



L A N D M A R K S
P R E S E R V A T I O N
C O M M I S S I O N

S T A F F R E P O R T

FOR COMMISSION ACTION
DECEMBER 7, 2023

2144 Shattuck Avenue – American Trust/Wells Fargo Building

**Structural Alteration Permit (#LMSAP2023-0007) to install a security gate
on the office tower entrance of the Wells Fargo Building.**

I. Application Basics

A. Land Use Designations:

- Zoning District – Downtown Commercial/Mixed Use District
- General Plan Land Use Designation – Central Downtown

B. CEQA Determination: Categorically Exempt from further review pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15331 for *Historical Resource Restoration & Rehabilitation*.

C. Parties Involved

- Property Owner: Bollibokka Shattuck LLC
Pacific West Asset Management
P. O. Box 19068
Irvine, CA 92623
- Project Applicant: Sean Kennedy, Architect
Studio Skaggs Kennedy
Berkeley, CA

D. Recommendation: Open hearing, provide comments; continue hearing.

Figure 1: Vicinity Map showing nearby City Landmarks & Districts

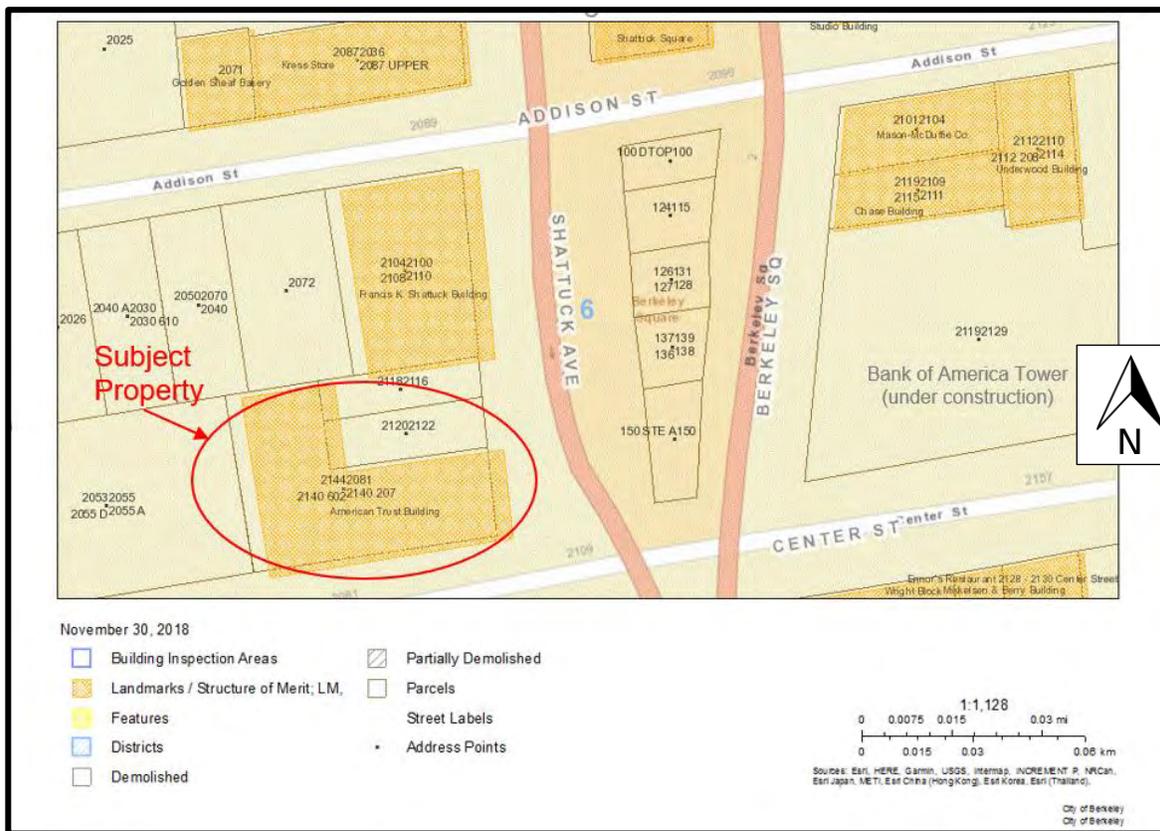


Figure 2: Subject property, current site conditions (Google)



Figure 3: Subject property, current site conditions along Center Street (Page & Turnbull)

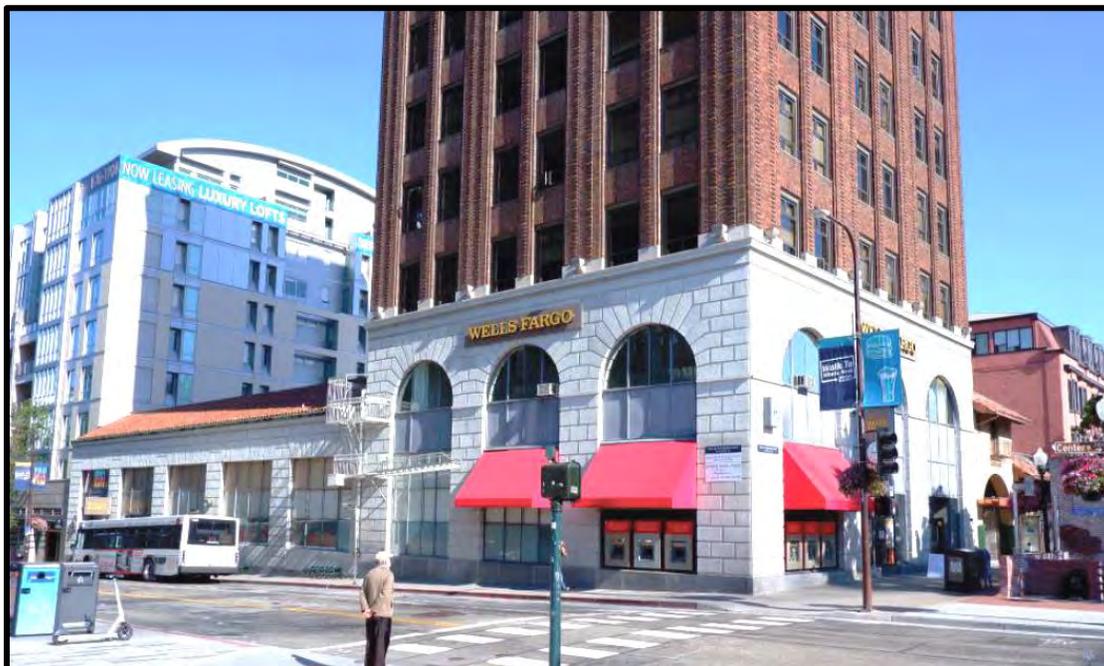


Figure 4: Subject property, current site conditions at Shattuck Avenue



Figure 5: Subject property, current site conditions at project area



II. Background

Brief Property History

The City Landmark American Trust/Wells Fargo Building was designed by notable Berkeley architect Walter H. Ratcliff, Jr. and completed in 1927. The commercial building reflects the Neoclassical architectural style and is comprised of a 12-story tower reflecting a tripartite arrangement and low-scale wing of two stories; see Figures 3 and 4. The Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) designated the property as a City Landmark in 1984, and it was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1985.

