

COA # 2011-COA-255 (FP)	INDIANAPOLIS HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT	Hearing Date SEPT. 7, 2011
646 Virginia Ave FLETCHER PLACE		Continued from: August 3, 2011
Applicant HAROLD MILLER mailing address: 646 Virginia Ave Indianapolis, IN 46203		Center Township Council District: 19 Dane Mahern
Owner: Same		
CASE		
IHPC COA: 2011-COA-255 (FP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modify storefront openings as per plans • Modify window openings on rear of building (work already started). • Restore original front entry 	
STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval with stipulations		
STAFF COMMENTS		

Background

This building was constructed in 1937 and originally used for the Sullivan Motor Sales Company. It later became W.S. Demoss in 1943, a toolmaking company, which did business here until it was recently sold to the present owner, Mr. Harold Miller. The store front windows are non-original metal frames. The transom above the windows is wood and may be original. The door and transom are wood and may be original. Mr. Miller is in the process of converting the building into a photography studio.

Violation

- May 13 Staff approved a COA to replace steel lintels above the front storefront window and door.

- May 20 The contractor told staff that in the process of replacing the steel lintel over the storefront window, the wood transoms above it came apart and had to be removed. Staff granted a COA to remove the transoms temporarily until June 20, during which time staff expected the owner to decide whether the wood transoms could be repairs and reinstalled, or if he needed to replace them.

- June 13 The Department of Code Enforcement posted a Stop Work Order for not having permits for interior work and for the enlargement of a window opening at the rear of the building.

- June 14 Mr. Miller' contractor admitted to erring by beginning to alter the rear window without a COA. He also told staff that Mr. Miller had decided to replace the window transom with a new aluminum transom.

Mr. Miller's contractor subsequently applied for a COA to replace the transom and alter the rear window.

Proposed Alterations to Front Elevation

Transom and Storefront Window

The owner wishes to replace the non-original aluminum storefront window and original wood transom with a new aluminum storefront window and transom. It is difficult to ascertain how much of the “original” transom is actually original, as there appears to have been replacement pieces added over the years. It is warped, requires much repair and some replacement. The original transom has frosted dimpled glass and deeply profiled mullions between each pane. The original large storefront windows (below the transom) were replaced many years ago, using flat metal strips to divide the large sheets of glass. The brick mold and concrete bulkhead appear to be intact.



Staff agrees that the best solution in this case is to build an entirely new storefront (show windows and transom) out of the aluminum. Reasons include:

- The present window has been significantly altered over the years, with only segments of original material left.
- The “original” transom would have to be almost completely rebuilt using mostly new wood, so little original would remain.
- The large storefront windows are presently divided with inappropriate thin metal strips.
- The detailing is simple and can easily be achieved using metal.
- The mullions dividing the large storefront windows can duplicate the ones in the transom, as they probably did originally. This will be a big visual improvement over the thin aluminum strips that have divided the windows for years.

The owner’s architect believes that a profile to match the existing could be easily duplicated. Since the storefront window and transom need to be rebuilt, a new unit should be considered. The original glass has been salvaged and could be reused, or new glass to resemble the original could be used.

Installation of New Recessed Entry

Staff’s believes the garage door is probably not original. The proposal is to remove it and replace it with a new recessed entry with a new door on one side wall, an unpainted redwood wall with round window at the back and a panel to display an oversized photograph on the other side wall. The new entry is for ADA compliance. The plans also show a wooden canopy projection.

While this entry is a completely contemporary expression, staff believes it is appropriate (with some exceptions explained below). The historic opening is not altered and the recessed nature of the entry reflects the fact that this large opening is historically a void in the façade. Furthermore, the contemporary elements visually appear to be on the interior to the building, and separated from the actual façade of the building --- almost as if one is looking into the garage space.

Staff Recommended Changes

1. **Round Window**. This has been the source of discussion between staff and the architect. While staff believes the contemporary design of this entry is generally compatible with the building, we find the round window element to be a visual distraction, as it becomes the first element one sees and is entirely at odds with all other elements of the building. Staff believes a square window would achieve the same practical need and also echo the squared off features found in the transom windows and the brick panel in the raised parapet.

It is staff’s understanding that the owner still prefers the round window, but may be willing to change to a square window if the IHPC requires it. Staff recommends that it be removed.

2. Unfinished Redwood. Staff has expressed a preference for painting the redwood, but the owner wishes to keep the redwood unpainted as proposed. This issue is not as important to staff as the round window, but we believe the IHPC should take it into consideration.

