

ADDRESS: 1632 POPLAR ST

Proposal: Remove gable roof and stone veneer; construct rooftop addition; replace windows

Review: Final Review

Owner: Poplar Lofts LLC

Applicant: Chwen-ping Wang, Ping Architects LLC

History: 1860; Green Hill Market

Individual Designation: 5/11/2018

District Designation: None

Staff Contact: Allyson Mehley, allyson.mehley@phila.gov

BACKGROUND:

This application proposes constructing a fourth-floor addition, roof deck, and pilot house to the building at 1632 Poplar Street. The building was constructed in 1859 and was historically known as the Green Hill Market House. The developer intends to convert the former market and church building to residential use. The proposed rehabilitation scope includes adding a fourth floor and roof deck with pilot house, restoring the brick façade and cornice, and installing new windows and exterior doors. The Historical Commission approved an in-concept application for this project at its June 2025 meeting.

At its June 2025 meeting, the Historical Commission asked the applicant to include more information about the neighborhood context in the final review submission. Other considerations included completing removal of the stone veneer, incorporating a cladding material and a color scheme that minimizes the public visibility of addition, determining the original configuration of the third-floor windows, and determining a historically appropriate window replacement configuration.

SCOPE OF WORK:

- Add a fourth floor and roof deck with pilot house.
- Rehabilitate the exterior.

STANDARDS FOR REVIEW:

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

- *Standard 2: The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.*
 - Photographs provided of the third-floor interior indicate that the existing window openings have not been altered. The exterior brick recessed panels below the third-story windows are character-defining features and should remain in place. A similar element is extant on the second-story elevation along N. 17th Street, and this too should be retained. Removal of these historic brick details does not meet Standard 2.
- *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 design of the proposed fourth-floor addition successfully differentiates itself from the historic building through its massing, size, scale, and architectural features. The proposed gray cladding is a neutral color and will minimize public visibility, meeting Standard 9.
 - To increase compatibility and better meet Standard 9, a cornice detail should be added.

- The applicant will work with the staff on the future removal of the stone veneer and the condition of the masonry material underneath it in order to meet Standard 9. Once the removal is complete, the applicant can work with the staff to determine an approvable preservation approach to rehabilitating the masonry façade.
- The identified historic window configuration should be incorporated into the two first-floor windows and central entrance along Poplar Street (see historic photographs and precedents—Images 12-16) to meet Standard 9. For the majority of the windows, the installation of two-over-two double-hung windows would be appropriate to the original construction period and satisfy Standard 9.
- *Standard 10: New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment will be unimpaired.*
 - The low-slope gable roof proposed for removal is hidden by the building's cornice and is not visible from the public right-of-way. The historic form and integrity of the designated building will not be visibly altered by the removal of the roof. If a future owner wishes to return it to its original appearance, the roof could be reconstructed; therefore, the proposal meets Standard 10.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval, provided the exterior brick panels are retained and the window configurations are revised, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standards 2, 9, and 10.

IMAGES

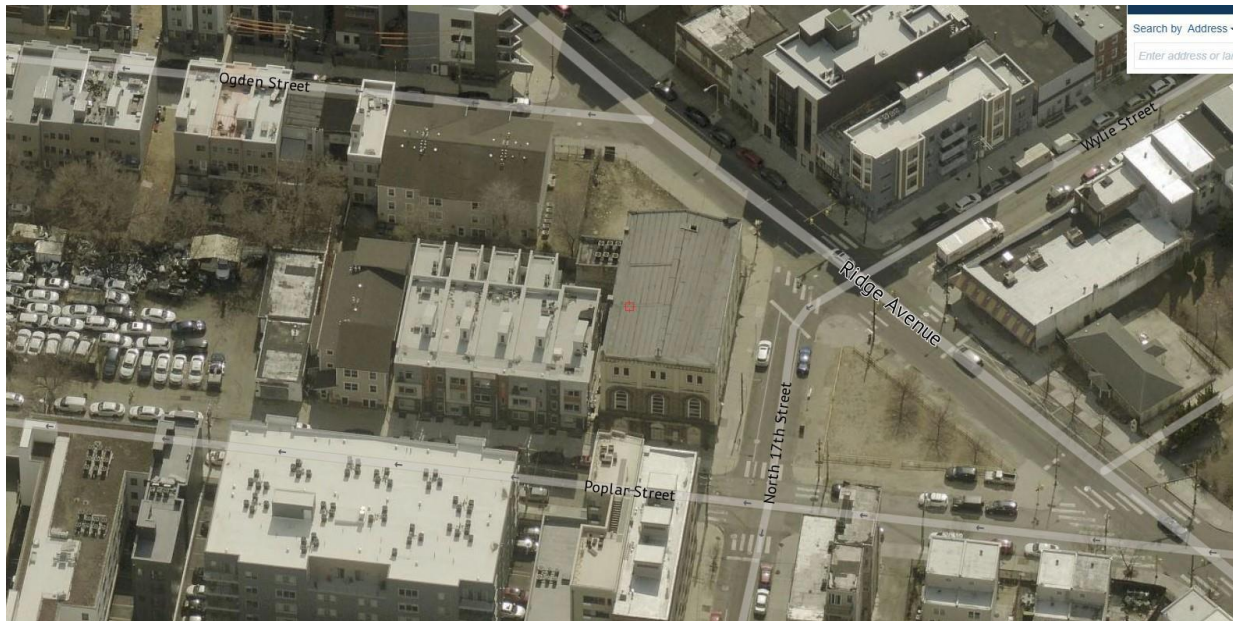


Image 1: Aerial view looking south. Neighborhood context around 1632 Poplar Street.

