

# HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

February 03, 2021

**HDRC CASE NO:** 2021-028  
**ADDRESS:** 1829 N NEW BRAUNFELS AVE  
**LEGAL DESCRIPTION:** NCB: 1268 BLK: 4 LOT: 9 KITCHEN SUBDIVISION  
**ZONING:** C-2 IDZ, H  
**CITY COUNCIL DIST.:** 2  
**DISTRICT:** Government Hill Historic District  
**APPLICANT:** Pam Carpenter/Seventh Generation Design, Inc.  
**OWNER:** GOVERNMENT HILL SQUARE  
**TYPE OF WORK:** Removal of existing, historic blade sign  
**APPLICATION RECEIVED:** January 15, 2021  
**60-DAY REVIEW:** Not applicable due to City Council Emergency Orders  
**CASE MANAGER:** Edward Hall

## REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval to remove the existing, historic blade sign at 1829 N New Braunfels and place in storage until the sign can be rehabilitated and re-installed.

## APPLICABLE CITATIONS:

*Historic Design Guidelines, Chapter 6, Guidelines for Signage*

## B. HISTORIC SIGNS

- i. Preservation*—Preserve historic signs, such as ghost signs or other signs characteristic of the building's or district's period of significance, whenever possible.
- ii. Maintenance*—Repair historic signs and replace historic parts in-kind when deteriorated beyond repair.

## FINDINGS:

- a. The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval to remove the existing, historic blade sign at 1829 N New Braunfels and place in storage until the sign can be rehabilitated and re-installed.
- b. The historic structure at 1829 N New Braunfels, commonly known as the Emil Weilbacher Building was constructed in 1921 and is contributing to the Government Hill Historic District. The existing blade sign, while not original to the structure, is also contributing, and was installed in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century.
- c. **BLADE SIGN REMOVAL** – At this time, the applicant has proposed to remove the existing, contributing blade sign from the façade of the historic structure and to store it off site until it can be rehabilitated and re-installed. The applicant has noted that the sign will be stored off site until funds can be raised, not to exceed a ten-year period. Staff finds the removal of contributing features to be inappropriate and the removal of the historic sign to be inconsistent with the Guidelines for Signage 1.B.i., which notes that historic signage should be preserved.
- d. **BLADE SIGN REMOVAL** – While the sign has fallen into disrepair, staff finds that historic elements that contribute to the integrity of a historic structure and district should remain in place. If the sign is to be removed for maintenance or repair, it should be reinstalled in a timely manner. Staff does not find the potential removal for up to ten years to be appropriate.

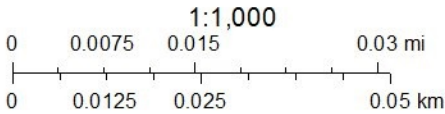
## RECOMMENDATION:

Staff does not recommend approval based on findings a through d. Staff recommends that the sign be maintained in place rather than be removed and placed in off-site storage.

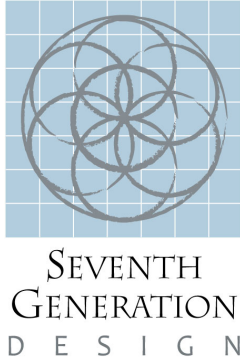
City of San Antonio One Stop



January 29, 2021







January 15, 2020

933 North Flores Street, Suite B  
San Antonio, Texas 78212

Ms. Shanon Miller, AICP  
Director of the Office of Historic Preservation  
Development and Business Services Center  
1901 South Alamo Street  
San Antonio, Texas 78204

RE: 1829 N. New Braunfels Ave., Weilbacher Building Rehabilitation, Request for  
Sign Removal (SGD Project No. 1622)

Dear Ms. Miller, OHP Staff Members and HDRC Commissioners,

As you are aware, the owners of 1829 North New Braunfels Avenue (Emil Weilbacher Building), Government Hill Square Properties, recently concluded a significant rehabilitation of the historic property that at one point was placed by the OHP on the Vacant Buildings Program List. The property has been transformed into an attractive and economically functioning contributor to the Government Hill Historic Neighborhood District. The property owners and design team wish to thank OHP and HDRC for their role in this transformation.

The historic property's rehabilitation came at great financial cost to the property owners, and the available funding for the project has been expended in the effort. Not all elements in need of repairs and refurbishment could be included in the project's budget and scope of work, with some being postponed for future phases. The project's rehabilitation proposal, which received a Certificate of Appropriateness, called for the retention of the building's existing blade sign, but not its rehabilitation due to budgetary limitations. It is the property owners' full intention to eventually restore the sign by refacing it, re-wiring its electrical components, and re-installing it on the building's façade with new structure to replace the deteriorated existing structure. However, the owner and project team became aware during the rehabilitation project that retaining the sign *in situ* given its significant physical deterioration is an untenable proposition with potential risks to public safety and continued deterioration to this character-defining element. The property owners respectfully request permission to remove the blade sign and place it in storage for future rehabilitation.