Proposed Alterations to Back of the Building

Near the rear of the building, there are three steel factory sash windows. The owner’s contractor started to enlarge one of the openings when a building inspector issued a Stop Work Order. That opening remains altered with plywood over the enlarged portion. The original window is still in the opening. However, the intent was to enlarge all three openings and install new windows and doors as per the drawings. Staff believes the steel windows are interesting, but because they are not visible from most angles, they don’t contribute significantly to the architecture of the building despite their age and character. Staff believes that the proposed alteration is appropriate and a reasonable way to convert this building for a new use, even though the work was started without approval.

STAFF RECOMMENDED MOTION

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To approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the following:

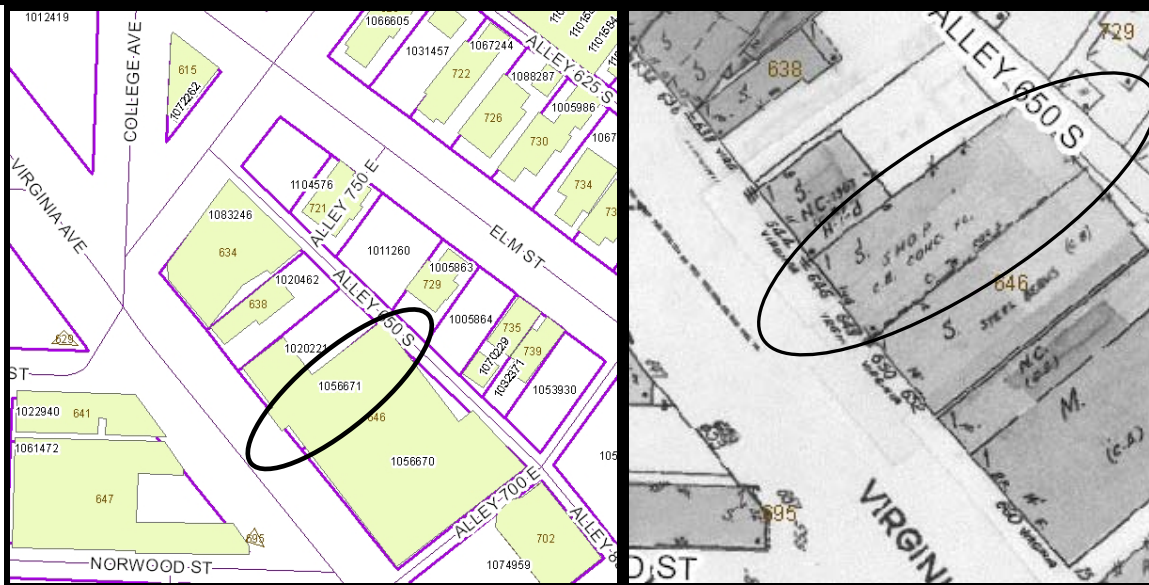
- **Modify garage door opening for new recessed entry**
- **Replace storefront window and transom with new aluminum window of matching design**
- **Modify three window openings on north elevation at rear of building**
- **Restore original front entry door**

All as per submitted documentation and subject to the following stipulations:

1. **Construction must not commence prior to approval by the IHPC staff of a final construction drawings, including the following changes:**
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
2. **A preconstruction meeting with staff and the applicant must be held prior to the issuance of permits. *Approved* _____ *Date:* _____**
3. **No alterations to the sizes of the openings on the front elevation are permitted.**

NOTE: Stipulation #1 and #2 must be completed prior to issuance of permits.