Page & Turnbull completed a Historical Resource summary for this property in 2022. Some of the notable character-defining features of the architectural design in their report included:

- 12-story building with flat roof, including tower and low-rise wing
- General building composition
- Pattern of window and door openings
- Building materials, including stone, masonry and terra cotta
- Decorative Neoclassical elements

In 2022, the Commission approved a Structural Alteration Permit (SAP) to create a new, ADA-accessible entrance on the low-rise, western wing of the building. As a Condition of Approval, the applicant was required to retain the original, recessed entry door and vestibule and to create a compatibly-designed security gate to protect the vestibule and complement the historic building design. In response, the applicant presented a design to the Commission Chairperson and staff during a building permit plan check review earlier this year; see Figure 6, below.

Figure 6. Previously-Approved ADA Entrance & Gates for Center Street



The LPC Chairperson approved the gate design, but neither the gates nor the new ADA-accessible entry have been installed yet.

Current SAP Application – received November 2023

On November 7, 2023, the applicant submitted a new SAP application requesting permission to install a gate on the Shattuck Avenue building entrance that serves the office tower. The design of the proposed gate replicates the design of the LPC Chair/Staff-approved gate for the Center Street entrance.

Per the applicant's request, these hearing preparations have been expedited. Staff mailed and posted notices of tonight's hearing on (or before) November 27, 2023, in accordance with the requirements of BMC Section 3.24.230.

III. Project Description

The applicant proposes to install a new security gate at the recessed entrance to the Wells Fargo Building office tower, which faces Shattuck Avenue. The proposed system would feature custom brass or bronze grille panels placed in front of the two storefront windows and a double-gate in the open doorway. The design replicates the previously-approved design for the gates at the Center Street side of the building.

The proposal includes two design options: a design with gates that are in-line with the building façade plane and swing outward; and an alternative that features a recessed gate and frame. See Figures 6 and 7, below.

Figure 6: Current Proposal for Shattuck Avenue Gate Option #1 – aligned with building façade

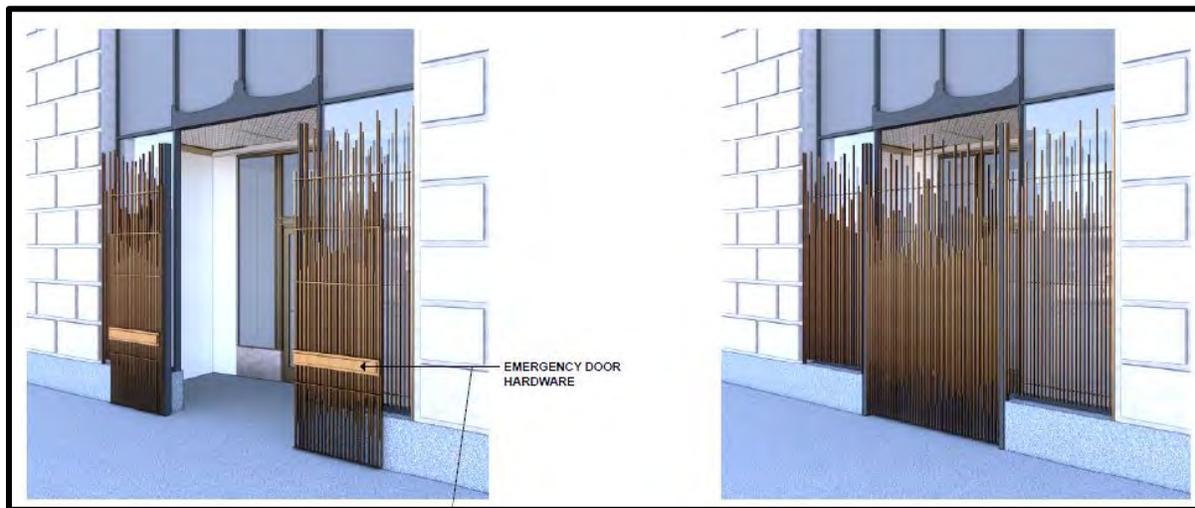


Figure 7: Current Proposal for Shattuck Avenue Gate Option #2 – recessed within vestibule



An Applicant Statement and Project Plans are provided as Attachments to this report.

IV. Issues and Analysis

Staff has identified the following relevant criteria pertinent to this project from the City's Downtown Design Guidelines (2012), the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (1977), and the Landmarks Preservation Ordinance (BMC Section 3.24). Additionally, possible conflicts with other code requirements are discussed under item D of this section.

A. Downtown (DT) Design Guidelines

The City's adopted DT Design Guidelines include sections for *Storefronts & Entrances* and *Special Considerations* that address accessibility. Both contain directives specific to Landmark buildings and ADA improvements.

- **Storefronts & Entrances** – Landmarks

Guideline L4 (page 38): *Retain original storefront elements, such as entries, doors, windows, bulkheads, frames and hardware. Repair rather than replace them. Repair techniques should use the gentlest means possible, so as not to damage historic materials.*

Analysis: The proposed installation would retain the recessed entry and stone bulkhead of the Well Fargo Building. All repairs, when or if necessary, would be Conditioned upon approval to employ the gentlest means possible.

- **Lighting, Security & Equipment**

Guideline 2 (page 43): *Housings for security grilles should be unobtrusive. Scissor and accordion grilles are discouraged unless they are completely concealed when not in use.*

Guideline 3: *Security grilles and tracks should be carefully integrated into the storefront design and should be completely concealed when not in use.*

Analysis: Instead of being unobstructed, the proposed security gates would be readily visible. This condition is not consistent with the Guideline, however the gate's decorative design is attractive and composed of high-quality brass/bronze metal work. As such, the visibility of the gate would not adversely impact the building or its historic design.

Guideline 4: *Roll-down grilles should be see-through rather than solid grates. This provides views of the interior when stores are closed.*

Analysis: As proposed, the gates would provide views into the entry vestibule.

Guideline 5: *Permanently attached interior or exterior security bars are not allowed.*

Analysis: The proposed does not included interior or exterior bars.

B. Secretary of the Interior (SOI) Standards for Rehabilitation

The SOI Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties defines *Rehabilitation* as "the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through

repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.” The applicant’s proposal represents a *Rehabilitation* (Rehab) project because it attempts to make better use of the interior lobby configuration of the building’s west wing. The analysis below summarizes staff’s findings for this project with respect to the most relevant Standards.

- **SOI Rehab Standard 3:** *Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.*

Analysis: The proposed project would not result in a false sense of historical development at the City Landmarks Wells Fargo building because the new gates are contemporary in their design and are not from or representative of any historical period.

- **SOI Rehab 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.*

Analysis: The proposed scope of work does not require destruction or removal of historical building fabric, nor would it involve alteration of building volumes or forms. The new gates would be differentiated from the Neoclassical building design and yet complementary due it is light form and high-quality metal work.