The following provides additional details to inform your evaluation of this request:

#### A. Current Condition of Sign

While assumed not original to the Weilbacher Building (built 1921), the existing metal blade sign appears to date from the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century and may be considered a character-defining feature of the primary façade of the building. As a result, the original scope of permitted work for the building included rehabilitation of the sign (see attached architectural drawing sheets and photographic documentation). Years of exposure and lack of maintenance, preceding the current property owner, has deteriorated the paint finish and exposing the metal case of the sign. Most of the original neon lighting tubes are broken or missing. And the structural armature suspending the sign from the building's parapet and façade is requiring substantial repairs or wholesale replacement to secure the sign properly and safely.

#### B. Reason for Temporary Removal and Storage of Blade Sign

A qualified sign contractor provided the property owners with a cost estimate of \$25,000 to rehabilitate the sign. This exceeds the available contingency funding for the current phase of rehabilitation of the property. This COA request proposes to temporarily remove the sign for safekeeping for rehabilitation during a future phase of the project. Acknowledging the iconic potential for the sign, it is the owners' intention to collaborate with community organizations (e.g., SAGE, Conservation Society of San Antonio, Government Hill neighborhood associations, etc.) to find funding to have the sign possibly restored as a Government Hill District gateway marker.

#### C. Terms and Stipulations for Permission for Temporary Removal and Storage of Blade Sign

If the City of San Antonio issues a Certificate of Appropriateness required for removal to remove of the existing blade sign located at 1829 N. New Braunfels Ave., Government Hill Properties will store it until funds are raised to rehabilitate and reinstall the sign. Government Hill Properties will commit to completion of the rehabilitation and reinstallation of the sign within 10 years. The sign will be kept in storage at location(s) known to OHP at all times. Community and District fundraising for the sign's restoration will be pursued to have the sign rehabilitated and reinstalled as soon as possible. In fact, once \$20,000 is raised, work would be authorized by Government Hill Properties to begin the sign's rehabilitation. During the fundraising period, Government Hill Properties will commit and set aside \$2500 annually to go towards the sign's eventual restoration and reinstallation. In other words, without any outside fundraising, Government Hill will set aside \$25,000 during the next ten years and contribute any additional funds needed in the tenth year to have the sign rehabilitated and reinstalled. Government Hill Properties further requests that the City of San Antonio also agrees that Government Hill Properties will retain all rights and the full authority to determine the content and the layout of the original sign faces, subject only to the normal regulations of the UDC's Signage Ordinance.

Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions regarding this CoA application or if you need additional supporting material. As always, thank you for your assistance and expertise.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Scott Wm. Carpenter". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Scott Wm. Carpenter, RA, LEED AP  
Principal, Seventh Generation Design, Inc.

CC: Government Hill Properties, PJC

Attachments:

- Selective drawing sheets from Construction Documents, dated 11/12/2018
- Photographs of Existing Conditions



# EMIL WEILBACHER BUILDING REHABILITATION

Government Hill Square Properties, LP.

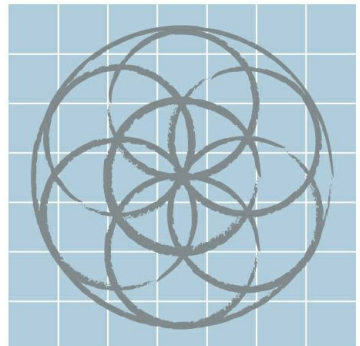
ISSUED FOR PERMIT SET

1829 N. NEW BRAUNFELS ST. SAN ANTONIO, TX 78208

11/13/2018



EXISTING BUILDING TO BE REHABILITATED



SEVENTH  
GENERATION  
DESIGN

ARCHITECTURE | SUSTAINABILITY | PRESERVATION

118 Broadway, Suite 519  
San Antonio, Texas 78205  
TEL (210) 262-6161 TEL (210) 241-7490

OWNER:

Government Hill Square Properties, LP.  
209 East Riverside Drive  
Austin, Texas 78704  
TEL (210) 227-2724

CIVIL ENGINEER:

SA Engineering Co.  
12703 Spectrum Drive, Suite 101  
San Antonio, Texas 78249  
TEL (210) 561-0808

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER:

Alpha Consulting Engineers  
10609 W. Interstate Highway 10, Suite 203  
San Antonio, Texas 78230  
TEL (210) 227-3647