Staff Reviewer: Meg Purnsley





PROPOSED VIRGINIA AVENUE ELEVATION

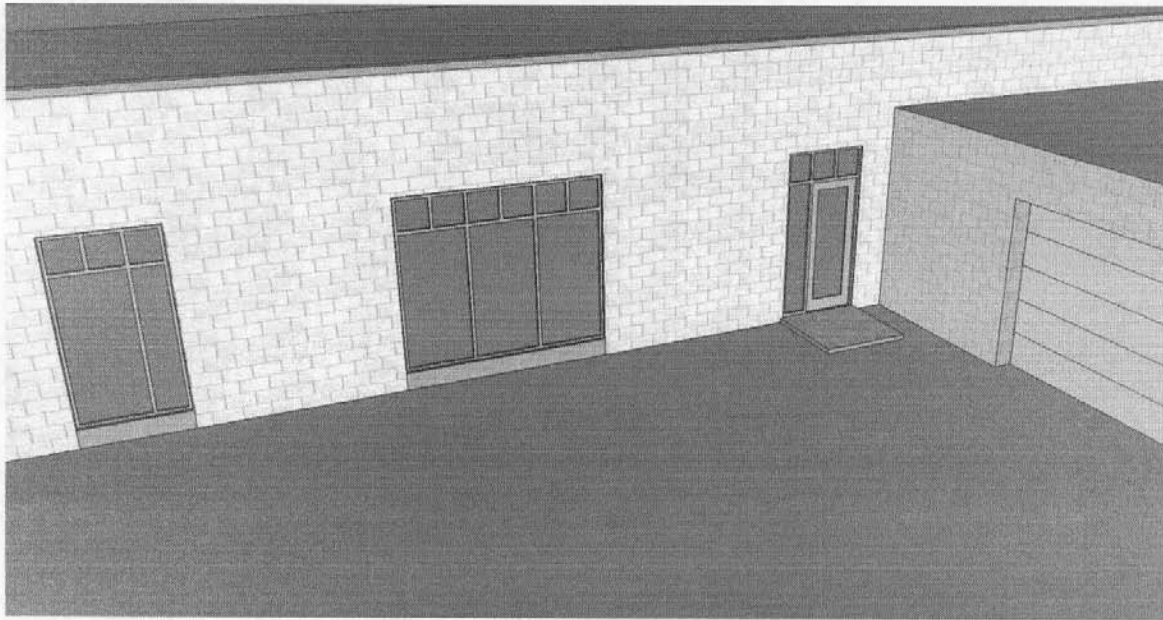


PROPOSED COVERED ENTRY, CANOPY AND PHOTOGRAPHY FEATURE WALL

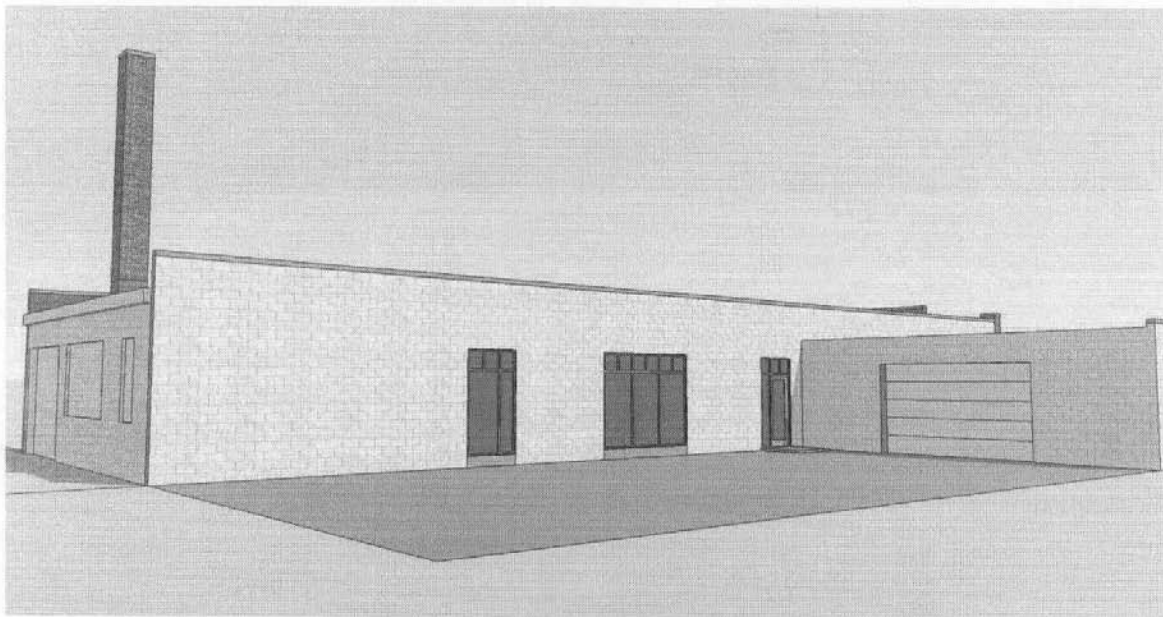
RECEIVED **PROPOSED ELEVATION**

