

**ADDRESS: 137 N 2ND ST**

Proposal: Install mural

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Incentanile Holdings LLC

Applicant: Kate Jacobi, Mural Arts Philadelphia

History: 1855

Individual Designation: 12/31/1984

District Designation: Old City Historic District, 12/12/2003

Staff Contact: Dan Shachar-Krasnoff, Daniel.Shachar-Krasnoff@phila.gov

**OVERVIEW:** This application proposes to install a mural on the south facade of the building at 137 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. The adjoining buildings at the northeast corner of Elfreth's Alley and N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street were demolished in 1966. The exposed party wall is clad with stucco. The mural will be created off site with the panels assembled and installed on-site. The facade will be primed, the mural clothed panels adhered to the wall with acrylic gel adhesive, sealed with clear acrylic, and two additional clear coats applied to protect against UV rays.

The project is being undertaken in cooperation with the Elfreth's Alley Association, Old City District, and Technically Philly. Sean Martana is the lead artist. The mural's design celebrates the work of artisans, tradespeople, makers and crafters in anticipation of the America 250<sup>th</sup> celebration.

**SCOPE OF WORK:** Install mural

**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 work will 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 south façade of 137 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street was not exposed until the adjoining buildings at 133 and 135 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street were demolished. The installation will not cover or alter any historic material.
- Section 6.15.a. of the Historical Commission's *Rules & Regulations*:
  - Murals shall not be placed directly upon historic fabric.
  - Murals shall not be placed in a manner that obscures historic fabric.
  - The Philadelphia Historical Commission, its committees, and staff shall not consider a mural's content as part of its review of any application for a building permit, but may consider size, scale, and relationship to the historic context.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Approval, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standard 9 and Section 6.15.a. of the Historical Commission's *Rules & Regulations*.



April 6, 2026

Philadelphia Historical Commission  
One Parkway Building  
1515 Arch Street – 13<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Philadelphia, PA 19102  
Attn: Dr. Jon Farnham

On behalf of Mural Arts Philadelphia, I am requesting to be placed on the agenda for the May meeting to be held on May 8, 2026. I am submitting this letter for a project with the Elfreth's Alley Association and the Old City community for a proposed mural at 2nd & Elfreth's Alley. This new mural honors the history and many contributions of the artisans, makers, tradespeople and crafters who first resided on Elfreth's Alley and the surrounding blocks of Old City.

I have attached reference photos of the wall, site context photos and our proposed design thus far. This mural is fully funded by a private grant for the 250th anniversary and is slated to be completed by the end of June.

If you have any questions or require any additional information, please call me at 610-299-2301 or email at [kate.jacobi@muralarts.org](mailto:kate.jacobi@muralarts.org).

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kate Jacobi', is positioned above the typed name.

Kate Jacobi  
Senior Project Manager  
Community Projects & Restorations



**Elfreth's Alley Mural Project**  
**at 2nd & Elfreth's**

Project Partner: Elfreth's Alley Association, Old City District, Technically Philly

Mural Name: *Elfreth's Alley Industrial History*

Address: 137 N 2nd St

Project Manager: Kate Jacobi

Lead Artist: Sean Martorana

**Project Description:**

Mural Arts Philadelphia has worked with the Old City community, specifically the Elfreth's Alley Association, for content support and archived photos to do a history mural around the origins of the Elfreth's Alley community. The origins of the Alley's first residents were many artisans, makers, craftspeople and tradespeople, and the mural will be a way to honor their contributions to the growth of the city's artistic, industrial and creative economy. The mural design will utilize elements of surrounding architectural styles and tools of the trades, and local flora and fauna as a way to create a reconstructed image featuring a made stained glass window and wrought iron fence filled with details found from other local architecture or furniture over different centuries and stylistic eras.

**Mural Location:**

The exterior south-facing wall of 137 N 2nd St by the end of Elfreth's Alley at 2nd street in the Old City neighborhood.

**Installation Plan:**

The mural will be produced off-site in a studio by the lead artist and a team of assistant artists. When the painting work on mural cloth is completed the mural sheets will be installed onto the new wall (primed first then installed with Golden Paintworks acrylic gel adhesive). The artwork will then be sealed with Benjamin Moore Corotech Clear Acrylic Sealer V027-00. After that, two coats of MSA Satin Varnish from Golden Paintworks will be applied to provide additional protection against UV rays and general wear and tear.