MEP ENGINEER:

CNG Engineering, PLLC  
1917 N. New Braunfels Ave. Suite 201  
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TEL (210) 224-8841

## EMIL WEILBACHER BUILDING REHABILITATION

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SAN ANTONIO, TX 78208

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2	05-01-2018	Draft Permit Set
3	11-13-2018	Permit Set
6	08-13-2019	Addendum 4 Construction Set



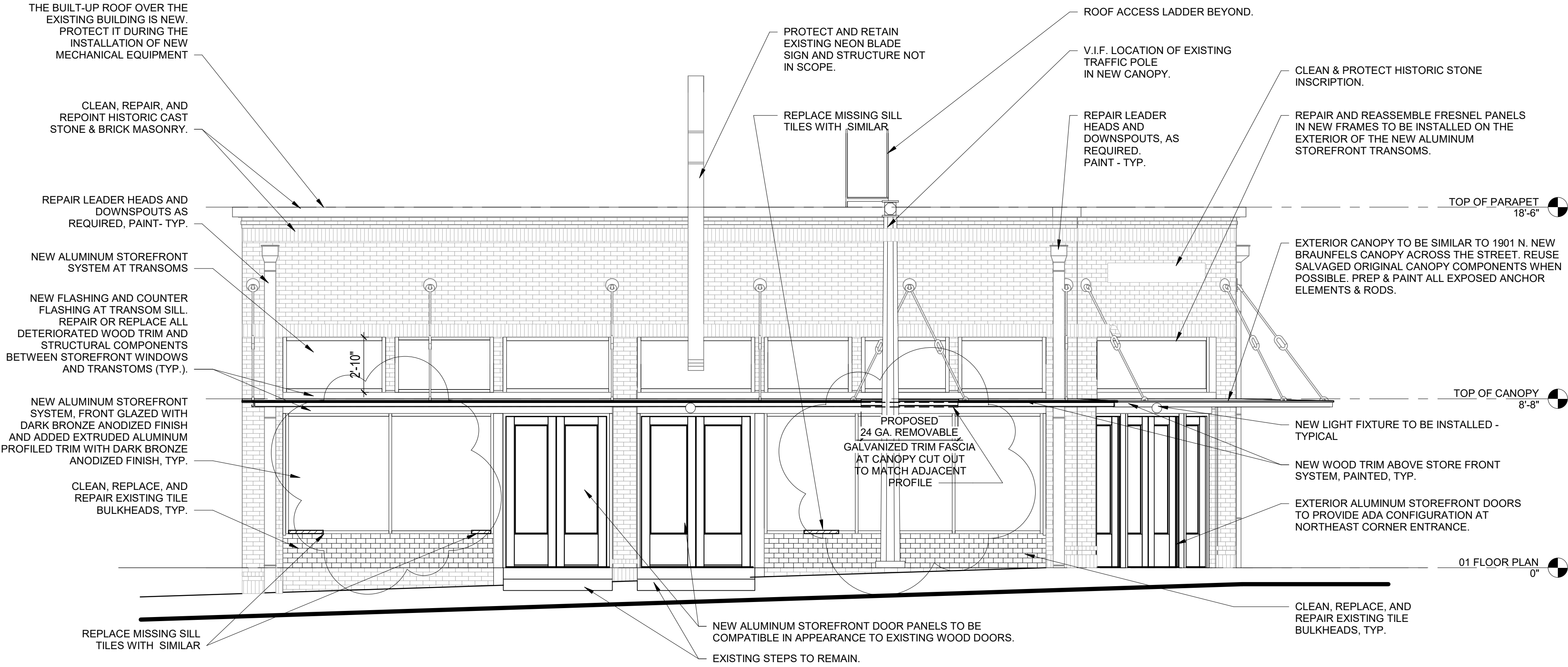
*Scott William Campbell*

11/13/2018

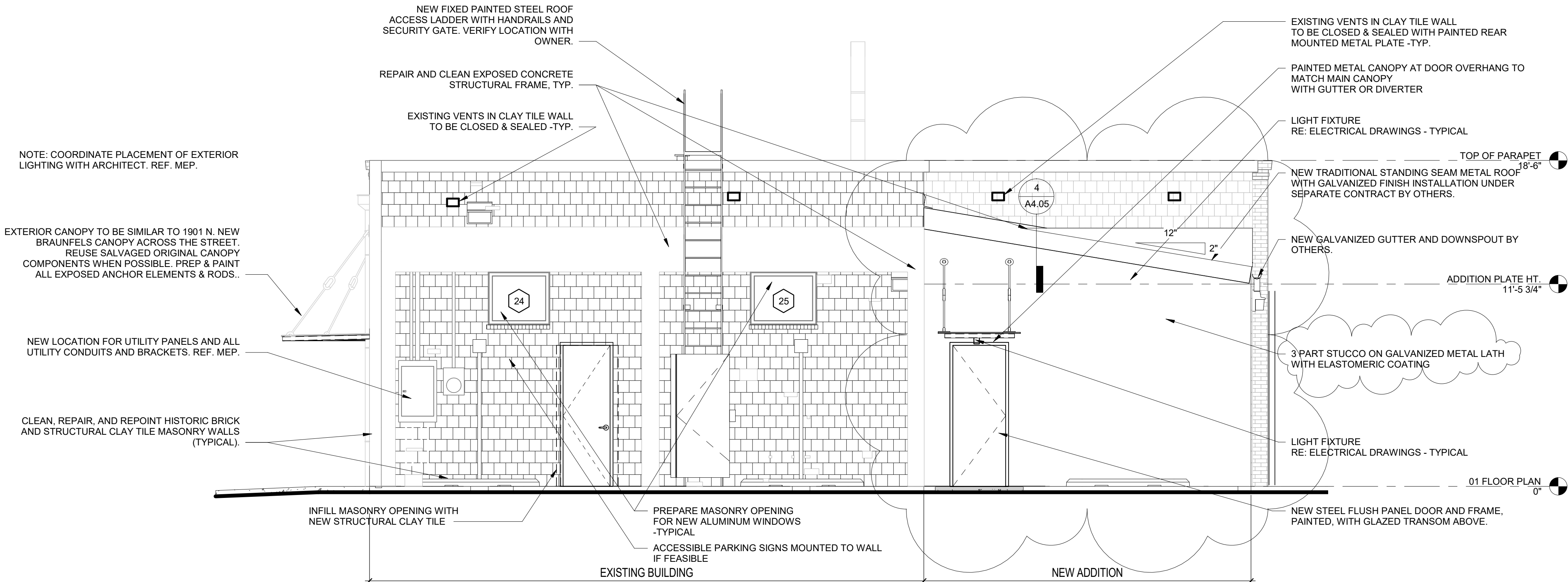


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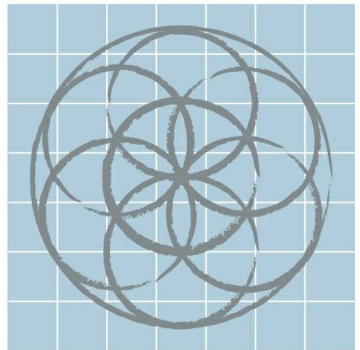
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11/13/2018