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BIRDSEYE VIEW OF PROPOSED STOREFRONT AND DOOR INFILL



PROPOSED STOREFRONT AND DOOR INFILL ON NORTH FACADE

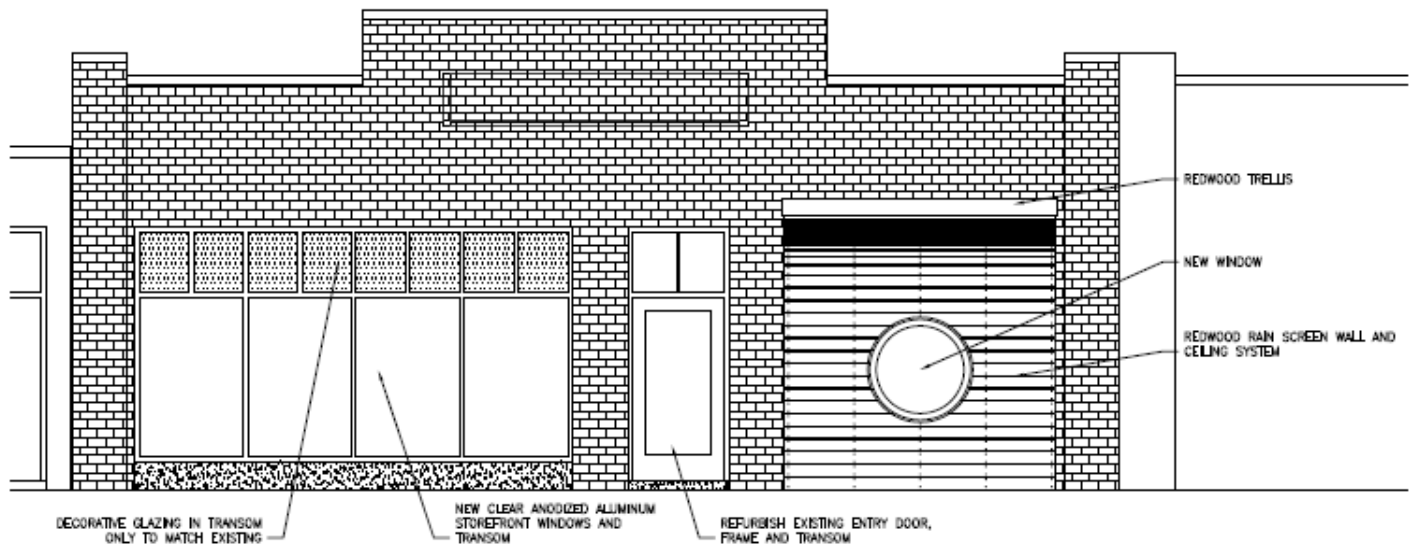
PROPOSED ELEVATION

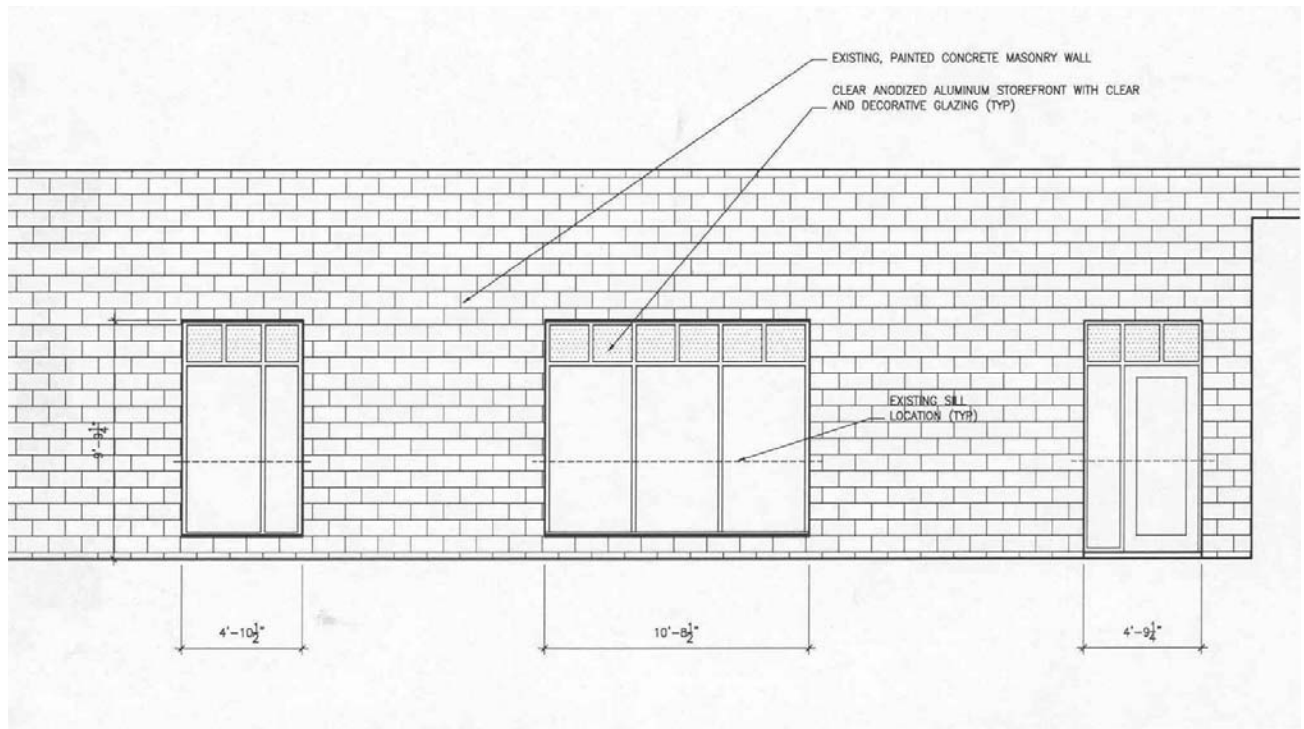
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