- **SOI Rehab 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 would be unimpaired.*

Analysis: If approved, the proposed work could be removed in the future without permanent or substantial impacts to the building or its historic fabric.

C. Landmarks Preservation Ordinance SAP Findings

In order to approve a request for a SAP, the Commission must find that the proposal would not adversely affect the features or special character of the subject structure or property. An analysis of the project with respect to the required findings of LPO is outlined below.

- **BMC Section 3.24.260, Paragraph C.1:** *“For applications relating to landmark sites, the proposed work shall not adversely affect the exterior architectural features of the landmark and, where specified in the designation for a publicly owned landmark, its major interior architectural features...”*

Analysis: The proposal to install new security gates on the office tower entrance of the City Landmark Wells Fargo Building would not remove or destroy the existing building fabric or alter the building design. The installation work would be reversible, thereby avoiding impairment or permanent damage to the structure.

The design and materials selected for this project are high-quality and would be compatible with the stone and masonry featured in the historic Neoclassical building design.

This project is not expected to adversely affect the exterior architectural features of the building and, therefore, appear to be permissible and consistent with the standards of the LPO.

- *“...nor shall the proposed work adversely affect the special character or special historical, architectural or aesthetic interest or value of the landmark and its site, as viewed both in themselves and in their setting.”*

Analysis: The proposed work is limited in scope, would affect only a small portion of the overall building façade, and would not result in substantial change to the building’s Neoclassical design. The special character of the American Trust/Wells Fargo Building would be retained and particular features, such as the decorative details and terra cotta and stone building materials, would be retained.

For all of these reasons, staff finds that the proposal is generally permissible and consistent with applicable guidelines, and could be received favorably provided the operational design meets all another applicable codes.

D. Other City Requirements & Anticipating Similar Requests

If LPC approves this SAP request, the proposed gates would be subject to review and consideration by other City agents, including the Public Works Engineering Division (PW) for the potential to encroach into the right-of-way, and Building & Safety (B&S) for egress compliance. After an initial assessment in November 2023, PW staff confirmed that an encroachment was unlikely to be granted for this case. Unfortunately, the applicant’s alternative that would avoid an encroachment appears to impede building egress; Sheet

A.05. Therefore, staff recommends that the applicant consult further with PW and B&S in order to re-design the proposal as needed, and then return to LPC for consideration of an improved design in the future.

The SAP application is presented to LPC at this time in order to receive comments and guidance until a final operational design can be achieved.

Expanding the Scope for Installation of Security Gates

Given the stated concerns about building safety and protection, the proposed security gate for the office tower entry may be necessary and appropriate for the bank tenant entry as well. The applicant might also consider expanding the scope of this SAP request to include gates for both Shattuck Avenue entrances and preemptively obtaining permission for additional gates at this location.

V. Rationale for Recommendation

The proposal to install a new security gate at the historic Wells Fargo Building appears to be generally permissible should the Commission find that the proposed design is compatible, appropriate for the circumstances and not likely to adversely affect the special Neoclassical character of the building.

However, this SAP application may not be ready for final action at this meeting and the Commission may wish to invite the applicant to return during a future meeting after considering further development of the proposal.

VI. Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Commission open the hearing on this matter in accordance with LPO requirements for timely review (BMC Section 3.24.220) and receive a presentation from the applicant.

The Commission may provide comments on the project design and, upon close of the hearing, continue to matter to a date to be determined.

Attachments and web links:

1. Applicant Statement, received & revised November 27, 2023
2. Proposed Project Plans, received November 27, 2023
3. Notice of Decision for Landmark designation, dated December 17, 1984, provided via web link here:

https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2023-12-07_LPC_Item%207_ATT3_Notice%20of%20Decision_Center%20Wells%20Fargo%20LM.pdf

Prepared by: Fatema Crane, Principal Planner/LPC Secretary; fcrane@berkeleyca.gov (510) 981-7410

Nov 15, 2023

To

Dept. of Planning & Development,
1947 Center Street, 3rd Floor
Berkeley, CA 94704

From

Studio Skaggs Kennedy
2315 Prince St, Studio
Berkeley, CA 94705

Re:

Applicant Statement - 2140 Shattuck Ave Gate

To Whom it May Concern,

The proposed project is located at the Wells Fargo Building (2140-2144 Shattuck Avenue), which is a City of Berkeley Landmark and listed in the National Register of Historic Places. It features a Beaux-Arts Neoclassical style 12-story office tower at the corner of Shattuck Avenue and Center Street.. The primary entrances to the building are on Shattuck Avenue, accessing the office tower lobby and the main banking hall lobby; a secondary entrance on Center Street accesses the Center Street wing which now has additional tenant space. The proposed project scope includes work at the entrance to the Tower Lobby located off of Shattuck.

The existing entrance at 2140 Shattuck Ave has an open vestibule with an ornate metal ceiling and two panes of glass separating the space from the sidewalk. The building owner has had significant trouble with members of the public accessing the space outside of business hours and vandalizing the historic vestibule. In one particularly bad incident, part of the vestibule was lit on fire. To mitigate the continuing danger to the property and to the users of the building, the owner would like to construct an "after-hours" security gate. This gate is designed to match the similar proposed for the Center Street entry which was previously approved by the Landmarks Commission in 2022. The gate will only be closed after business hours, and will not require a significant alteration to any of the historic elements of the building.

s_sk
studio skaggs kennedy
architecture + urbanism

Additionally the work proposed would be reversible in the future should the owner choose or for other reasons.

Thank you for your consideration of our proposed project.

Sincerely,

Sean Kennedy

Principal
Studio Skaggs Kennedy

Nov 27, 2023

To

Dept. of Planning & Development,
1947 Center Street, 3rd Floor
Berkeley, CA 94704

From

Studio Skaggs Kennedy
2315 Prince St, Studio
Berkeley, CA 94705

2140 Shattuck Avenue, Security Gate

The following analysis applies each of the Standards for Rehabilitation to the proposed project at 2140 Shattuck Avenue, based on the proposed project drawing set by Studio Skaggs Kennedy, titled "Shattuck Avenue Security Gate" and dated November 27, 2023.

Standards of Rehabilitation Analysis

Standard 1:

A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces and spatial relationships.

Analysis:

The proposed project does not propose a change of use. The addition of the new gates are in service to the use of the building as a commercial office building. The proposed project requires no change to its distinctive features and the gate design is consistent with other newly designed and approved gates and entries located at the Center Street entry location.

Standard 2:

The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.

Analysis:

The proposed project does not propose the removal of any distinctive materials or alteration of features at this particular location. The gate design is consistent with other newly designed and approved gates and entries located at the Center Street entry location.

Standard 3:

Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.

Analysis:

The proposed project does not add conjectural features or elements from other historic properties. The proposed gate does not create a false sense of historical development and is compatible with other approved elements at the Center Street entry.

Standard 4:

Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.

Analysis:

The period of significance of the Wells Fargo Building has been identified as 1925 to 1927, spanning its period of original construction and including the early remodel of the ground floor by Ratcliff for the American Trust Company in 1927. No features have been installed since 1927 that have acquired historic significance in their own right.