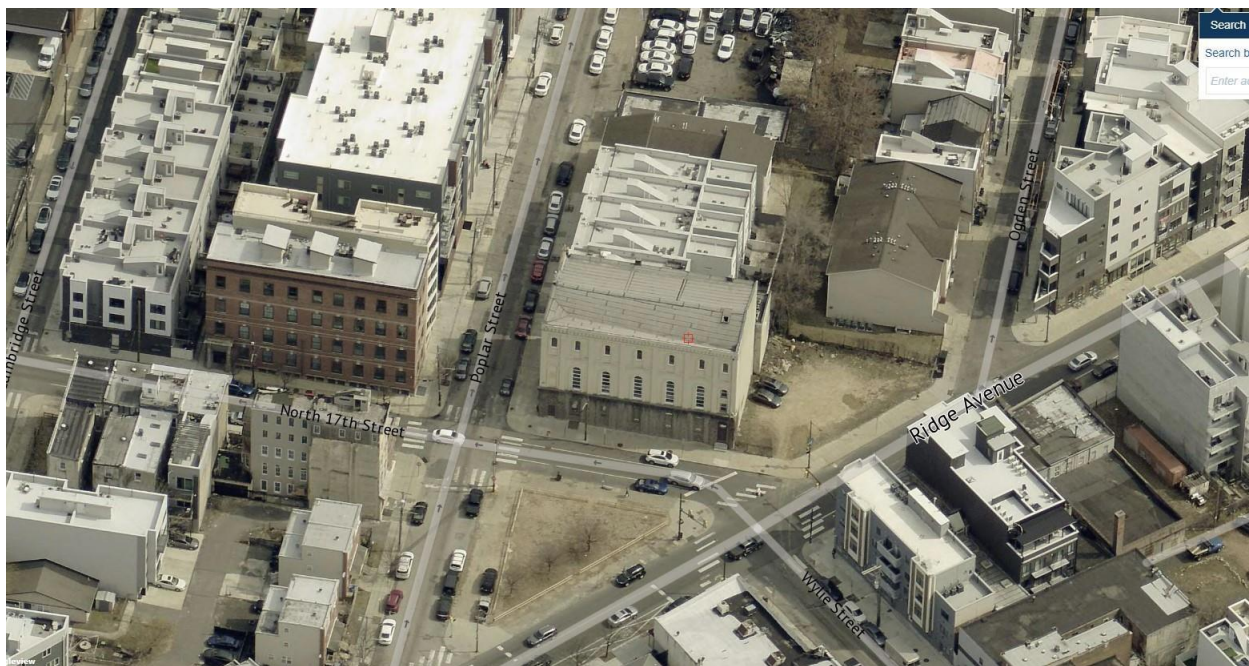


Image 2: Aerial view looking east. Neighborhood context around 1632 Poplar Street.



Image 3: View west along Poplar Street.



Image 4: Corner of Poplar Street and N. 17th Street. View of north (front façade) and west elevations of building.



Image 5: View from the intersection of Ridge Avenue and N. 17th Street. West and south (rear of building) elevations are visible.



Image 6: View looking north along N. 17th Street and south elevation of 1632 Poplar Street.



Image 7: The original brick is visible on the second and third elevations of the building. The original red brick is currently painted yellow. The first floor is currently clad in stone veneer.



Image 8: View of first floor along N. 17th Street.



Image 9: Close up view of stone veneer along N. 17th Street.



Image 10: Elevation along N. 17th Street. The red boxes show areas of historic brick detailing that dates to original construction. The third floor recessed panels are also extant on the Poplar Street front façade.



Image 11: Interior view of windows on third floor. Plaster was removed to expose original brick. There is no indication that these windows were reduced in height since the 1859 construction. The lack of alterations in this area confirms that the brick panel detailing on the exterior was included in the original design and construction.



Image 12: 1632 Poplar Street in early 1980s. Photograph shows building corner at Poplar and N. 17th Streets. Unpainted brick is visible on the second and third levels. The first floor appears to have stucco applied to the façade and window/door openings are filled in. An original window is still visible on the second-floor façade. The architectural design of Philadelphia public markets constructed during the mid-18th century consistently showcased heavy ornamented brick and large arched windows with detailed tracery. The original window shown in this photo is similar to other public markets constructed in this era (see Images 13-16) .