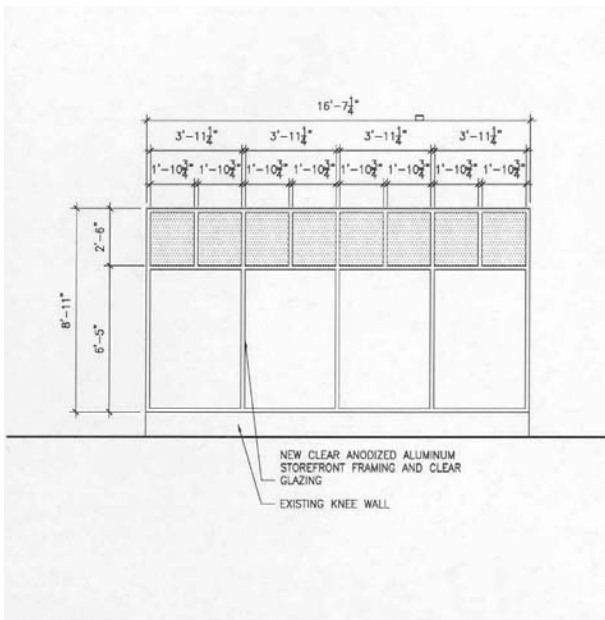
This image shows the rear of the building and the three openings that are being requested to be enlarged and replaced with new windows.





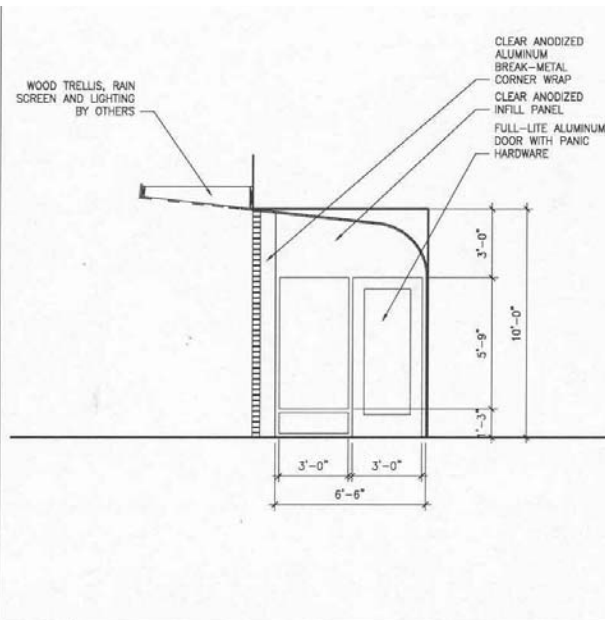
1 PARTIAL EXTERIOR ELEVATION

1/4" = 1'-0"