Standard 5:

Distinctive materials, features, finishes and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.

Analysis:

Existing distinctive materials, features, finishes and construction techniques that characterize the Wells Fargo Building will be retained in place.

Standard 6:

Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.

Analysis:

The proposed project does not involve any replacement of any deteriorated historic features.

Standard 7:

Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.

Analysis:

As planned, the proposed project does not involve chemical or physical treatments of historic materials.

Standard 8:

Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.

Analysis:

The proposed project does not include any excavation of previously undisturbed ground.

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.

Analysis:

Existing distinctive materials, features, finishes and construction techniques that characterize the Wells Fargo Building will be retained in place. The proposed design and materials are compatible with the existing material palette of the Wells Fargo Building. The unornamented, minimal design pays homage to the craftsmanship and material richness of the existing building while clearly reading as contemporary.

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 would be unimpaired.

Analysis:

If the proposed design were to be removed, the materiality and form of the entry at this location would be unchanged and unimpaired.

SHATTUCK AVE. SECURITY GATE

**Landmark Preservation Committee Review
2140 SHATTUCK AVENUE
11.27.23**

Project Tabulations

Project Address: 2140 Shattuck Ave
Berkeley CA, 94704

Assessor's Parcel No: 57-202300400

Zoning: C-DMU Core

Existing Occupancy: B

Proposed Occupancy: No Change

Building Area Allowed: Unlimited

Building Area Proposed: No Change

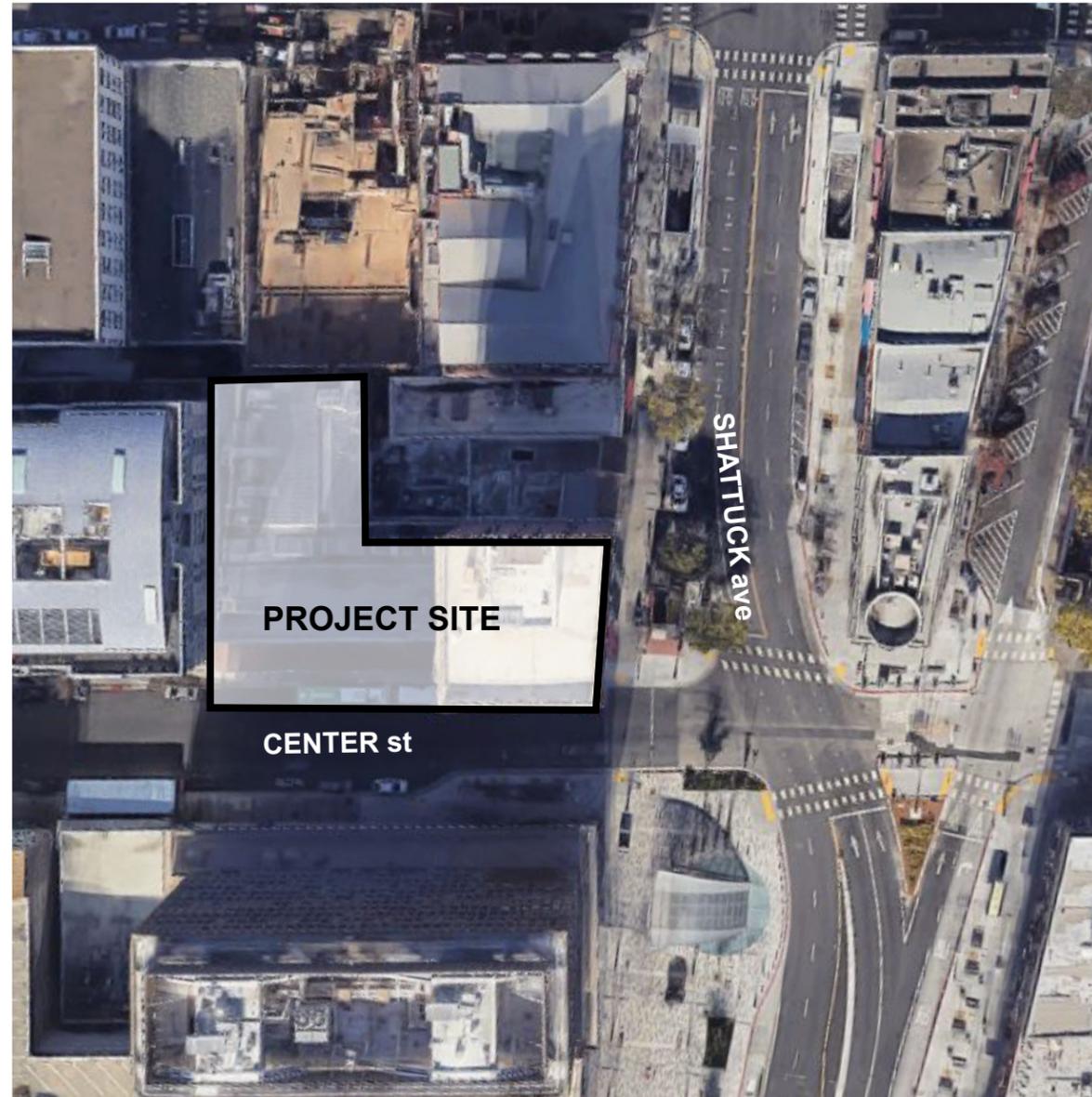
Area of Work: 146sf

Special Designation:

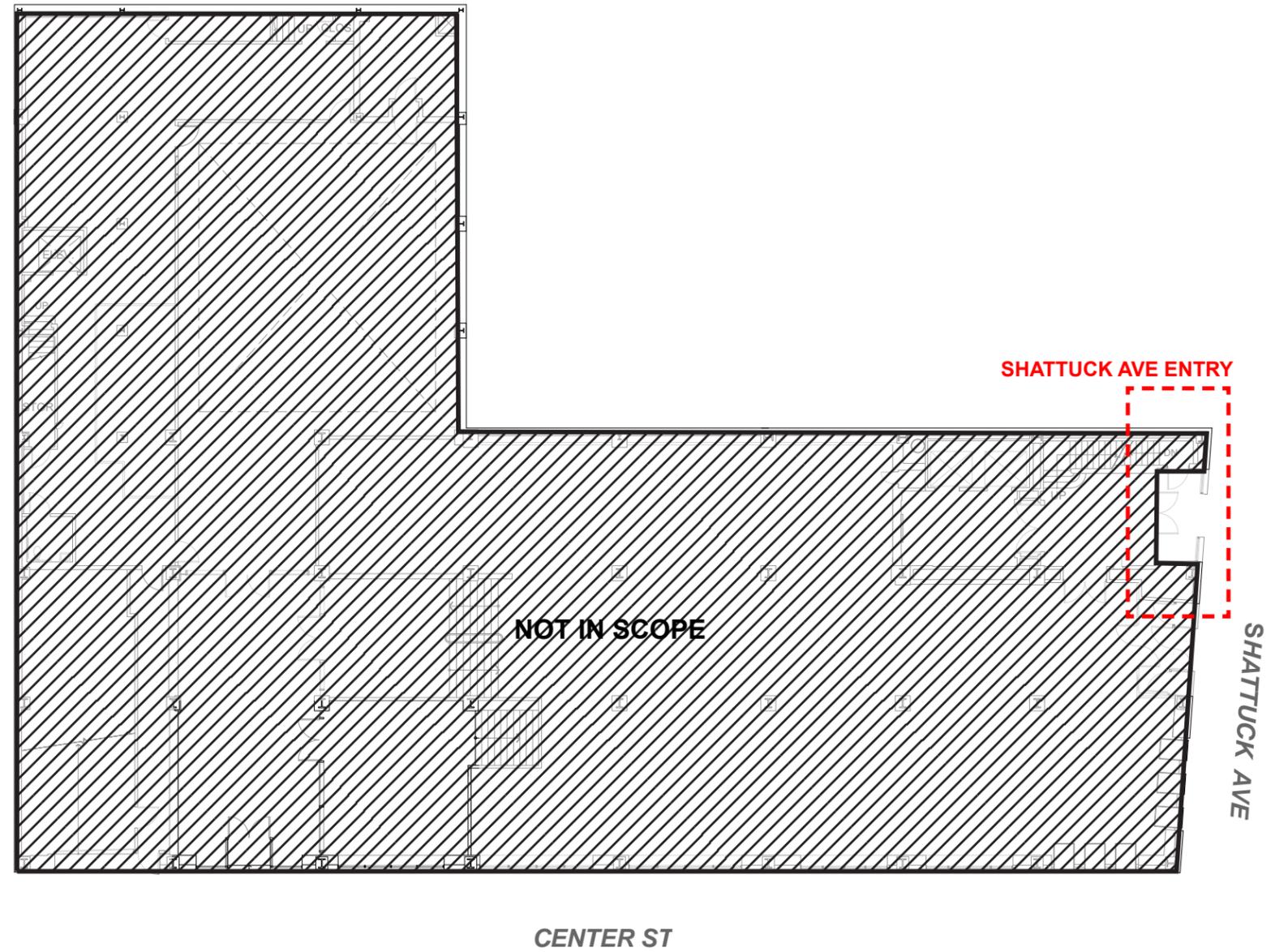
City of Berkeley Designated Landmark; Listed in National Register

Project Description:

This project proposes to add an "after-hours" security gate to protect the vestibule of 2140 Shattuck from vandalism. The proposed gate takes its design language from the existing material palette of the historic banking hall as well as the entry gate design for the recently approved Center Street entry around the corner of the building.