Image 13: Western Market (demolished). Located at Market Street and 16th Street. Constructed 1859.



Image 14: Eastern Market (demolished). Located near 4th Street and Chestnut Street. Constructed 1859.



Image 15: Lincoln Market (demolished). Located at Broad Street and Fairmount Avenue. Constructed 1871.



Image 16: Dock Street Market (demolished). Located in proximity to Delaware Avenue and Dock Street. Constructed circa 1870.

Cover Letter

Date: Aug 12, 2025

Attention: Allyson Mehley
Historic Preservation Planner Supervisor
1515 Arch Street, 13th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19102

Project Address: 1632 Poplar St,
Philadelphia PA 19130

From: Chwen-ping Wang, RA
CC: Simon Townsend,
Church of the Living God, the Pillar, and Ground of the Truth

Re: Requesting a Historical Committee Review for the Rehabilitation of the church located at 1632 Poplar St, Philadelphia PA 19130

This letter is an introduction to our design intentions for the revitalization of the historic building at 1632 Poplar St. The building was built in 1859 and historically known as the Green Hill Market House; the building is currently a vacant church. Our proposal aims to thoughtfully convert this vacant 3-story structure into a multi-family residential building with a 1-story addition, creating a 4-story landmark that respects its historical significance while meeting modern needs.

The existing building is characterized by its shallow gable roof with decorative cornices, and brick walls with portions of the 1st-2nd floor façade adorned with serpentine stone veneer. Although aged and in need of restoration, these elements are handsome survivors amidst the evolving landscape of the Francisville neighborhood. Please see below our proposed plan.

The following design intent incorporates feedback provided from the committee during the in-concept review.

Preservation and Restoration Plan:

Our primary goal is to restore the historic façade to its original or recommended suitable appearance. This includes:

1. Gentle-wash the brick wall to remove faded paint and stain
2. Removing the serpentine stone veneer to expose the original brick beneath.
3. Upon removing the existing shallow gable roof, to preserve and restore the gable ends and

cornices to reflect their original craftsmanship.

4. Replacing existing windows with new, dimensionally accurate units that are operable for residential use.

1-Story Addition:

To support the building's adaptive reuse and feasibility for the equitable owner, we propose a 1-story addition with a roof deck and pilot house. Our design incorporates the following guidelines based on feedback from the project's In-concept review:

1. The new fourth floor is recessed behind the existing gable and cornice, preserving the character of the original façade, also giving visual prominence of the historic structure.
2. Designating different materials and colors for the addition to distinguish it from the historic portion, ensuring clear visual separation.
3. The roof deck and its railing are set back to minimize its visibility from the streets.
4. The pilot houses are situated at the center to be entirely concealed from public view.
5. The total height complies with the maximum height allowed for a CMX-2.5 zoned lot.

This project represents a unique opportunity to transform and revive one of the neighborhood's overlooked historic buildings into a vibrant community asset. We are committed to preserving its legacy while enhancing its functionality for modern living.

We appreciate your review and consideration of this application.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chwen-Ping Wang". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and prominent.

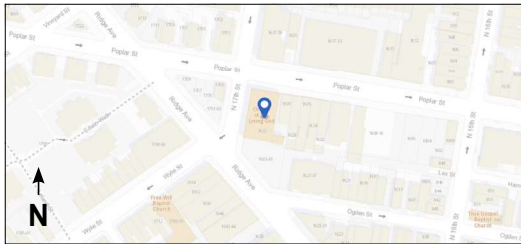
Chwen-ping Wang, RA
Principal | Ping Architects LLC