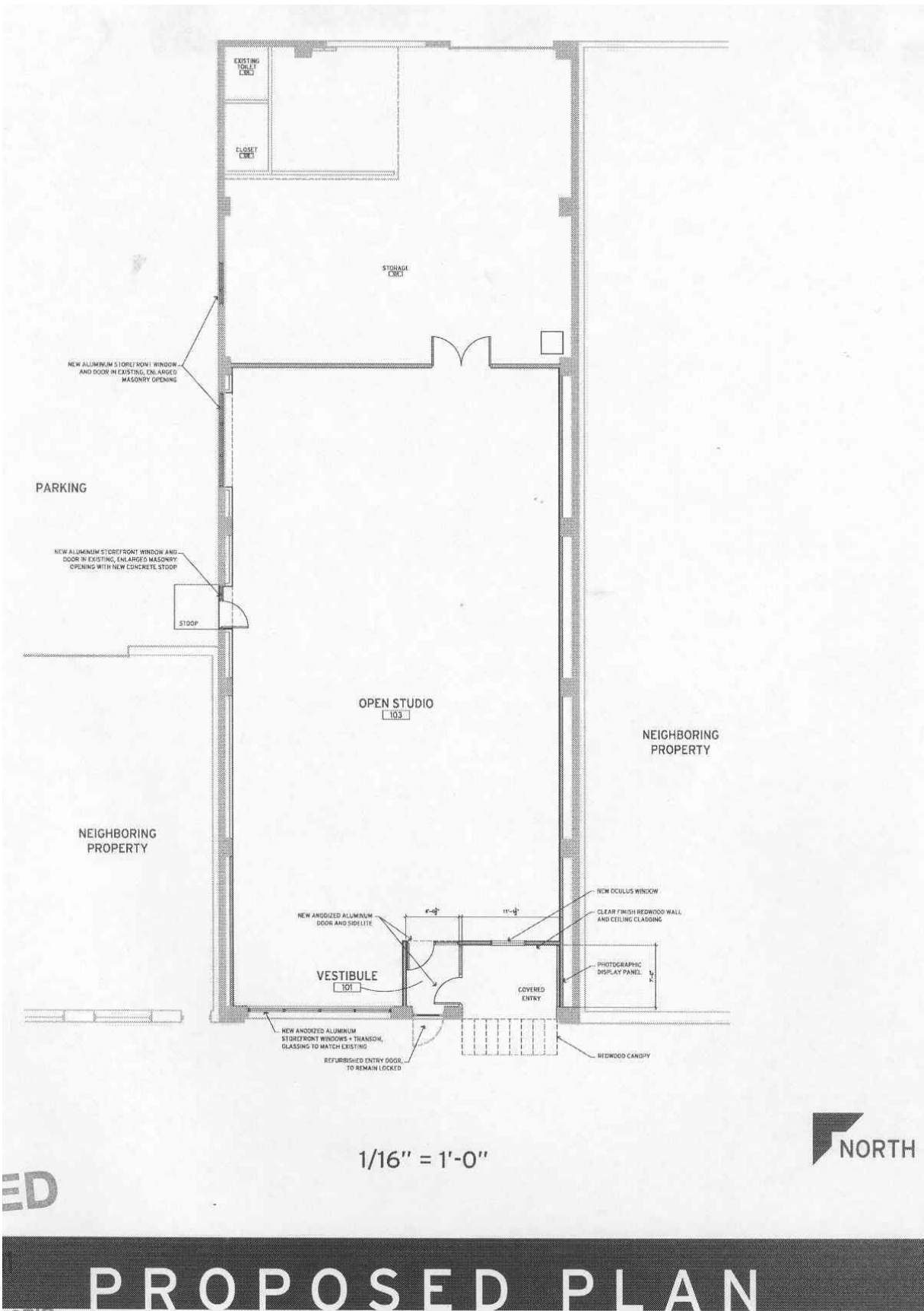
2 FRAME ELEVATION

1/4" = 1'-0"