VICINITY MAP



SCOPE DIAGRAM
FLOOR PLAN LEVEL 1





PROJECT

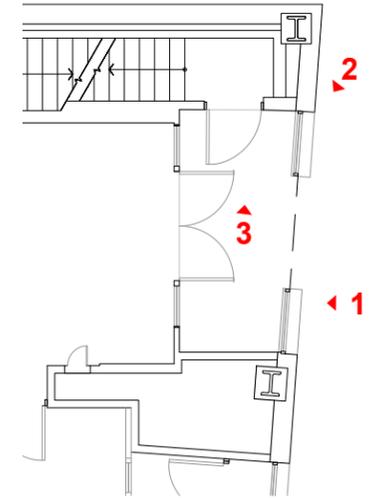


PROJECT

3



2



KEY PLAN



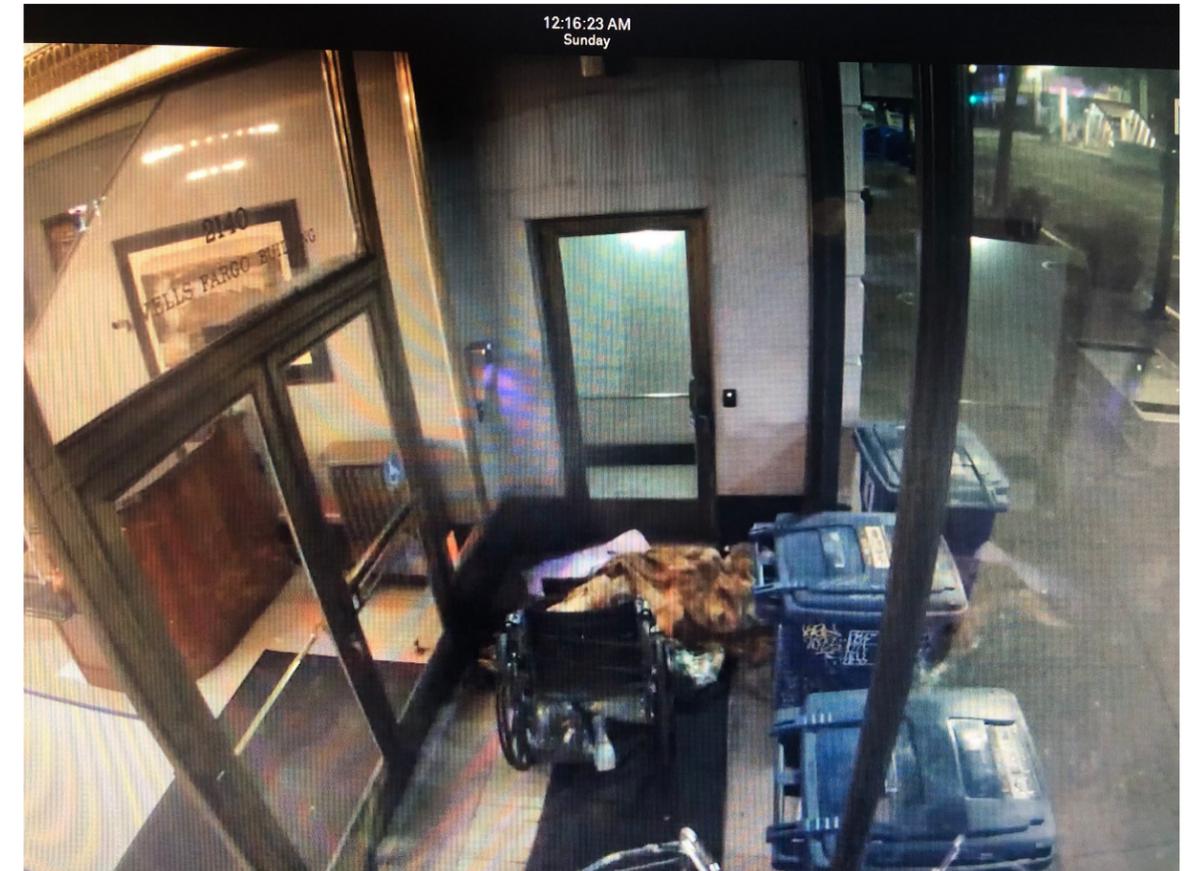
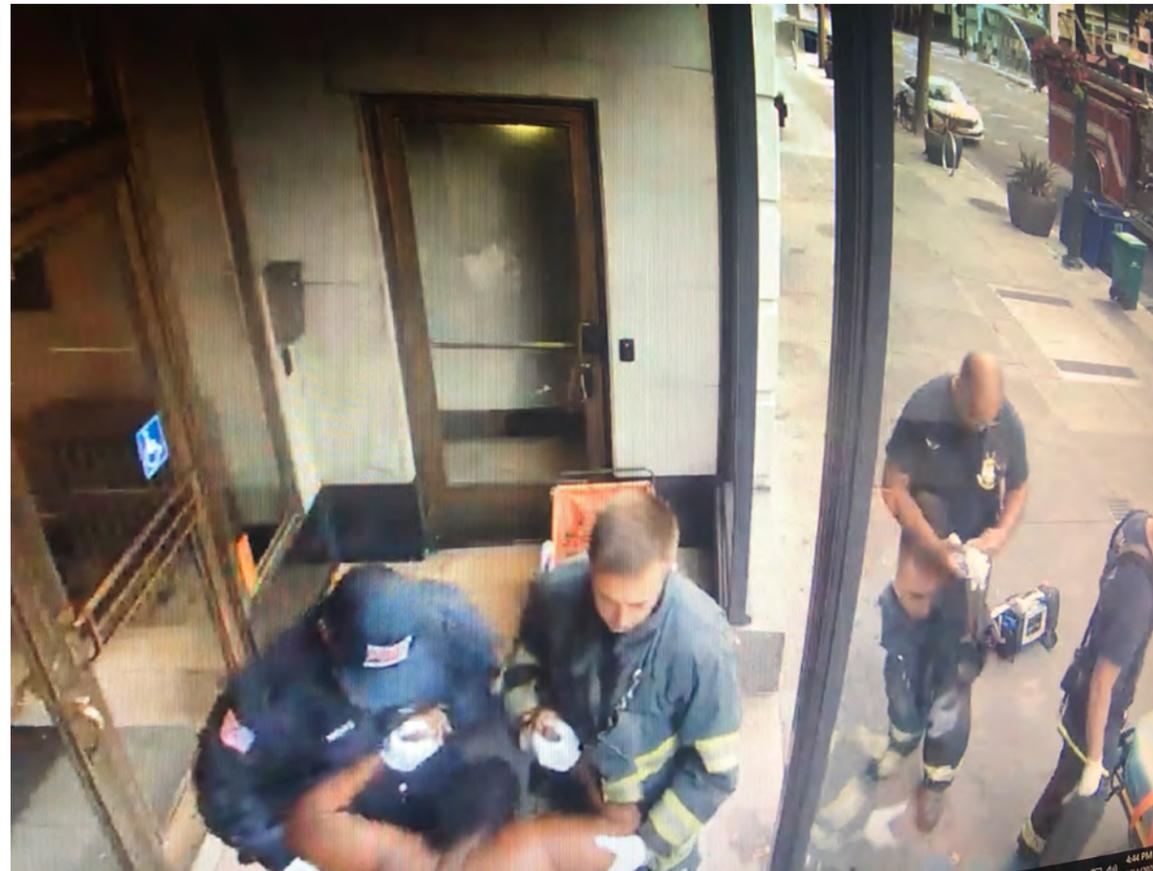
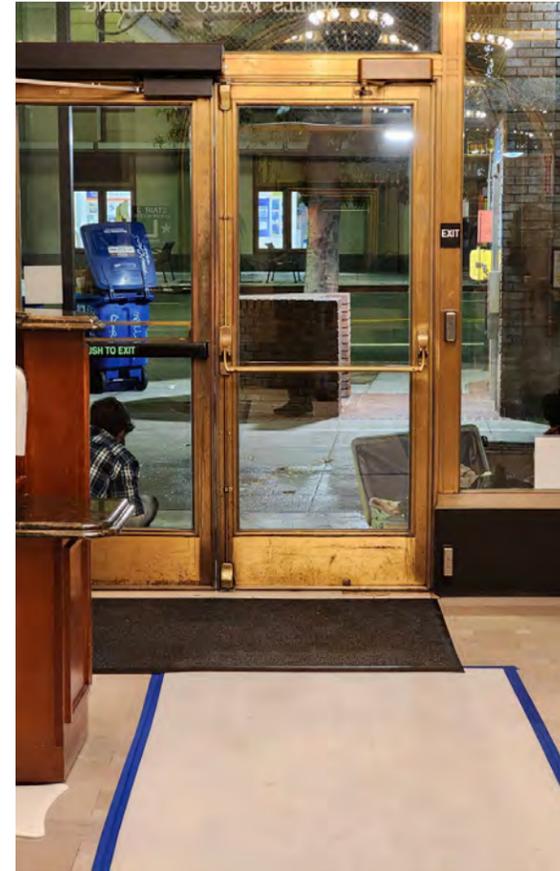
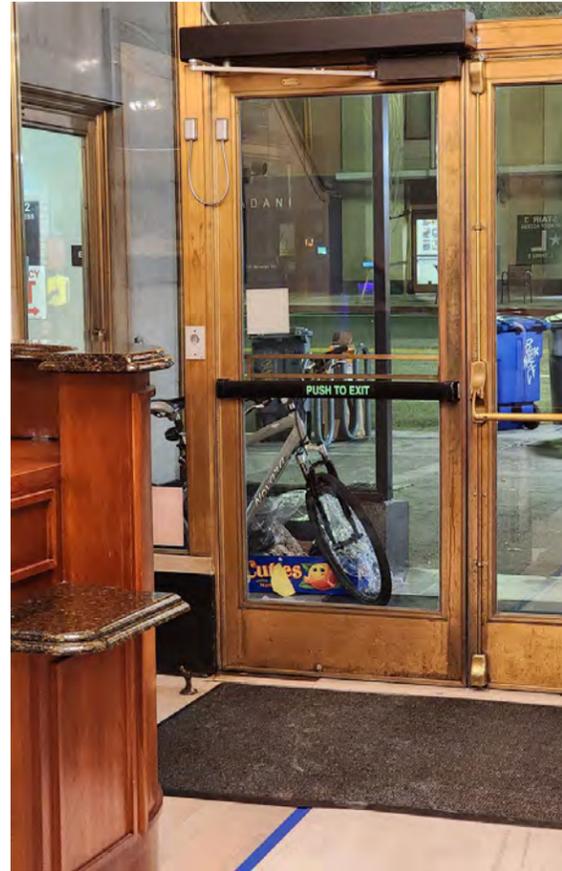
(E) BANING HALL ENTRY
 TO REMAIN