1632 POPLAR ST

Philadelphia Historical Commission Review



PING ARCHITECTS, LLC
ping@ping-arch.com
510-394-8732



LOCATION MAP



ZONING MAP



LOOKING WEST ON POPLAR ST



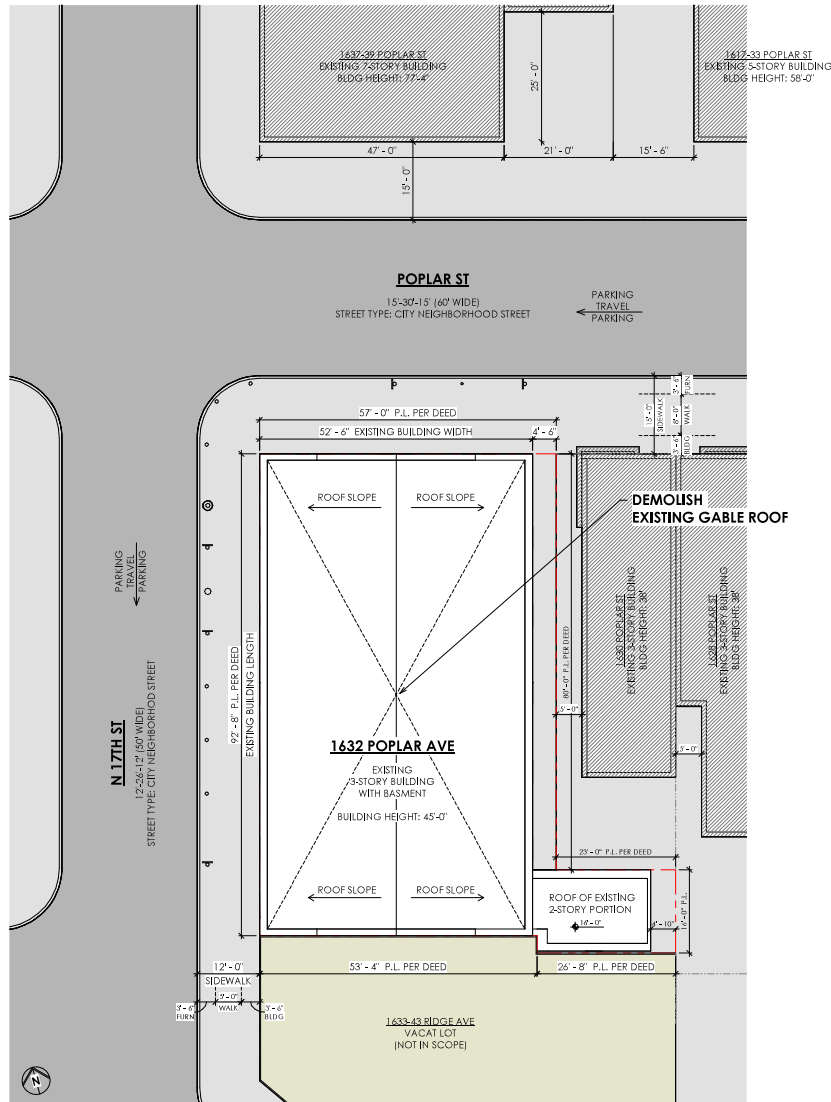
LOOKING EAST ON POPLAR ST



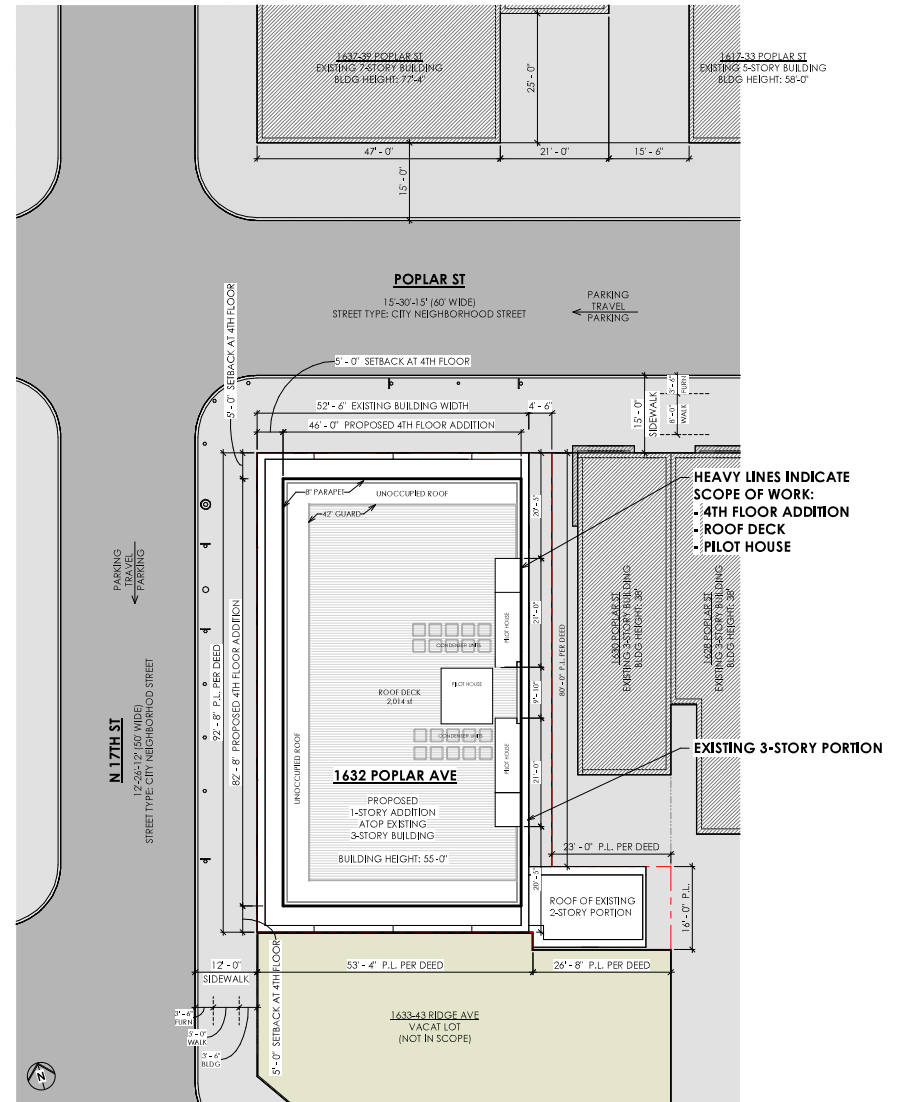