1 SECTION/FRAME ELEVATION

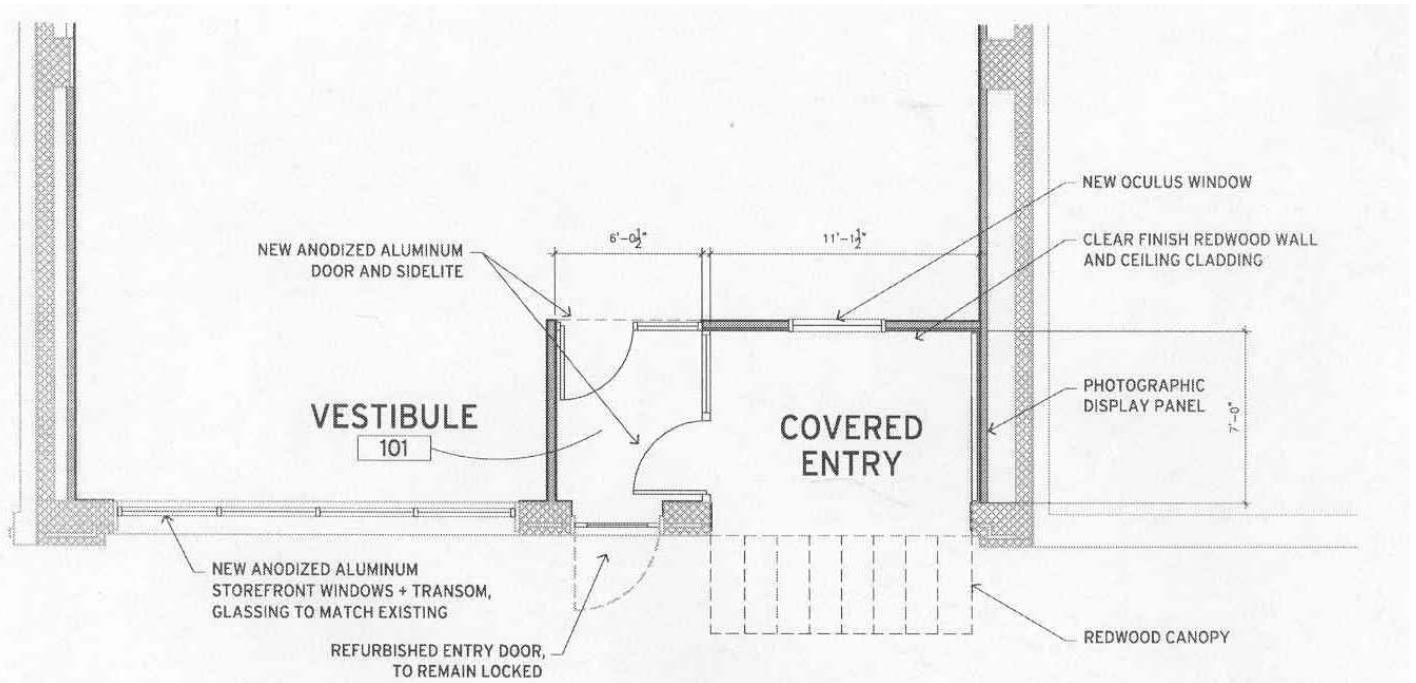
1/4" = 1'-0"



1/16" = 1'-0"



