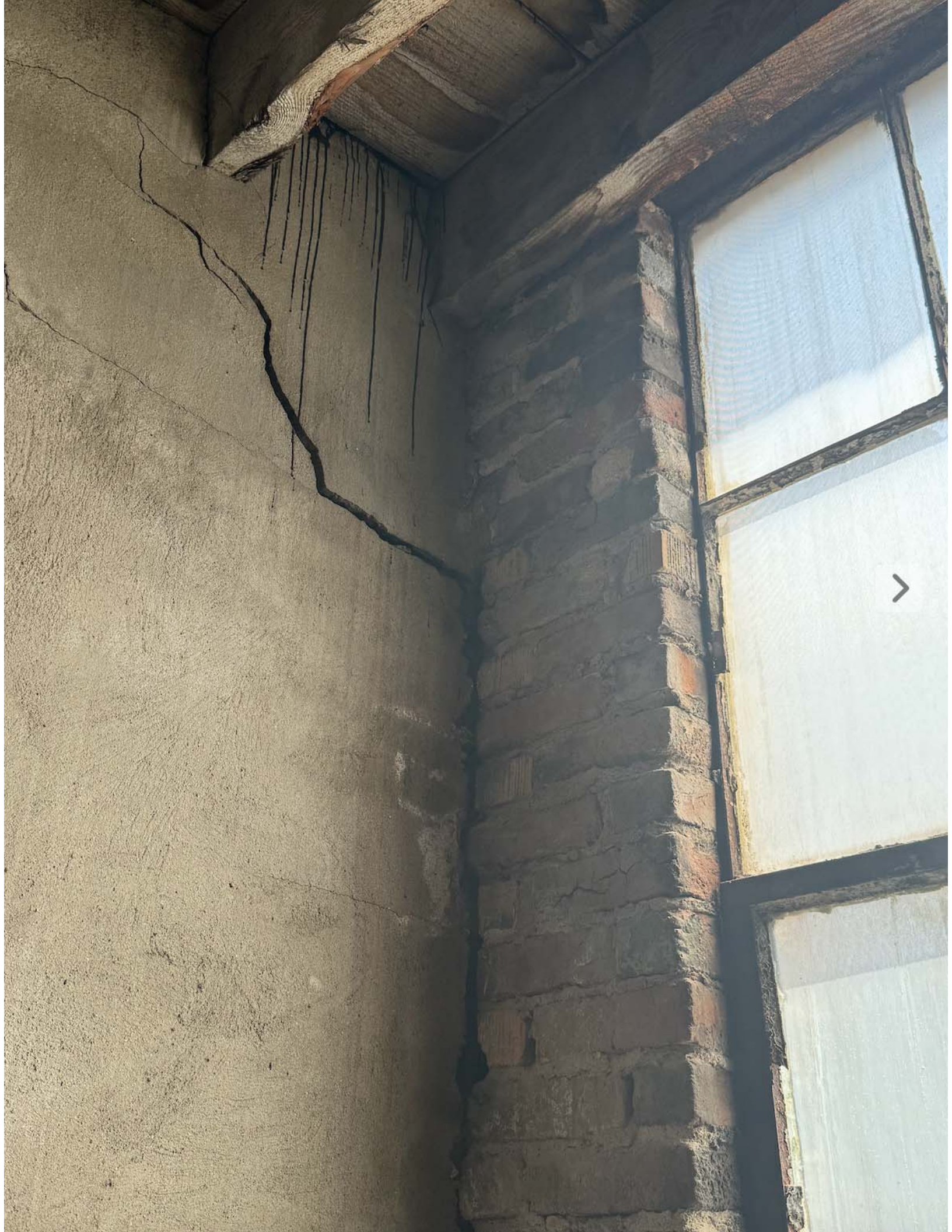










Photo 4 – front wall is bowing out and masonry is deteriorated

Photo 5 – Large crack at front wall - roof level