

## HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

May 20, 2015

Agenda Item No: 1

**HDRC CASE NO:** 2015-111  
**ADDRESS:** 517 E HOUSTON ST  
**LEGAL DESCRIPTION:** NCB 422 BLK 26 W 26 FT OF 5 ARB A2 2010-RESURVEY PER DEED 13852/200 EX 2/4/2009  
**ZONING:** D H HS  
**CITY COUNCIL DIST.:** 1  
**DISTRICT:** Alamo Plaza Historic District  
**LANDMARK:** Albert Maverick Building  
**APPLICANT:** David Alvidrez  
**OWNER:** David Alvidrez  
**TYPE OF WORK:** Facade restoration, glass canopy installation and window and door opening replacement

### REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval to:

1. Restore the existing plaster on the Houston Street (south) façade.
2. Clean and restore the brick on the Peacock Alley (north) façade.
3. Restore the scupper, downspout and down leader on the Peacock Alley façade.
4. Restore the existing painted signage on the Peacock Alley façade.
5. Install clear glass on the Houston Street façade.
6. Install a glass canopy on the Houston Street façade including two smaller eyebrow canopies.
7. Alter the recessed storefront entrance depth.
8. Install new windows on the Peacock Alley façade to replace those that are currently missing.
9. Install two (2) new doors on the Peacock Alley façade.

### APPLICABLE CITATIONS:

*Historic Design Guidelines, Chapter 1, Guidelines for Exterior Maintenance and Alterations*

#### 2. Materials: Masonry and Stucco

##### A. MAINTENANCE (PRESERVATION)

- i. *Paint*—Avoid painting historically unpainted surfaces. Exceptions may be made for severely deteriorated material where other consolidation or stabilization methods are not appropriate. When painting is acceptable, utilize a water permeable paint to avoid trapping water within the masonry.
- ii. *Clear area*—Keep the area where masonry or stucco meets the ground clear of water, moisture, and vegetation.
- iii. *Vegetation*—Avoid allowing ivy or other vegetation to grow on masonry or stucco walls, as it may loosen mortar and stucco and increase trapped moisture.
- iv. *Cleaning*—Use the gentlest means possible to clean masonry and stucco when needed, as improper cleaning can damage the surface. Avoid the use of any abrasive, strong chemical, sandblasting, or high-pressure cleaning method.

##### B. ALTERATIONS (REHABILITATION, RESTORATION, AND RECONSTRUCTION)

- i. *Patching*—Repair masonry or stucco by patching or replacing it with in-kind materials whenever possible. Utilize similar materials that are compatible with the original in terms of composition, texture, application technique, color, and detail, when in-kind replacement is not possible. EIFS is not an appropriate patching or replacement material for stucco.
- ii. *Repointing*—The removal of old or deteriorated mortar should be done carefully by a professional to ensure that masonry units are not damaged in the process. Use mortar that matches the original in color, profile, and composition when repointing. Incompatible mortar can exceed the strength of historic masonry and results in deterioration. Ensure that the new joint matches the profile of the old joint when viewed in section. It is recommended that a test panel is prepared

to ensure the mortar is the right strength and color.

iii. *Removing paint*—Take care when removing paint from masonry as the paint may be providing a protectant layer or hiding modifications to the building. Use the gentlest means possible, such as alkaline poultice cleaners and strippers, to remove paint from masonry.

iv. *Removing stucco*—Remove stucco from masonry surfaces where it is historically inappropriate. Prepare a test panel to ensure that underlying masonry has not been irreversibly damaged before proceeding.

#### 4. Materials: Metal

##### A. MAINTENANCE (PRESERVATION)

i. *Cleaning*—Use the gentlest means possible when cleaning metal features to avoid damaging the historic finish. Prepare a test panel to determine appropriate cleaning methods before proceeding. Use a wire brush to remove corrosion or paint build up on hard metals like wrought iron, steel, and cast iron.

ii. *Repair*—Repair metal features using methods appropriate to the specific type of metal.

iii. *Paint*—Avoid painting metals that were historically exposed such as copper and bronze.