LOOKING SOUTH ON N 17TH ST



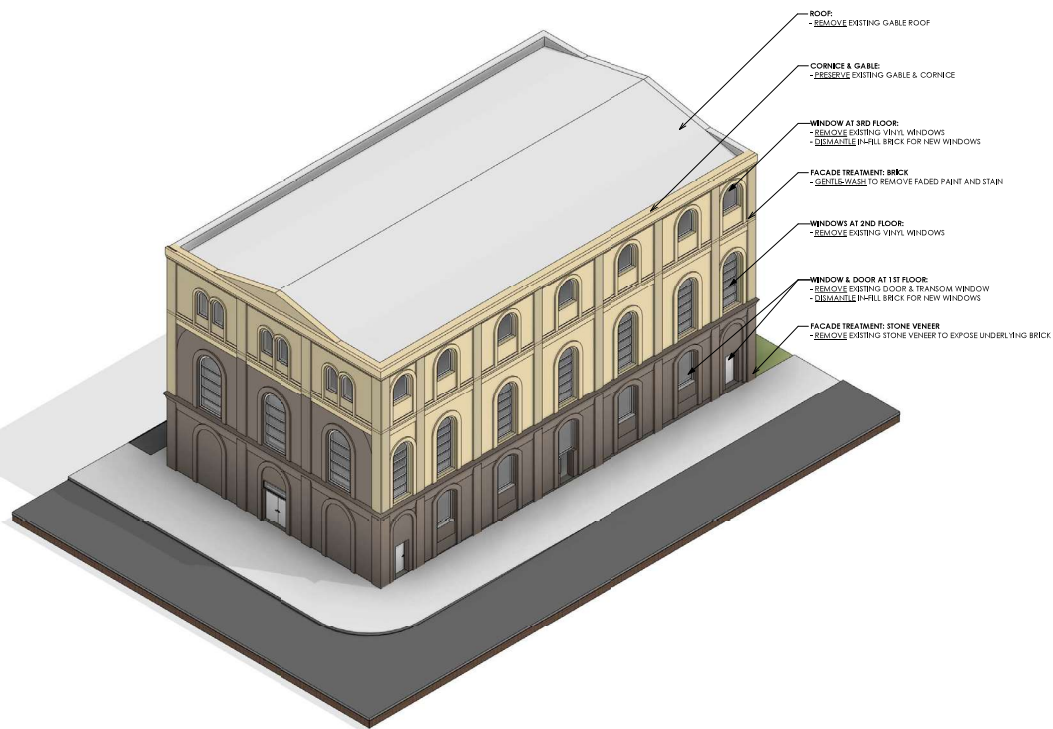
LOOKING NORTH ACROSS RIDGE AVE



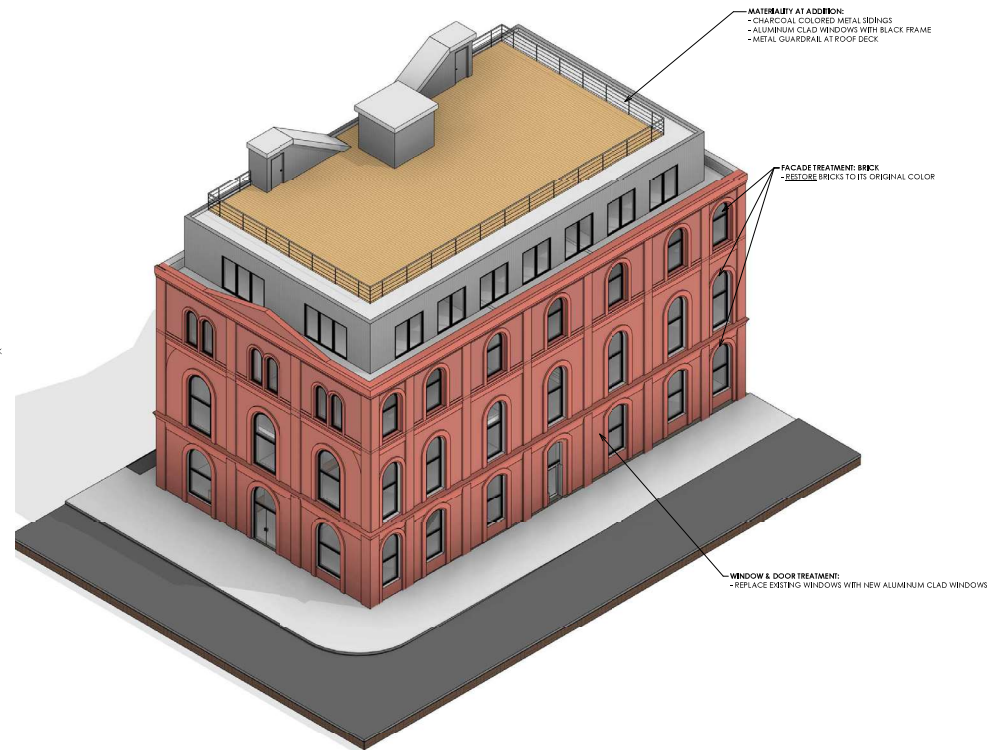
EXISTING SITE PLAN



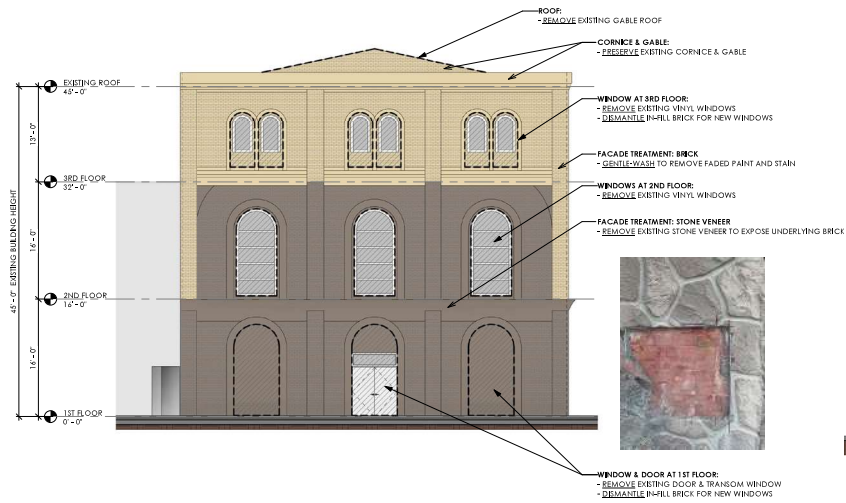
PROPOSED SITE PLAN



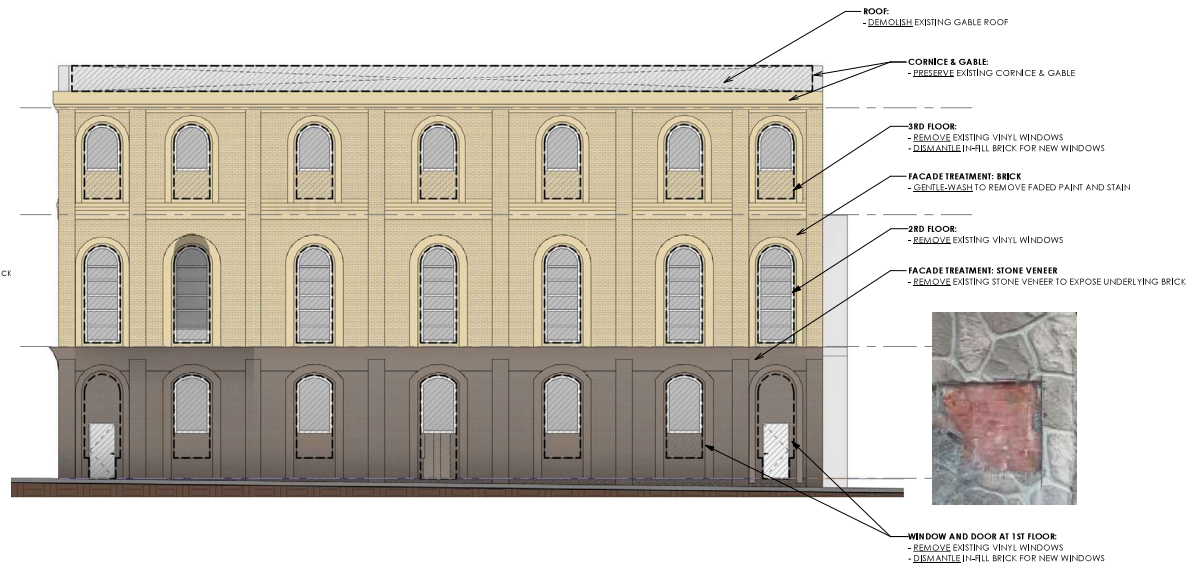