**Project Timeline:**

Winter 2026	Mural research and design
May 8, 2026	Historical Commission review
May-June 2026	Produce mural (host several community paint days)
June 2026	Install on the wall / mural dedication

**Project Budget:**

\$120,000 (funded by a grant from the Philadelphia Funder Collaborative)

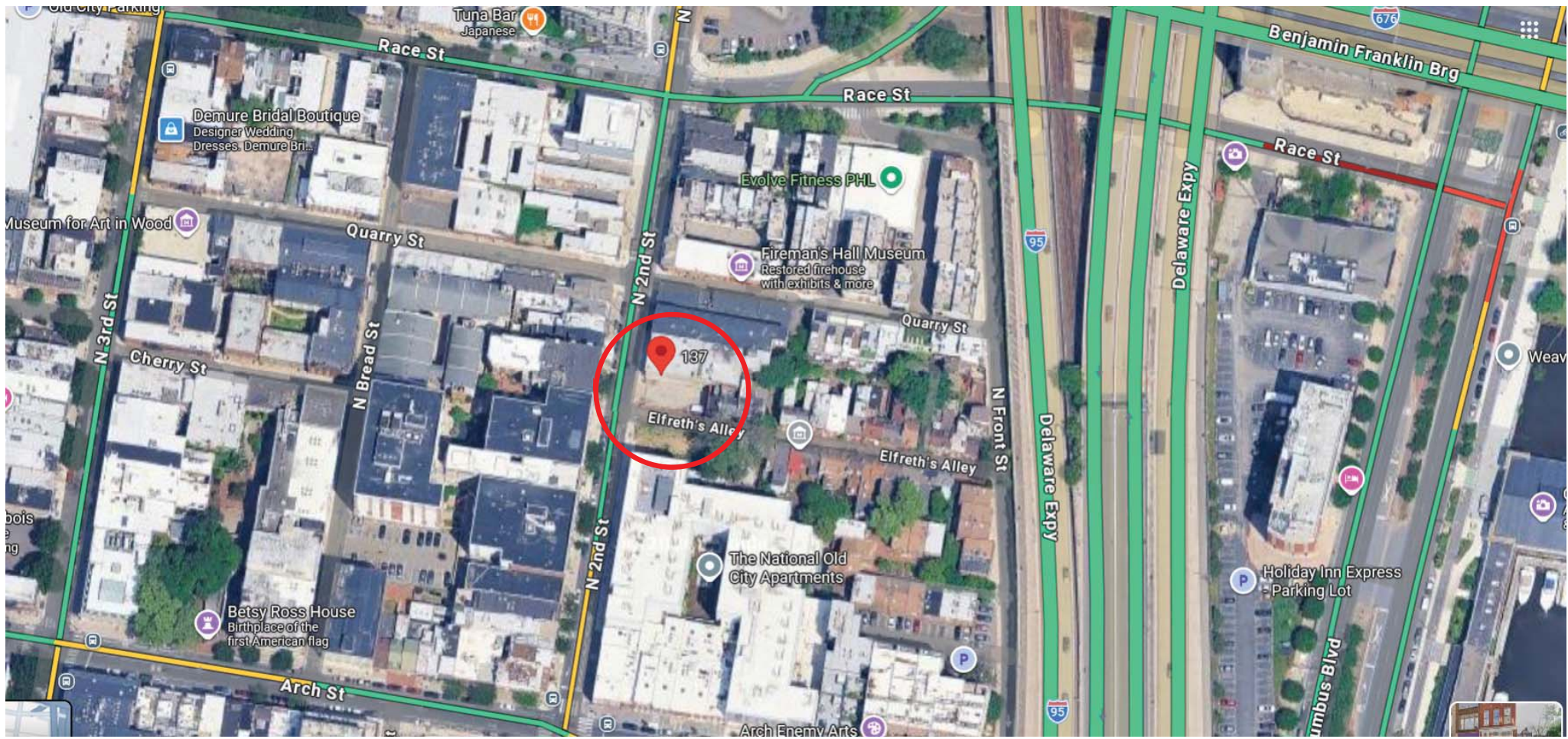
Budget specifics (aside from administrative and project management):