##### B. ALTERATIONS (REHABILITATION, RESTORATION, AND RECONSTRUCTION)

i. *Replacement*—Replace missing or significantly damaged metal features in-kind or with a substitute compatible in size, form, material, and general appearance to the historical feature when in-kind replacement is not possible.

ii. *Rust*—Select replacement anchors of stainless steel to limit rust and associated expansion that can cause cracking of the surrounding material such as wood or masonry. Insert anchors into the mortar joints of masonry buildings.

iii. *New metal features*—Add metal features based on accurate evidence of the original, such as photographs. Base the design on the architectural style of the building and historic patterns if no such evidence exists.

#### 6. Architectural Features: Doors, Windows, and Screens

##### A. MAINTENANCE (PRESERVATION)

i. *Openings*—Preserve existing window and door openings. Avoid enlarging or diminishing to fit stock sizes or air conditioning units. Avoid filling in historic door or window openings. Avoid creating new primary entrances or window openings on the primary façade or where visible from the public right-of-way.

ii. *Doors*—Preserve historic doors including hardware, fanlights, sidelights, pilasters, and entablatures.

iii. *Windows*—Preserve historic windows. When glass is broken, the color and clarity of replacement glass should match the original historic glass.

iv. *Screens and shutters*—Preserve historic window screens and shutters.

v. *Storm windows*—Install full-view storm windows on the interior of windows for improved energy efficiency. Storm window may be installed on the exterior so long as the visual impact is minimal and original architectural details are not obscured.

##### B. ALTERATIONS (REHABILITATION, RESTORATION, AND RECONSTRUCTION)

i. *Doors*—Replace doors, hardware, fanlight, sidelights, pilasters, and entablatures in-kind when possible and when deteriorated beyond repair. When in-kind replacement is not feasible, ensure features match the size, material, and profile of the historic element.

ii. *New entrances*—Ensure that new entrances, when necessary to comply with other regulations, are compatible in size, scale, shape, proportion, material, and massing with historic entrances.

iii. *Glazed area*—Avoid installing interior floors or suspended ceilings that block the glazed area of historic windows.

iv. *Window design*—Install new windows to match the historic or existing windows in terms of size, type, configuration, material, form, appearance, and detail when original windows are deteriorated beyond repair.

v. *Muntins*—Use the exterior muntin pattern, profile, and size appropriate for the historic building when replacement windows are necessary. Do not use internal muntins sandwiched between layers of glass.

vi. *Replacement glass*—Use clear glass when replacement glass is necessary. Do not use tinted glass, reflective glass, opaque glass, and other non-traditional glass types unless it was used historically. When established by the architectural style of the building, patterned, leaded, or colored glass can be used.

vii. *Non-historic windows*—Replace non-historic incompatible windows with windows that are typical of the architectural style of the building.

viii. *Security bars*—Install security bars only on the interior of windows and doors.

ix. *Screens*—Utilize wood screen window frames matching in profile, size, and design of those historically found when

the existing screens are deteriorated beyond repair. Ensure that the tint of replacement screens closely matches the original screens or those used historically.

x. *Shutters*—Incorporate shutters only where they existed historically and where appropriate to the architectural style of the house. Shutters should match the height and width of the opening and be mounted to be operational or appear to be operational. Do not mount shutters directly onto any historic wall material.

## 10. Commercial Facades

### A. MAINTENANCE (PRESERVATION)

i. *Character-defining features*—Preserve character-defining features such as cornice molding, upper-story windows, transoms, display windows, kickplates, entryways, tiled paving at entryways, parapet walls, bulkheads, and other features that contribute to the character of the building.

ii. *Windows and doors*—Use clear glass in display windows. See Guidelines for Architectural Features: Doors, Windows, and Screens for additional guidance.

iii. *Missing features*—Replace missing features in-kind based on evidence such as photographs, or match the style of the building and the period in which it was designed.

iv. *Materials*—Use in-kind materials or materials appropriate to the time period of the original commercial facade when making repairs.

### B. ALTERATIONS (REHABILITATION, RESTORATION, AND RECONSTRUCTION)

i. *New features*—Do not introduce new facade elements that alter or destroy the historic building character, such as adding inappropriate materials; altering the size or shape of windows, doors, bulkheads, and transom openings; or altering the facade from commercial to residential. Alterations should not disrupt the rhythm of the commercial block.

ii. *Historical commercial facades*—Return non-historic facades to the original design based on photographic evidence. Keep in mind that some non-original facades may have gained historic importance and should be retained. When evidence is not available, ensure the scale, design, materials, color, and texture is compatible with the historic building. Consider the features of the design holistically so as to not include elements from multiple buildings and styles.