EXISTING ISOMETRIC VIEW



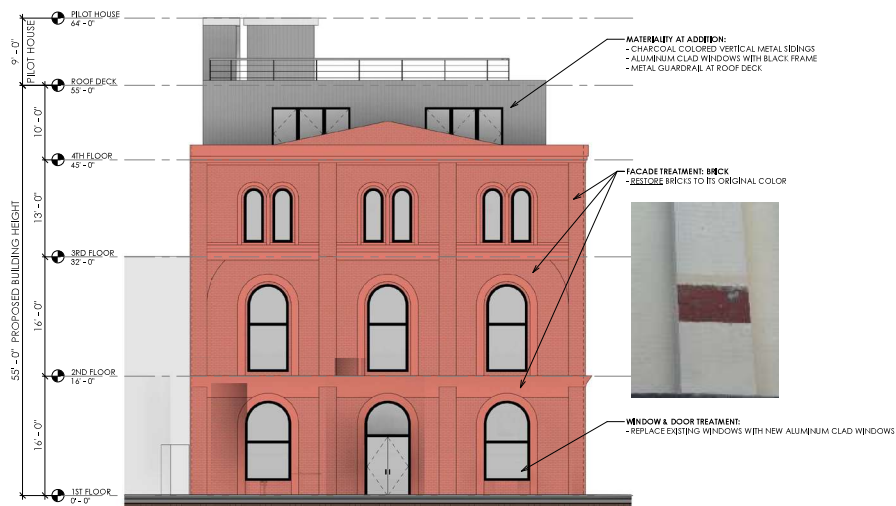
PROPOSED ISOMETRIC VIEW



EXISTING ELEVATION AT POPLAR ST



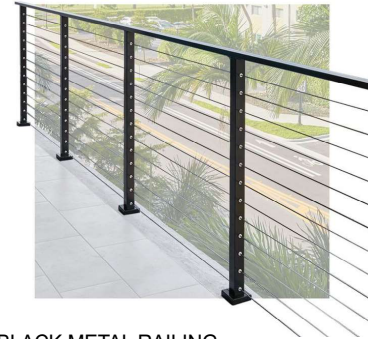
EXISTING ELEVATION AT N 17TH ST



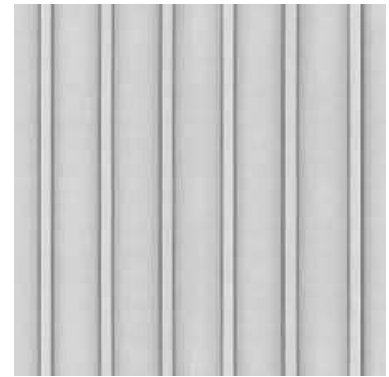
PROPOSED ELEVATION AT POPLAR ST