Design Phase	\$6,000 - research and design labor
Production Phase	\$43,000 - production labor in studio
Installation Phase	\$22,500 - installing on the new wall
Paint & Sundries	\$14,500 (primer, paint, gel, sealer, mural cloth)
Events/other	\$4,000 (paint days, dedication)

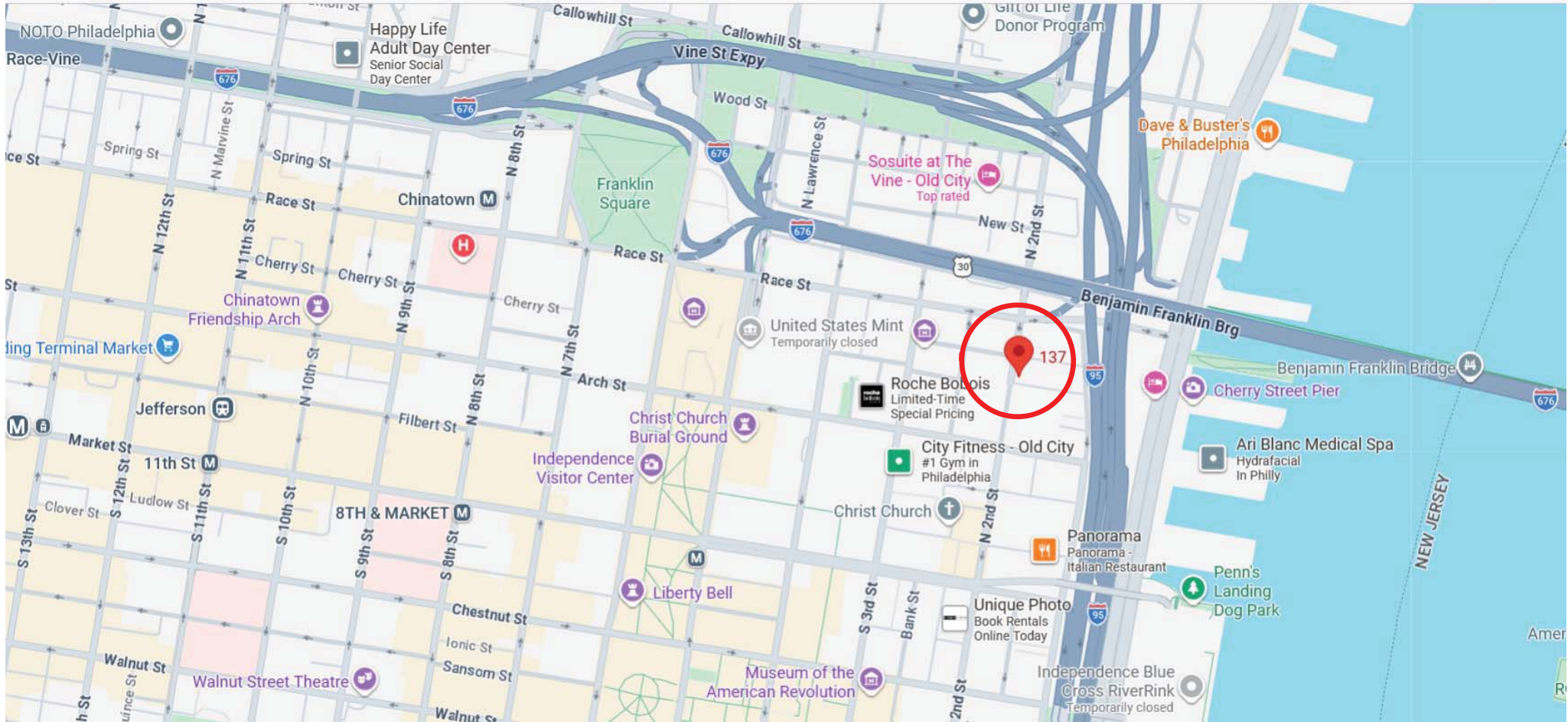
**Mural Arts Philadelphia**  
*Elfreth's Alley Mural Project*

Project Manager: Kate Jacobi

Artist: Sean Martorana



Aerial map of the mural site location (in red circle) within the Old City neighborhood