## 11. Canopies and Awnings

### A. MAINTENANCE (PRESERVATION)

i. *Existing canopies and awnings*—Preserve existing historic awnings and canopies through regular cleaning and periodic inspections of the support system to ensure they are secure.

### B. ALTERATIONS (REHABILITATION, RESTORATION, AND RECONSTRUCTION)

i. *Replacement canopies and awnings*—Replace canopies and awnings in-kind whenever possible.

ii. *New canopies and awnings*—Add canopies and awnings based on accurate evidence of the original, such as photographs. If no such evidence exists, the design of new canopies and awnings should be based on the architectural style of the building and be proportionate in shape and size to the scale of the building facade to which they will be attached. See UDC Section 35-609(j).

iii. *Lighting*—Do not internally illuminate awnings; however, lighting may be concealed in an awning to provide illumination to sidewalks or storefronts.

iv. *Awning materials*—Use fire-resistant canvas awnings that are striped or solid in a color that is appropriate to the period of the building.

v. *Building features*—Avoid obscuring building features such as arched transom windows with new canopies or awnings.

vi. *Support structure*—Support awnings with metal or wood frames, matching the historic support system whenever possible. Minimize damage to historic materials when anchoring the support system. For example, anchors should be inserted into mortar rather than brick. Ensure that the support structure is integrated into the structure of the building as to avoid stress on the structural stability of the facade.

## FINDINGS:

- a. A similar proposal to rehabilitate and remodel the exterior of 517 E Houston received conceptual approval on October 15, 2008, however that request was last heard by the HDRC on March 4, 2009, where final approval was not given. At that time, Office of Historic Preservation staff noted that many of the proposed alterations to the historic facade were not consistent with the UDC nor the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation.
- b. This request was heard by the Historic and Design Review Commission on April 1, 2015. At that meeting the

Commissioners referred the case to the Design Review Committee to address some of the inconsistencies and concerns that Office of Historic Preservation Staff had addressed.

- c. This request was reviewed by the Design Review Committee on April 7, 2015. At the meeting, committee members noted that proposed glass canopy was appropriate given its lightweight appearance and that it would be best to not alter the original fenestration at the rear of the structure.
- d. The applicant has proposed to restore the existing plaster façade which fronts E Houston as well as to restore the existing rear brick façade which fronts Peacock Alley. This is consistent with the Guidelines for Exterior Maintenance and Alterations 2. A. and 2.B. and 10.B.ii.
- e. The applicant has proposed to restore the scuppers, downspouts and down leaders of the existing gutter system. While those that are currently on the façade are not historic, their repair is consistent with the Guidelines for Exterior Maintenance and Alterations 4.A.
- f. The applicant has noted in the application materials that the existing signage on the Peacock Alley façade which reads “SOL FRANK Company” is to be restored. While not original to the façade, this signage has historic value and should be restored with the restoration of the brick façade. This request is consistent with the Guidelines for Signage 1.B.i. and ii.
- g. The applicant has proposed to install clear glass on the Houston Street façade where a second level clear storefront glass would have once been located. The Guidelines for Exterior Maintenance and Alterations 10.A.iii. states that missing features should be replaced in to match the style of the building and the period in which it was designed. Staff finds that the applicant’s proposal is appropriate and consistent with the Guidelines.
- h. Per a photograph dated October 2007, the Houston Street façade at 517 Houston featured a canopy which projected approximately eight (8) feet out over the sidewalk, which has since been removed. The applicant has proposed to install a projecting steel and glass canopy which is to extend over the sidewalk approximately five (5) feet and feature three (3) sections to correspond with the entrance way and the proposed new clear glass. While the profile and materials aren’t like in materials to the original, historic façade, staff finds that the light appearance of the thin steel and glass canopy does not distract from the historic façade and is appropriate in this instance.
- i. While currently covered by plywood, the storefront façade at 517 E Houston features a recessed storefront entrance. Other storefront entrances on E Houston do not feature entrances nearly as deep as this one, which leads to believe that 517 E Houston’s storefront entrance is not an original element of the building’s design. The applicant has proposed to alter the storefront entrance to become more consistent with other storefront setbacks along E Houston. Staff finds that this request appropriate.
- j. According to the Guidelines for Exterior Maintenance and Alterations, new windows that match the historic windows of a structure should be installed when the existing windows are missing or deteriorated beyond repair. The applicant has proposed to install new one over one wood windows on the Peacock Alley (rear) façade of the structure. This is consistent with the Guidelines for Exterior Maintenance and Alterations 6.B.iv.
- k. The applicant has proposed to install two (2) new doors on the Peacock Alley façade. While this is the rear of the building, in this instance the rear is proposed to be treated as the front also. The Guidelines for Exterior Maintenance and Alterations 6.A.i. does not recommend that new entrances be created where visible from the public right of way. This proposal is not consistent with the Guidelines. Staff recommends that the applicant keep the existing door openings and widths.