Project number 1622  
Date 11/13/2018  
Drawn by  
Checked by

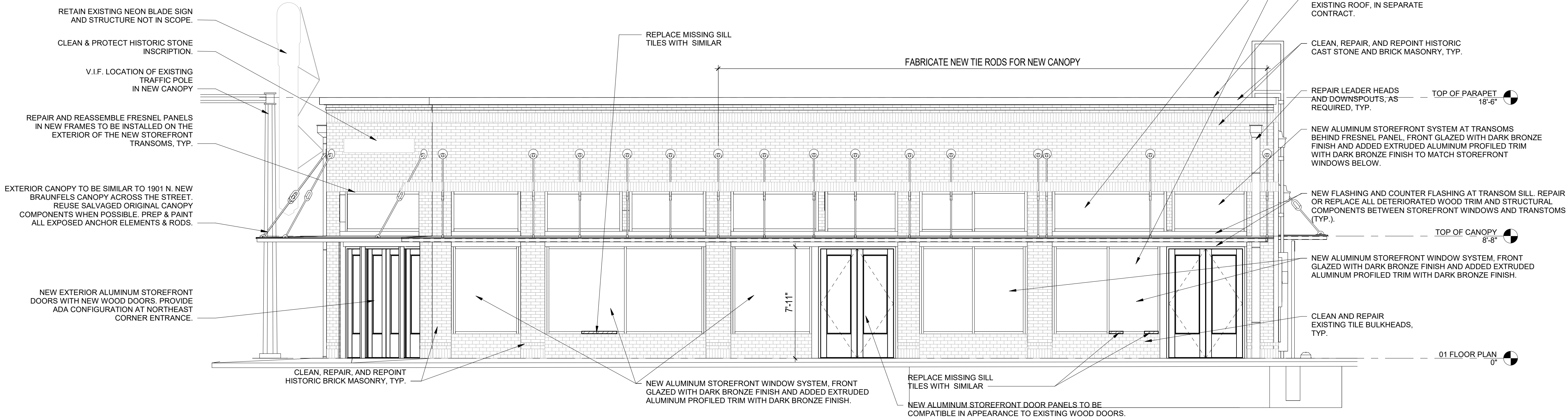
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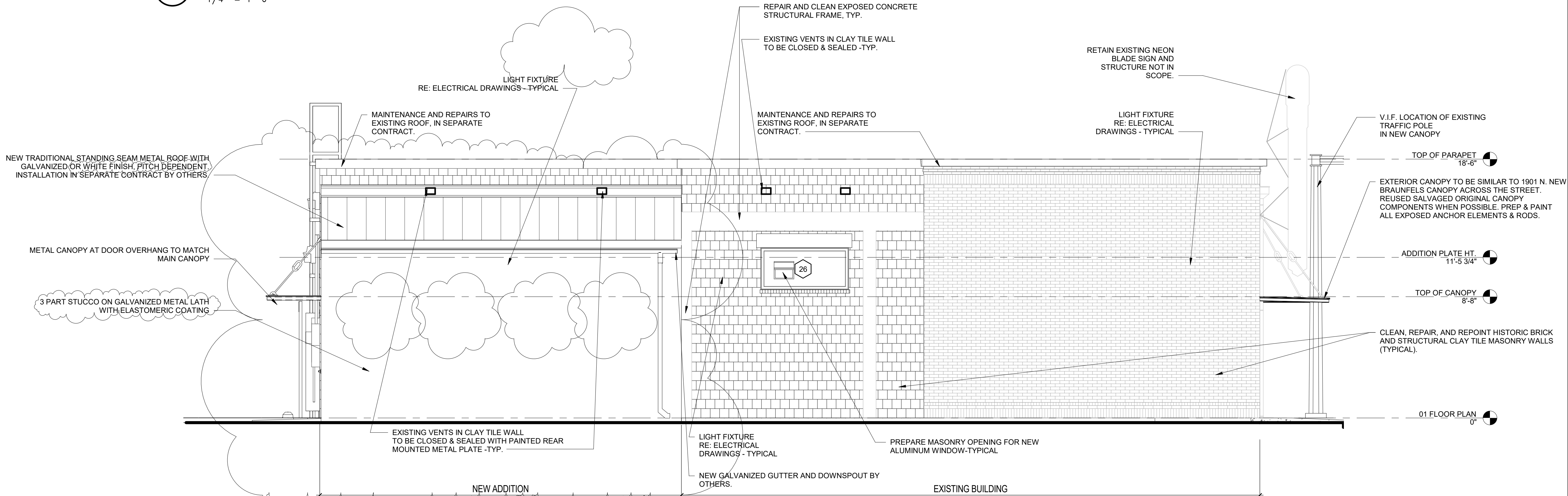


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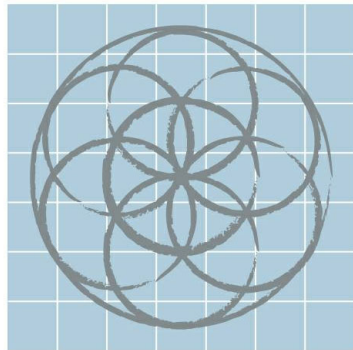
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A3.02

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Name: Emil Weilbacher Building Rehabilitation  
 Address: 1829 North New Braunfels Ave., San Antonio, Texas  
 Description: View looking NNW toward southeast corner of building  
 Date: October 7, 2016 (Prior to Rehabilitation)

Photograph No.

GVHL-01



Name: Emil Weilbacher Building Rehabilitation  
 Address: 1829 North New Braunfels Ave., San Antonio, Texas  
 Description: View looking NNW toward southeast corner of building  
 Date: October 7, 2016 (Prior to Rehabilitation)

Photograph No.

GVHL-02





Name: Emil Weilbacher Building Rehabilitation  
 Address: 1829 North New Braunfels Ave., San Antonio, Texas  
 Description: View looking west across New Braunfels Ave. at east facade  
 Date: October 7, 2016 (Prior to Rehabilitation)

Photograph No.

GVHL-03



Name: Emil Weilbacher Building Rehabilitation  
 Address: 1829 North New Braunfels Ave., San Antonio, Texas  
 Description: View looking southwest at northeast corner of building  
 Date: October 7, 2016 (Prior to Rehabilitation)

Photograph No.

GVHL-04





Name: Emil Weilbacher Building Rehabilitation  
 Address: 1829 North New Braunfels Ave., San Antonio, Texas  
 Description: View looking south across Carson St. at north facade of building  
 Date: October 7, 2016 (Prior to Rehabilitation)

Photograph No.