PROJECT

1

EXISTING PHOTOGRAPHS

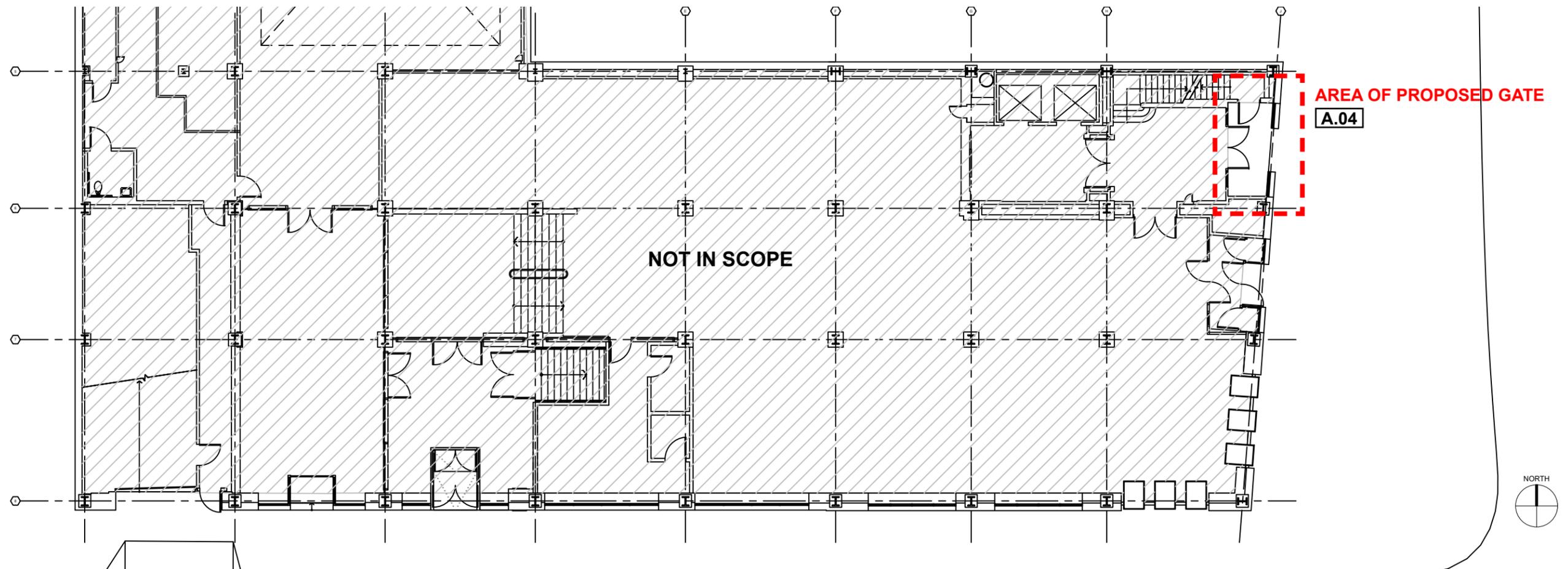
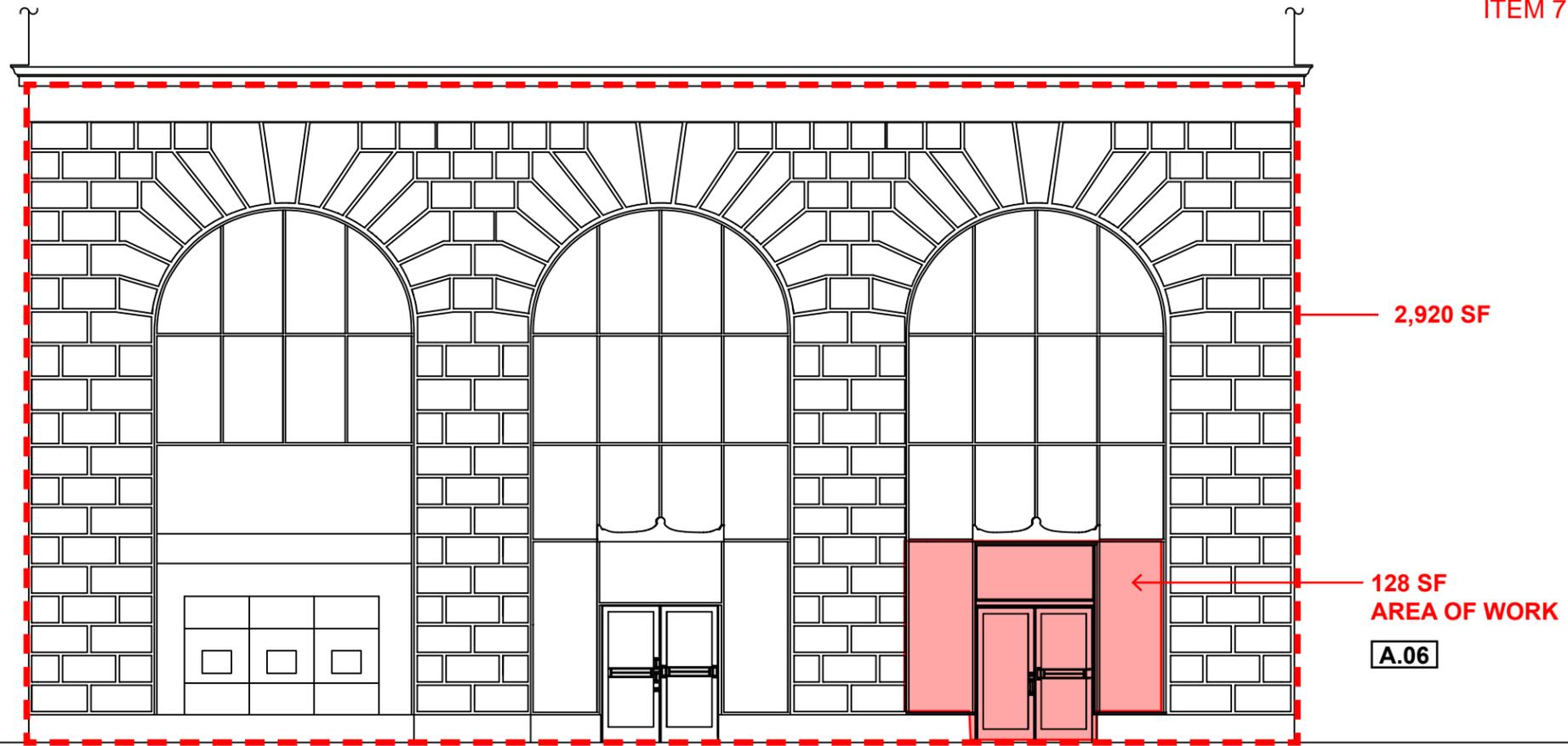
All photos taken by on 9.19.23