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval of items #1 through #8 as submitted based on findings a through j.

Staff does not recommend approval of item #9 based on finding k.

## **CASE MANAGER:**

Edward Hall





## Flex Viewer

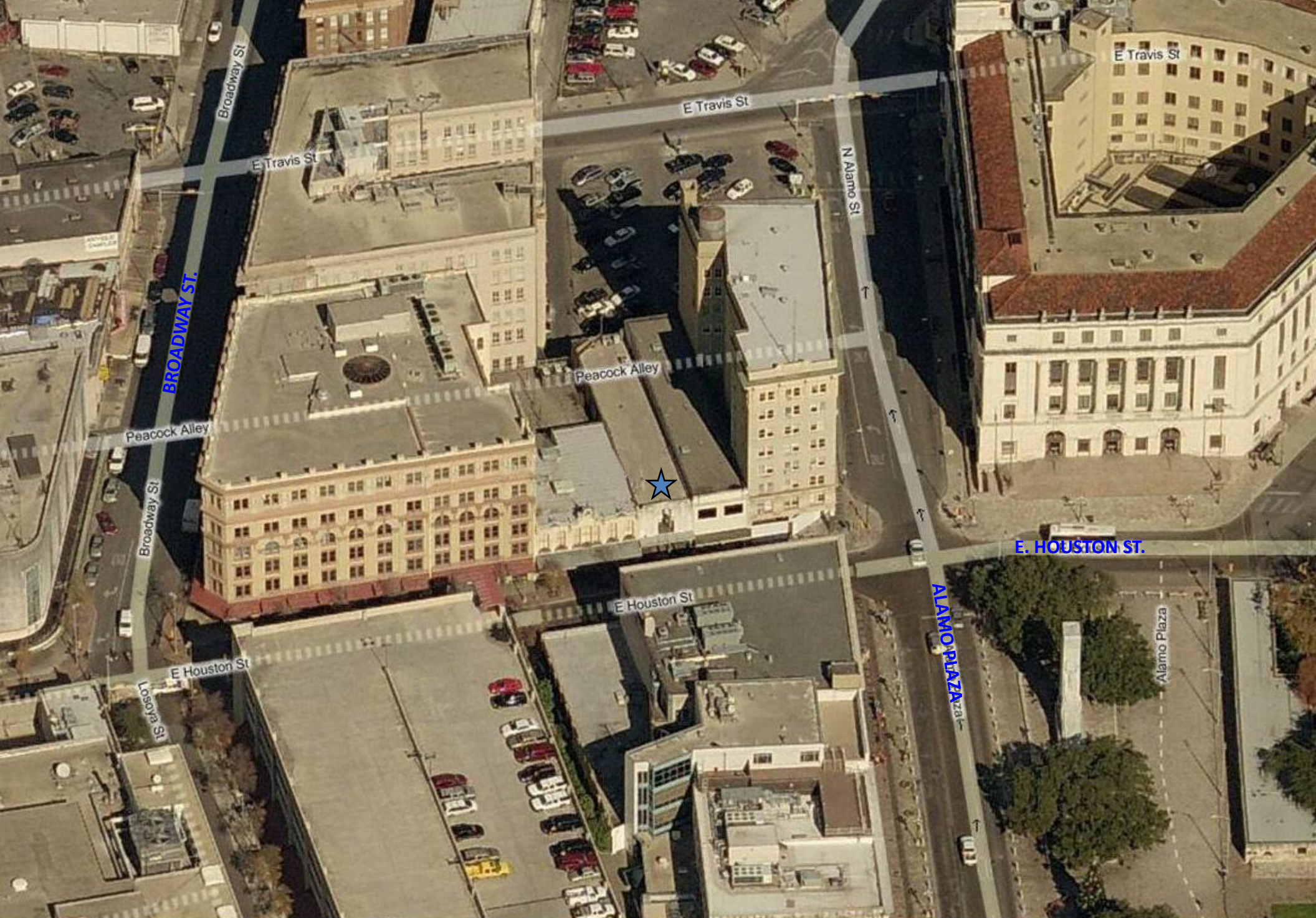
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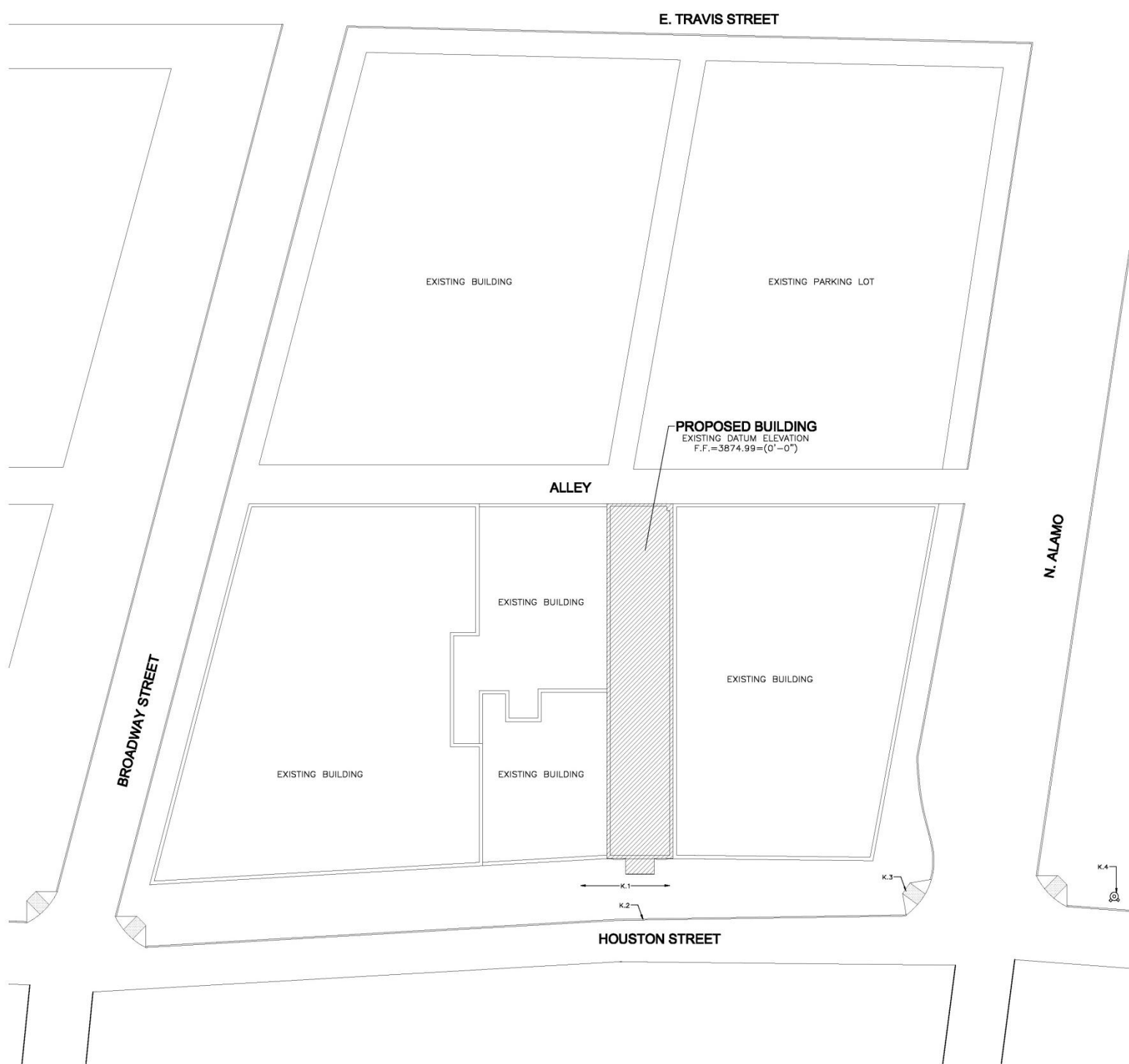