GVHL-05



Name: Emil Weilbacher Building Rehabilitation  
 Address: 1829 North New Braunfels Ave., San Antonio, Texas  
 Description: Detail view of south face of blade sign on east facade  
 Date: October 7, 2016 (Prior to Rehabilitation)

Photograph No.

GVHL-06



# EMIL WEILBACHER BUILDING REHABILITATION

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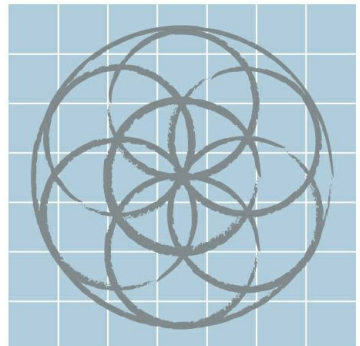
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*Scott William Campbell*

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 Description: View looking NNW toward southeast corner of building  
 Date: October 7, 2016 (Prior to Rehabilitation)

Photograph No.

GVHL-01



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Photograph No.

GVHL-02





Name: Emil Weilbacher Building Rehabilitation  
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Name: Emil Weilbacher Building Rehabilitation  
 Address: 1829 North New Braunfels Ave., San Antonio, Texas  
 Description: View looking southwest at northeast corner of building  
 Date: October 7, 2016 (Prior to Rehabilitation)

Photograph No.

GVHL-04





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 Description: View looking south across Carson St. at north facade of building  
 Date: October 7, 2016 (Prior to Rehabilitation)

Photograph No.