Map of the mural site location (in red circle) within the Old City neighborhood



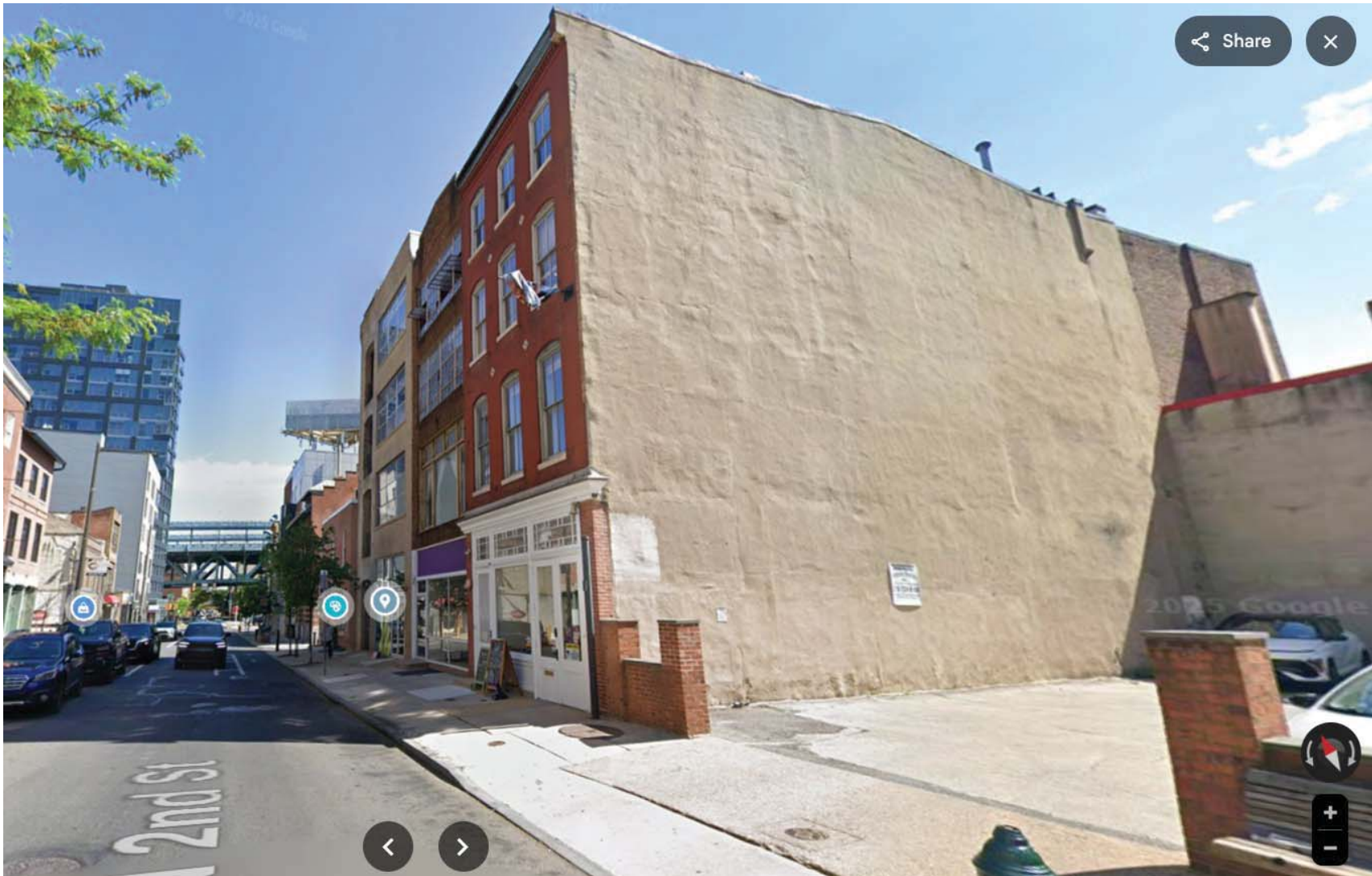
View from south end of Elfreth's Alley approaching the wall (the Dolly Ottey Park will be located in this empty lot this spring)



View from west end of Elfreth's Alley, looking down the Alley with the mural wall on left and park site on the right