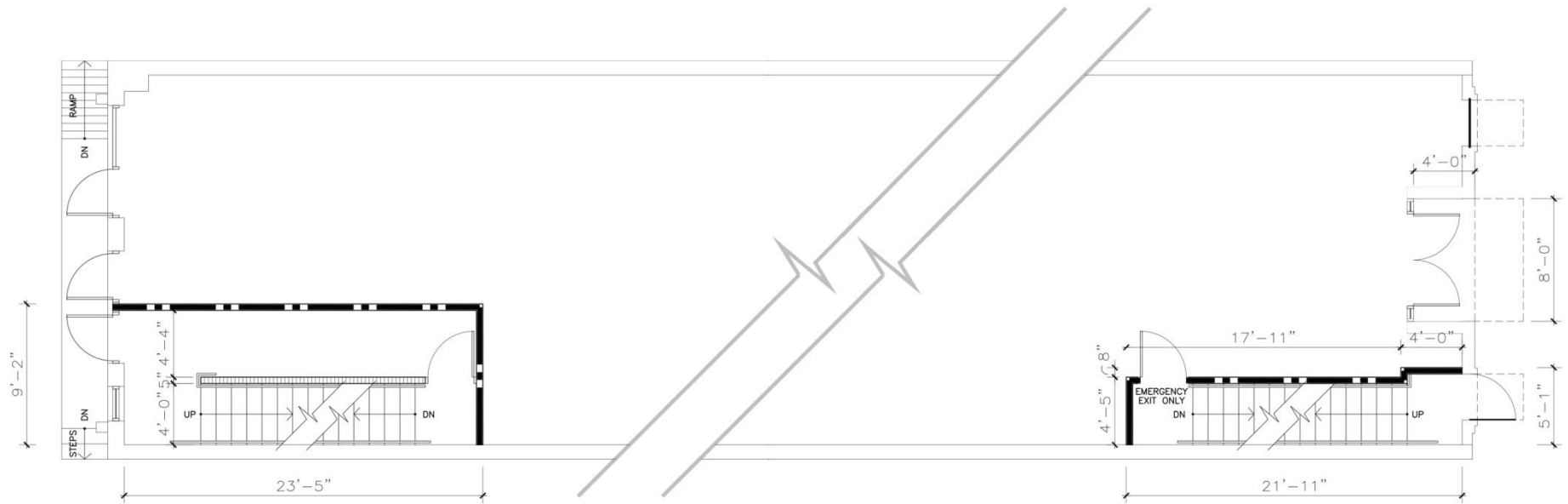




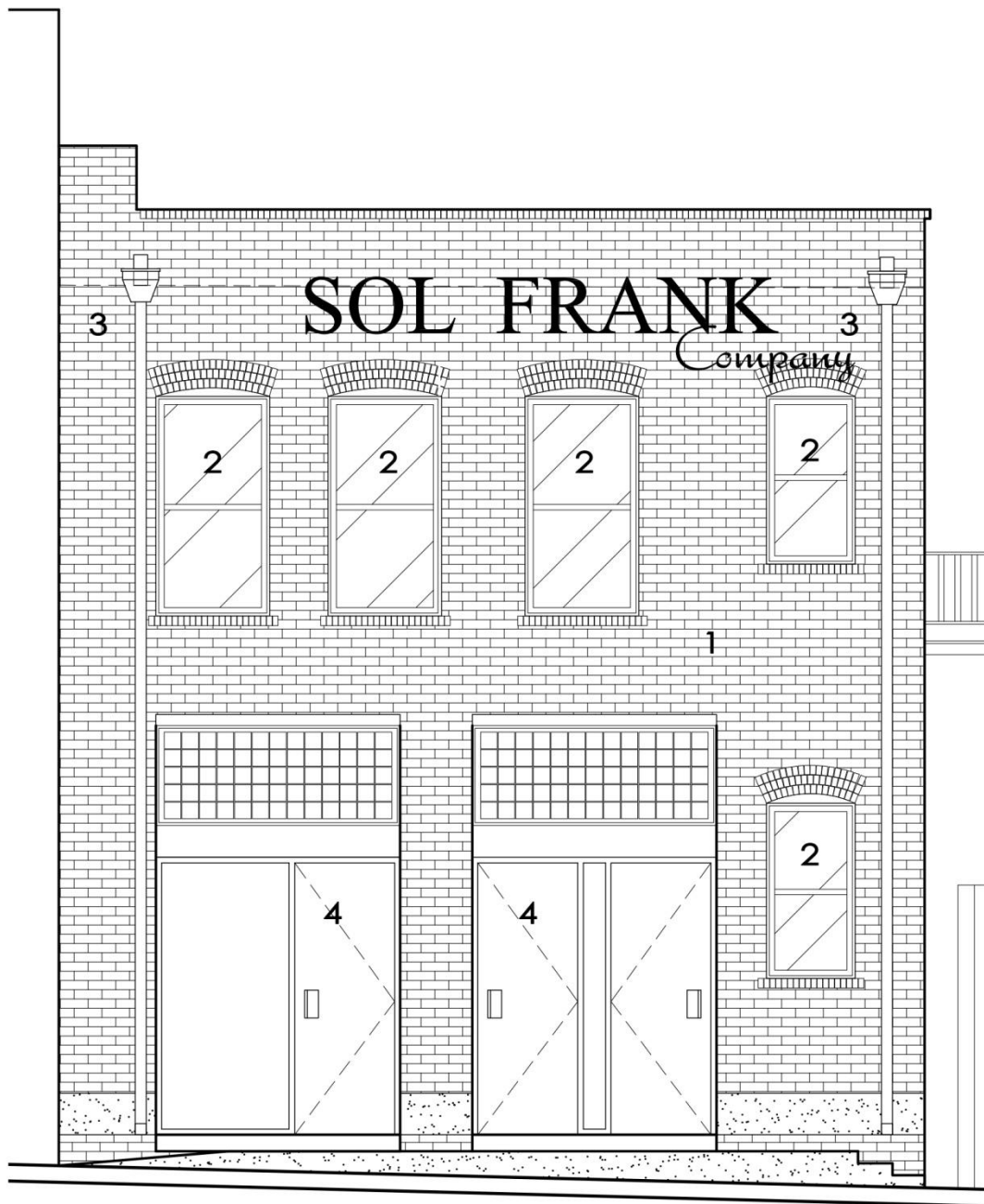




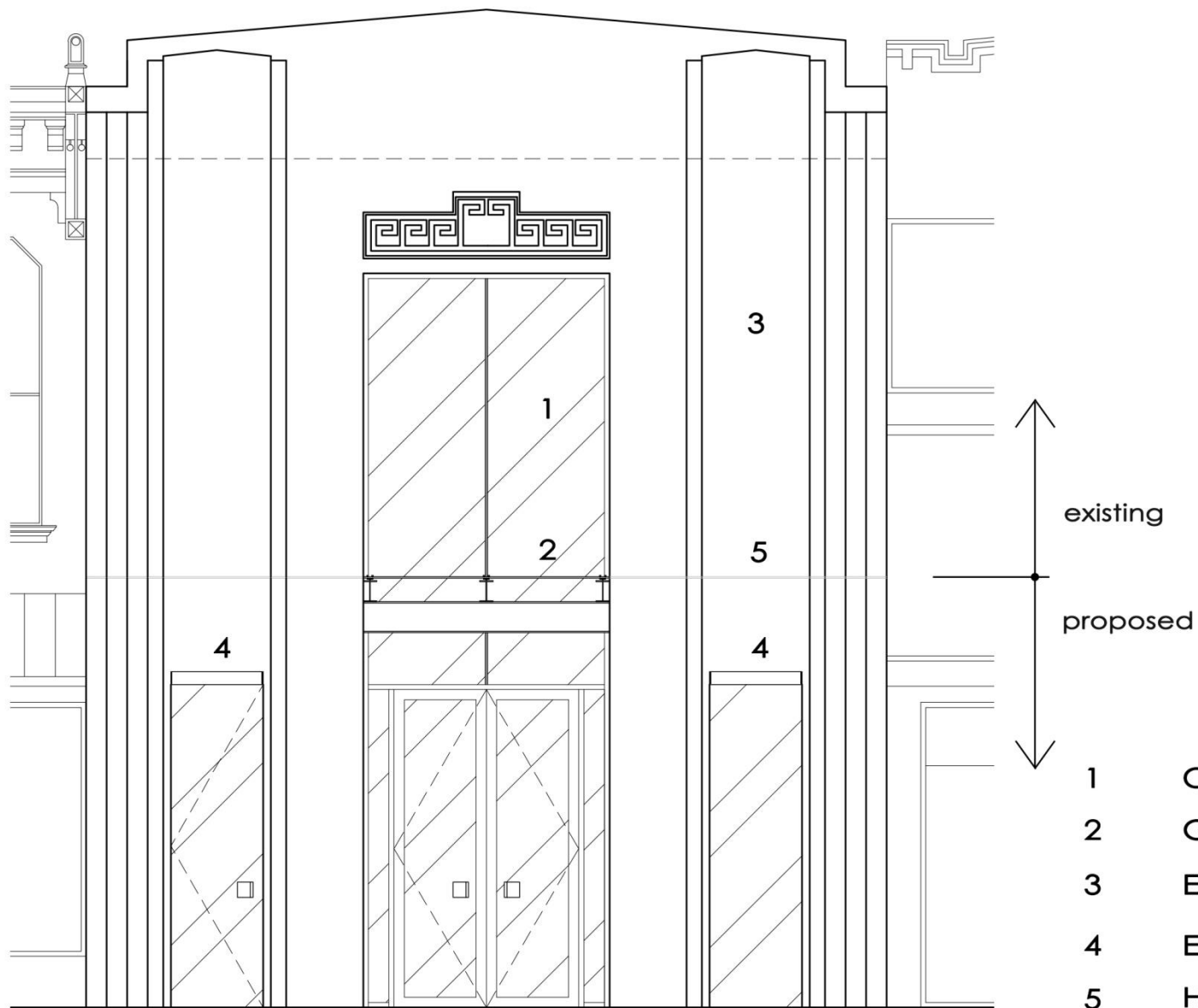




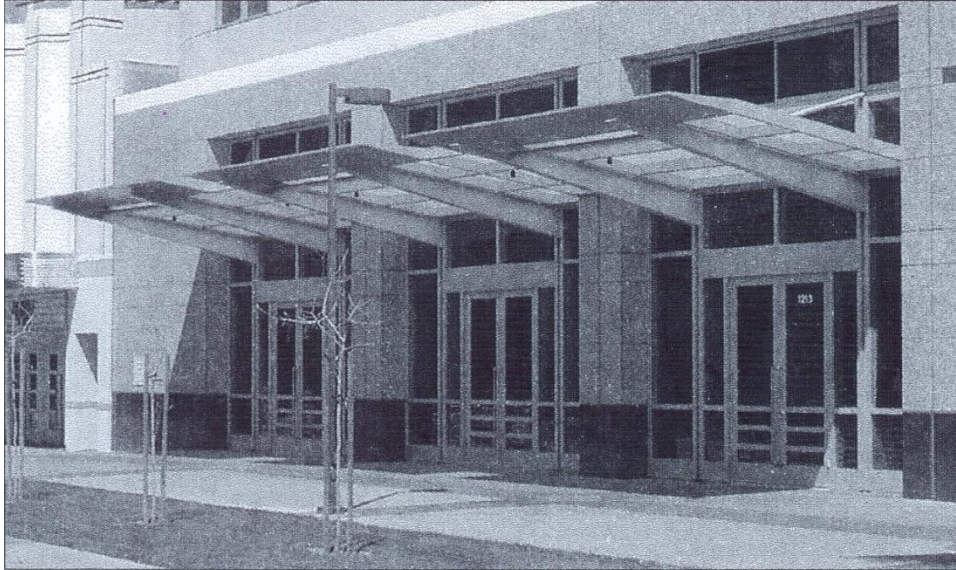




- 1 CLEAN AND RESTORE EXISTING BRICK
- 2 REPLACE WINDOWS
- 3 RESTORE SCUPPER, DOWNSPOUT AND DOWN LEADER
- 4 NEW DOORS



- 1 CLEAR GLASS
- 2 GLASS CANOPY
- 3 EXISTING PLASTER
- 4 EYEBROW CANOPY - GLASS
- 5 HORIZONTAL CONTROL JOINT



*A canopy should be integrated into the design of the new building.*