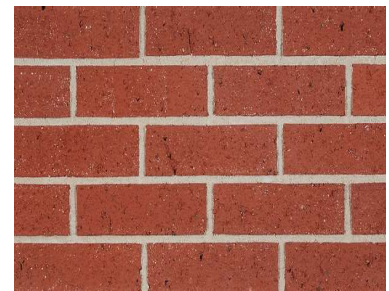
PROPOSED ELEVATION AT N 17TH ST



BLACK METAL RAILING



GREY-TONE
STANDING SEAM METAL



RESTORED
RED-TONED BRICK



LOOKING WEST AT POPLAR ST

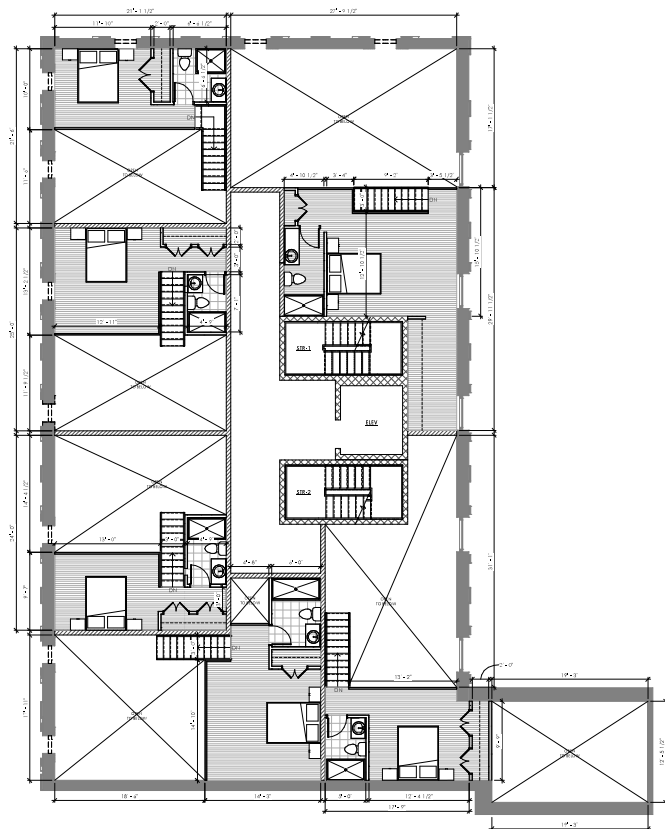


LOOKING SOUTH ON N 17TH ST