GVHL-05



Name: Emil Weilbacher Building Rehabilitation  
 Address: 1829 North New Braunfels Ave., San Antonio, Texas  
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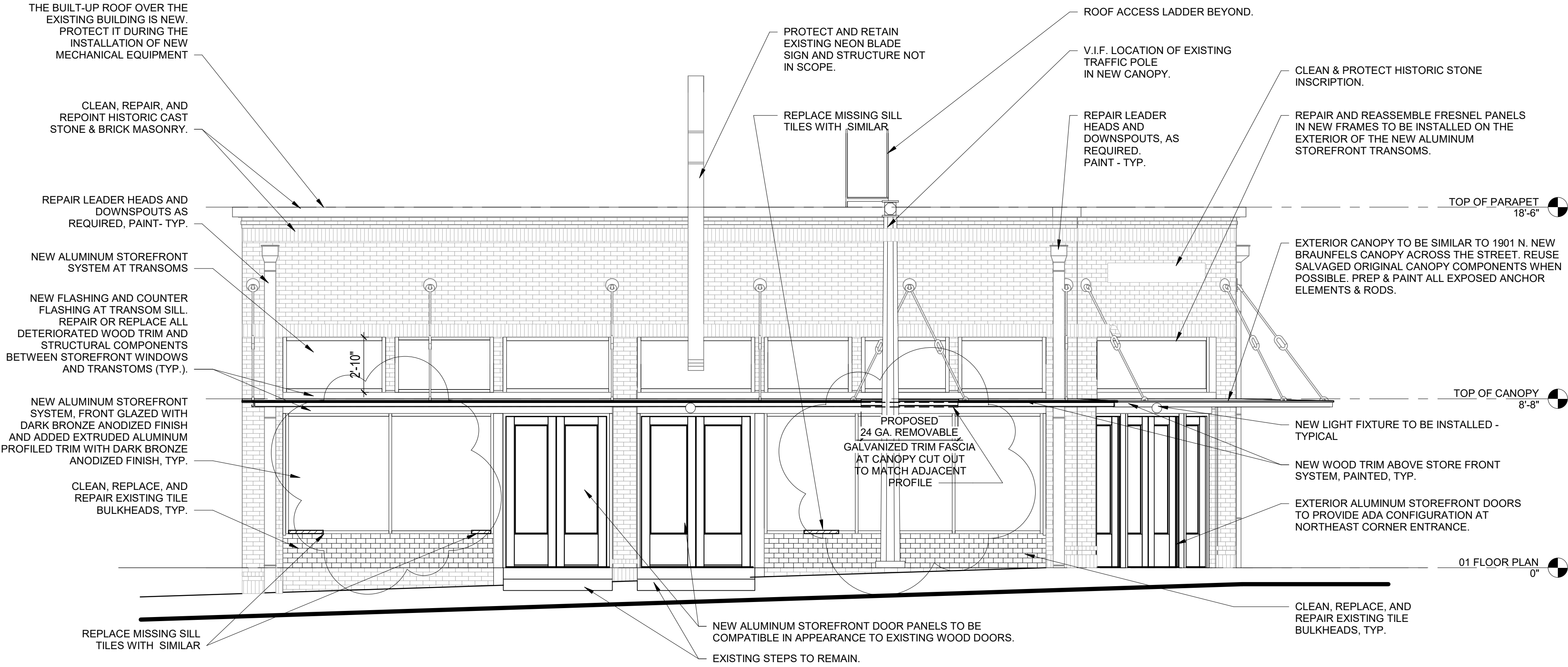
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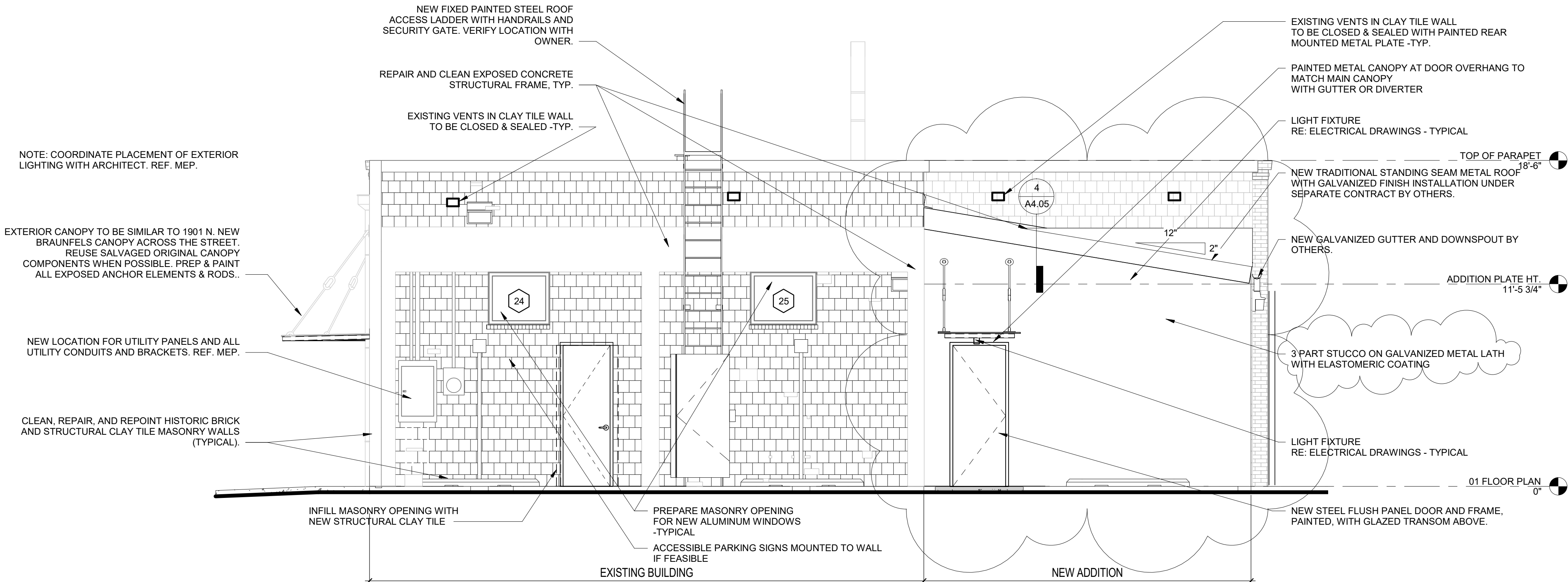