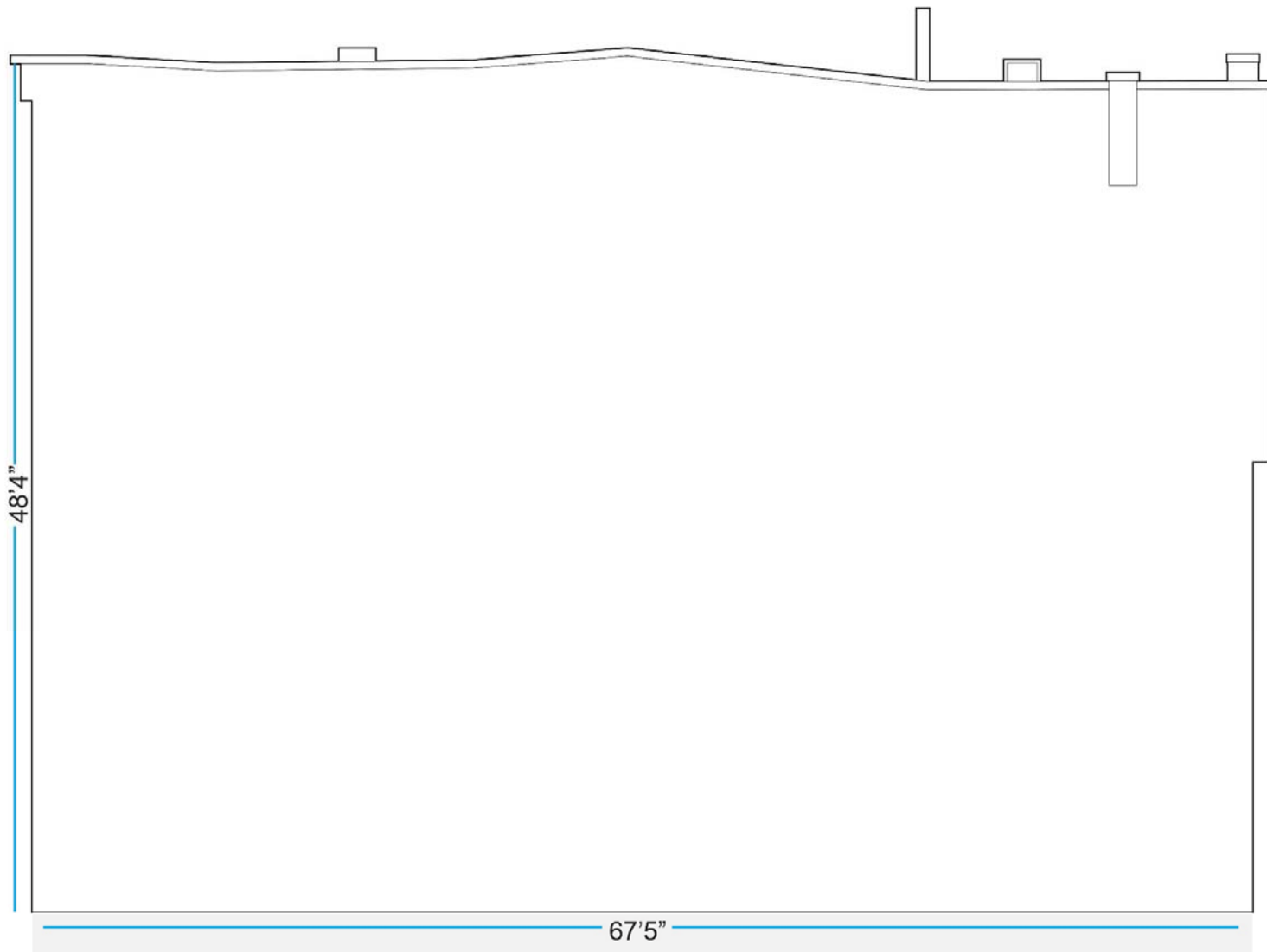
View from Elfreth's Alley approaching 2<sup>nd</sup> Street



View from southwest corner of the parking lot curb and looking north up 2<sup>nd</sup> Street



Mural wall at 137 N 2<sup>nd</sup> St (south façade)



Mural wall dimensions (approx. 3,250 SF)



Proposed new mural on south façade