PROPOSED PLAN



VED

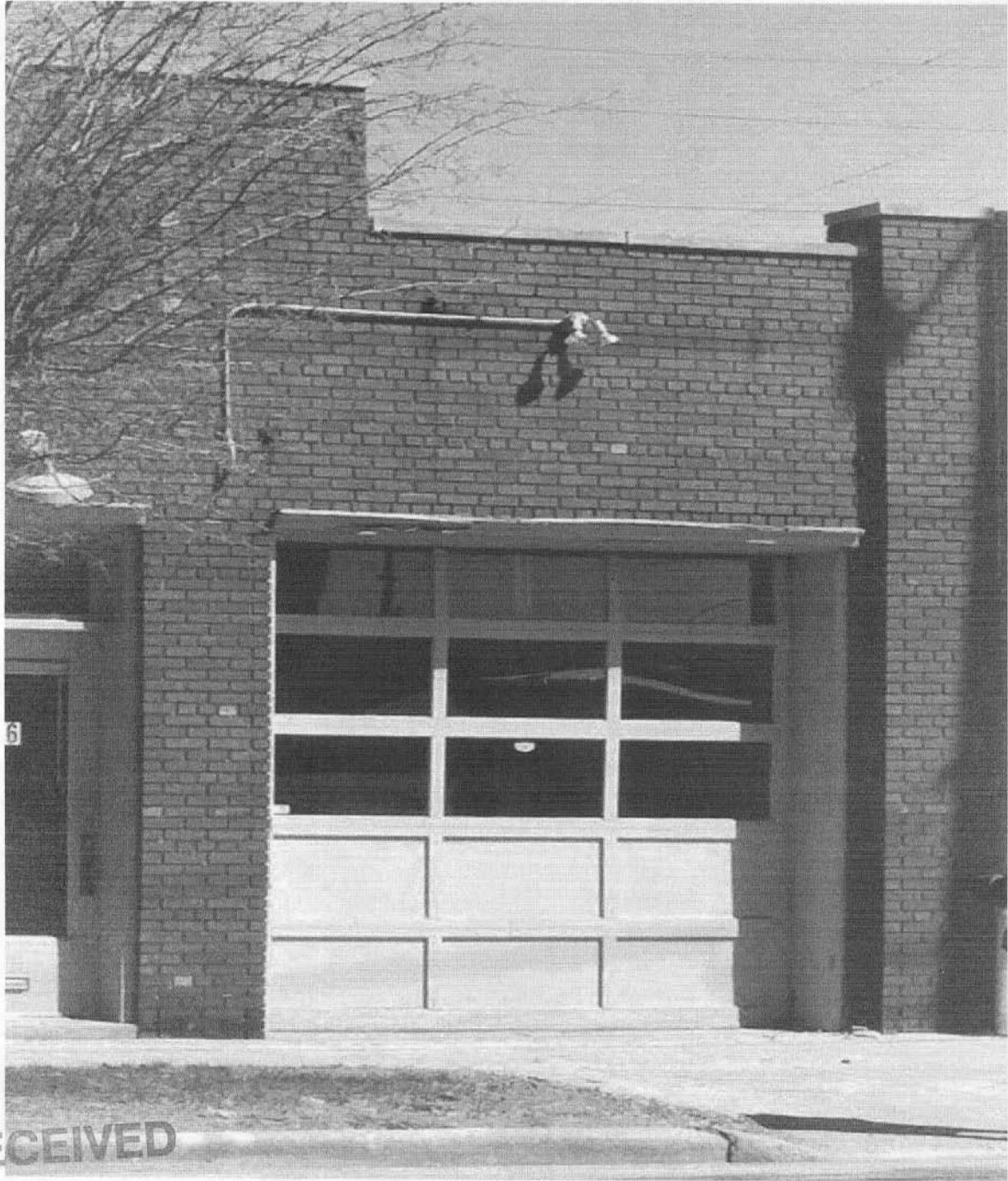
2011

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1/8" = 1'-0"



ENLARGED PLAN



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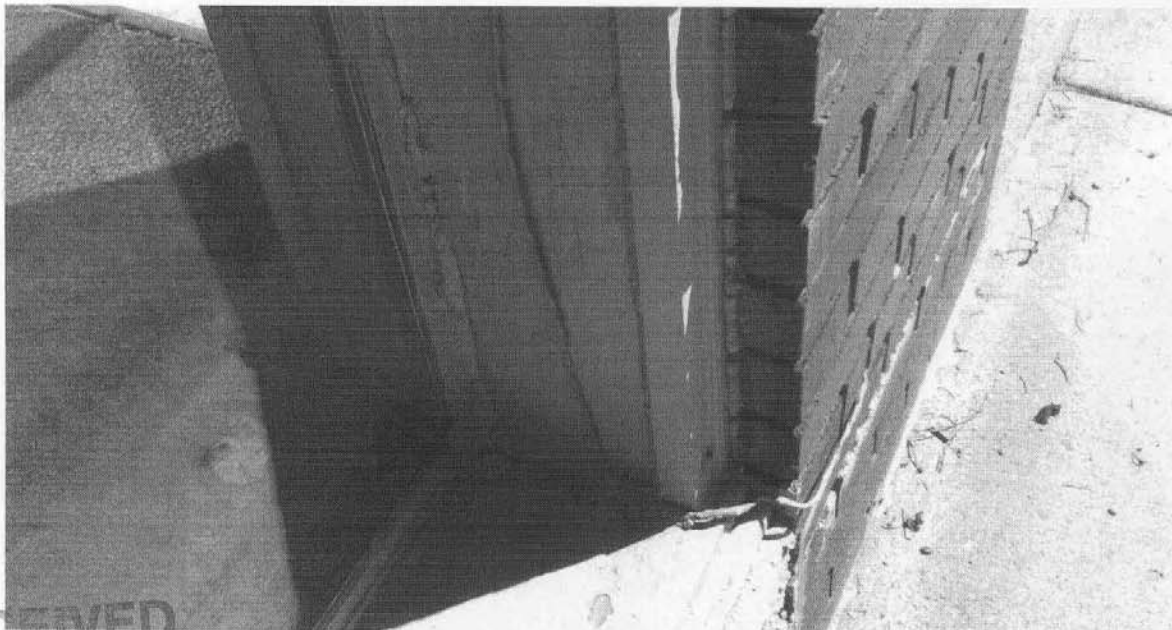
EXISTING OVERHEAD DOOR

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EXISTING FACADE



DETERIORATING STOREFRONT WINDOW

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646 VIRGINIA AVENUE



Above: Front Elevation
Below: Bulkhead below storefront window





Above: View of window at rear of building that has been altered
Below: View of front entry (being repaired only)





Above: View of transom window from the exterior
Below: View of transom window from the interior