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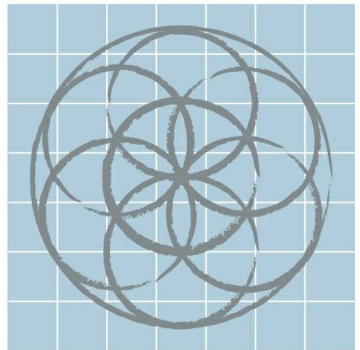
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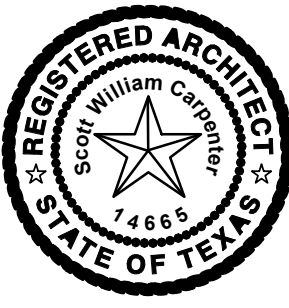
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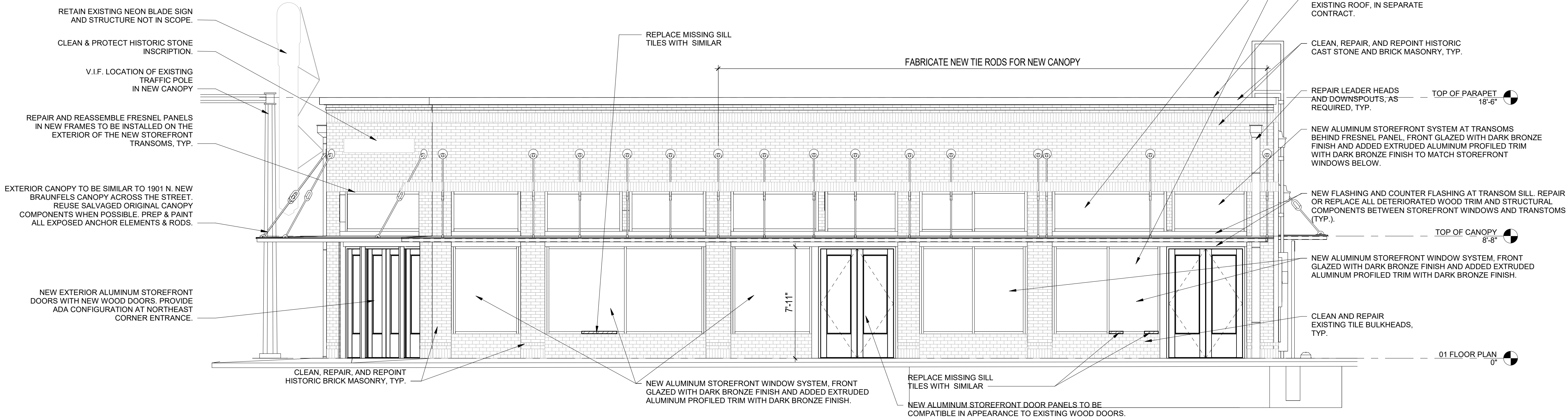
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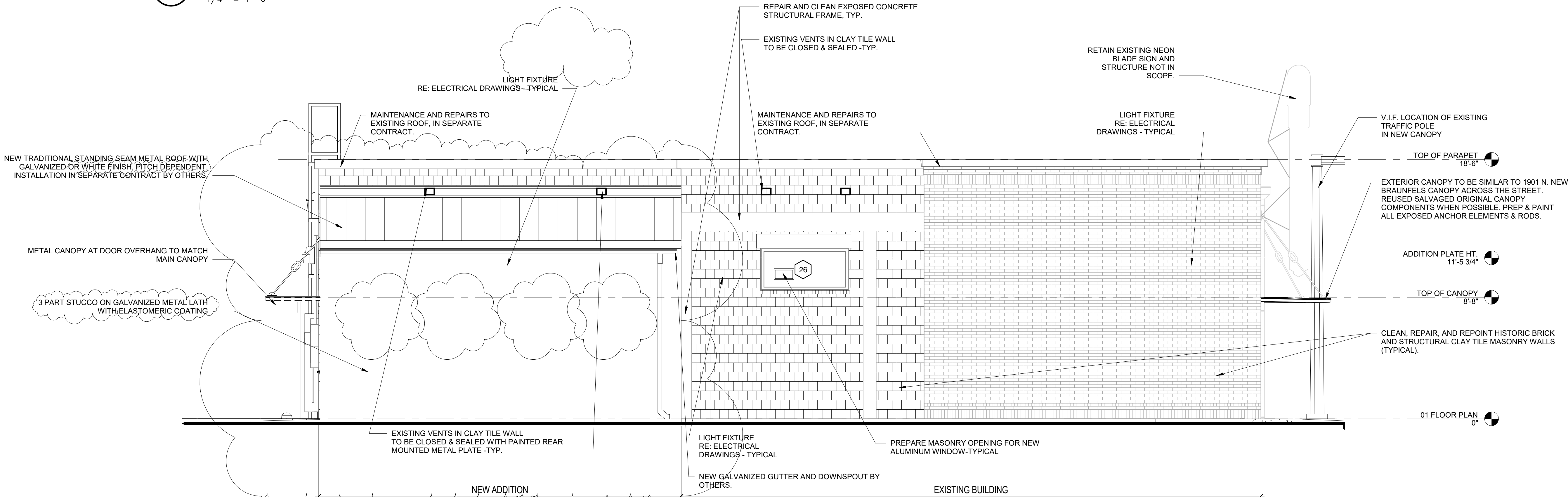


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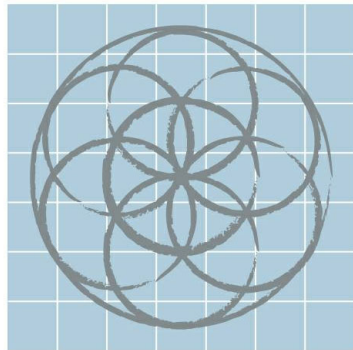
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A3.02

Scale 1/4" = 1'-0"

















Carson

Emil Weilbacher





E Carson

Emil Weillbacher