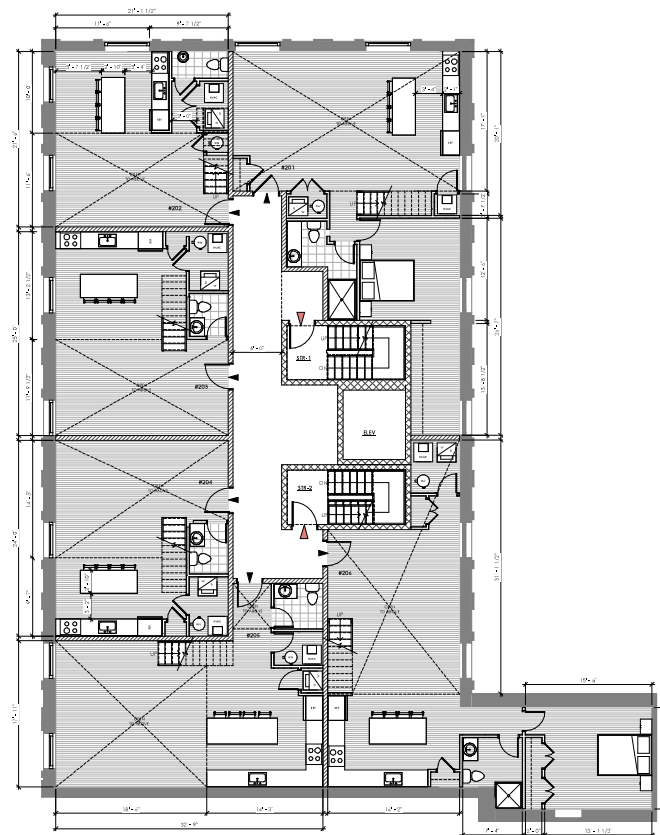


LOOKING EAST ON N 17TH ST

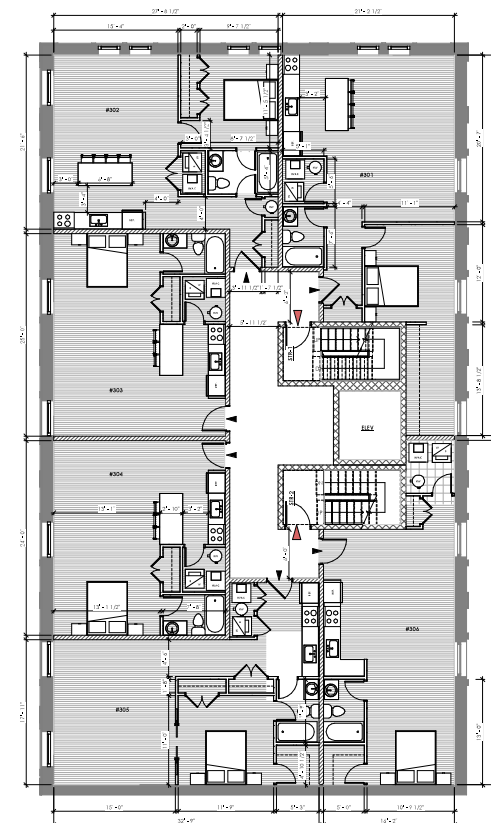




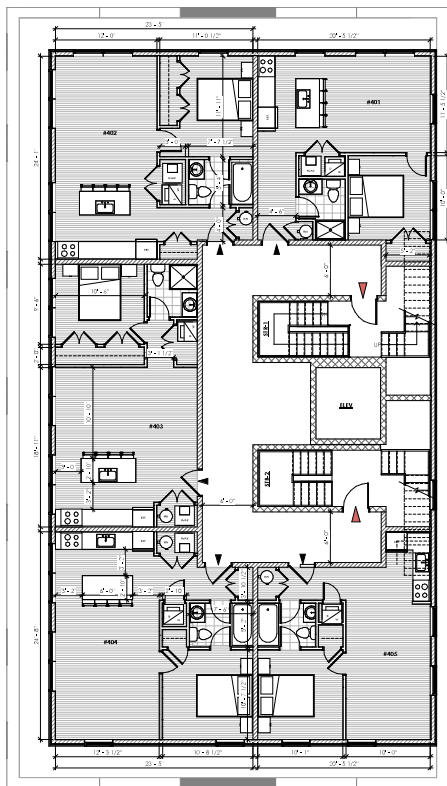
2ND FLOOR



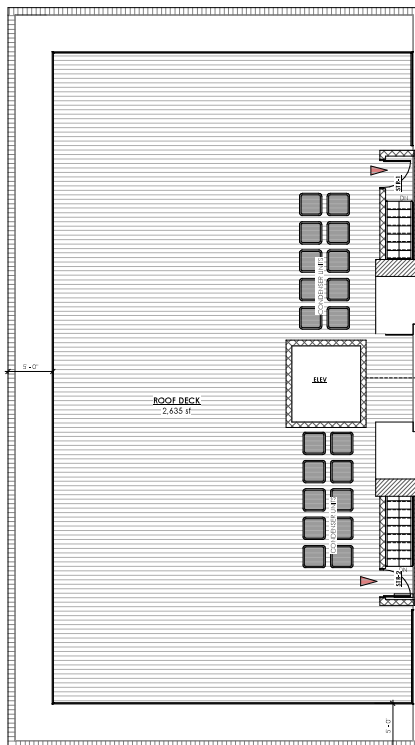
2ND FLOOR MEZZANINE



3RD FLOOR



4TH FLOOR- ADDITION



ROOF DECK