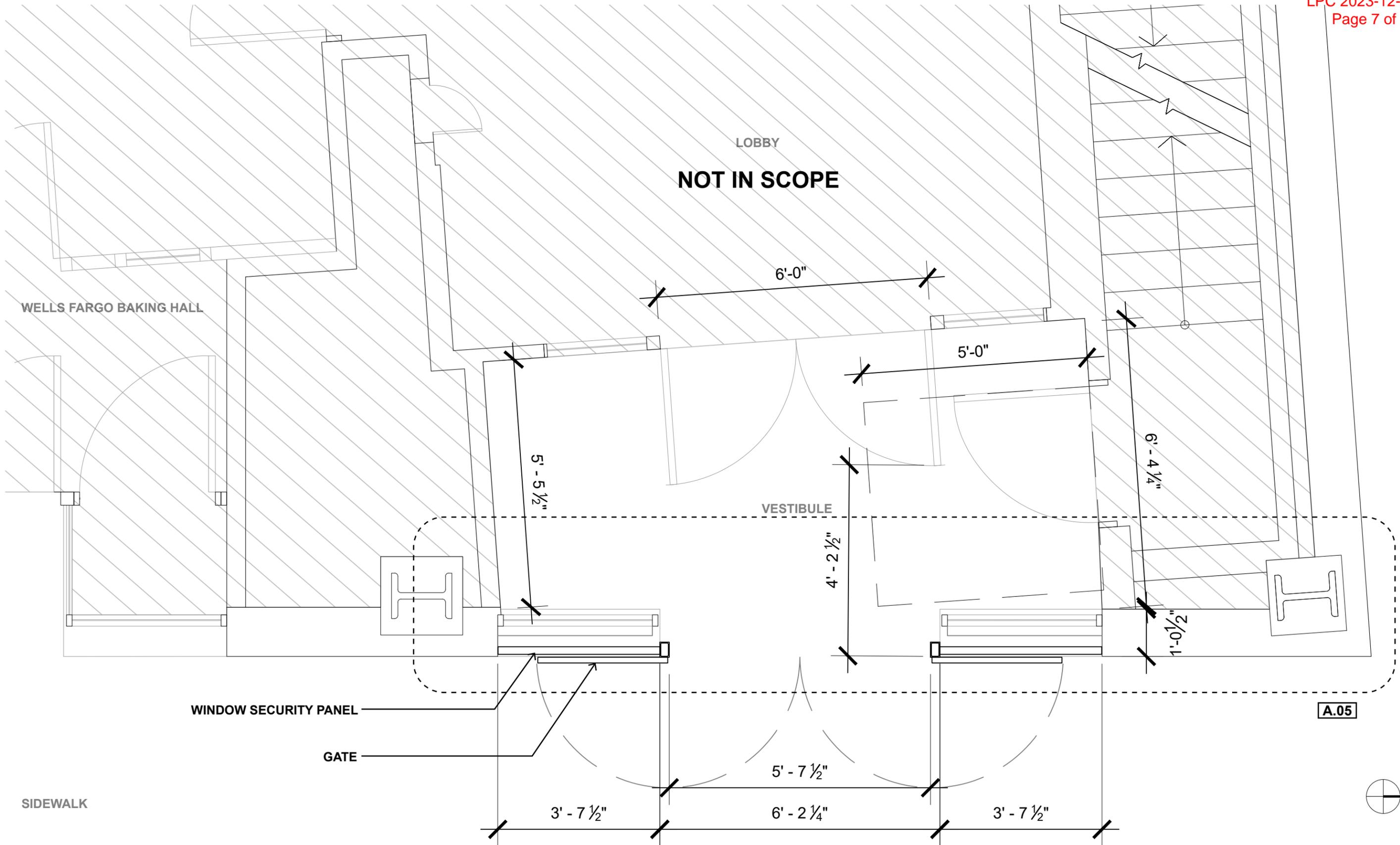


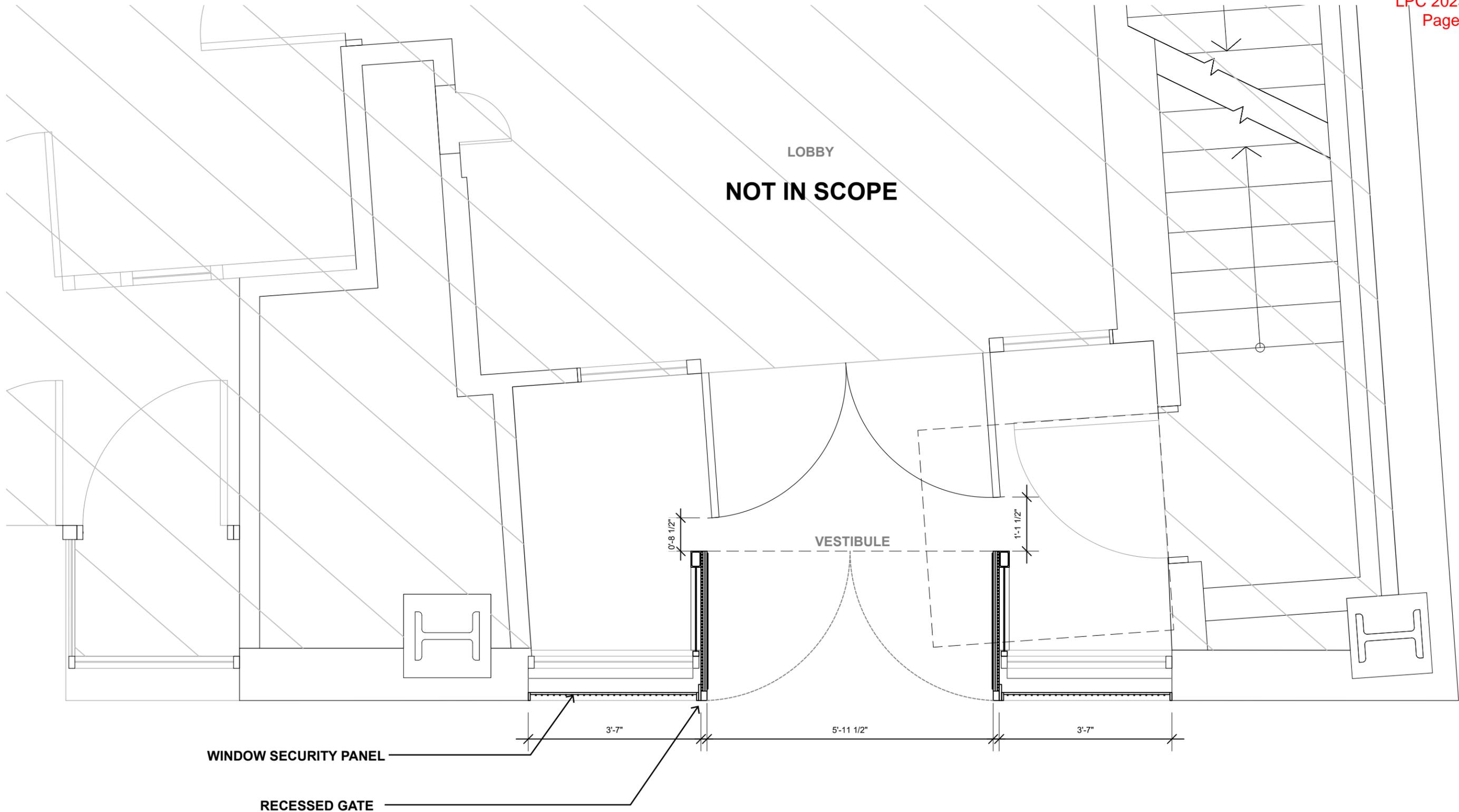
CCTV STILLS

Recent unsafe behavior in the vestibule as captured on the security cameras.

4.4% of Facade Altered

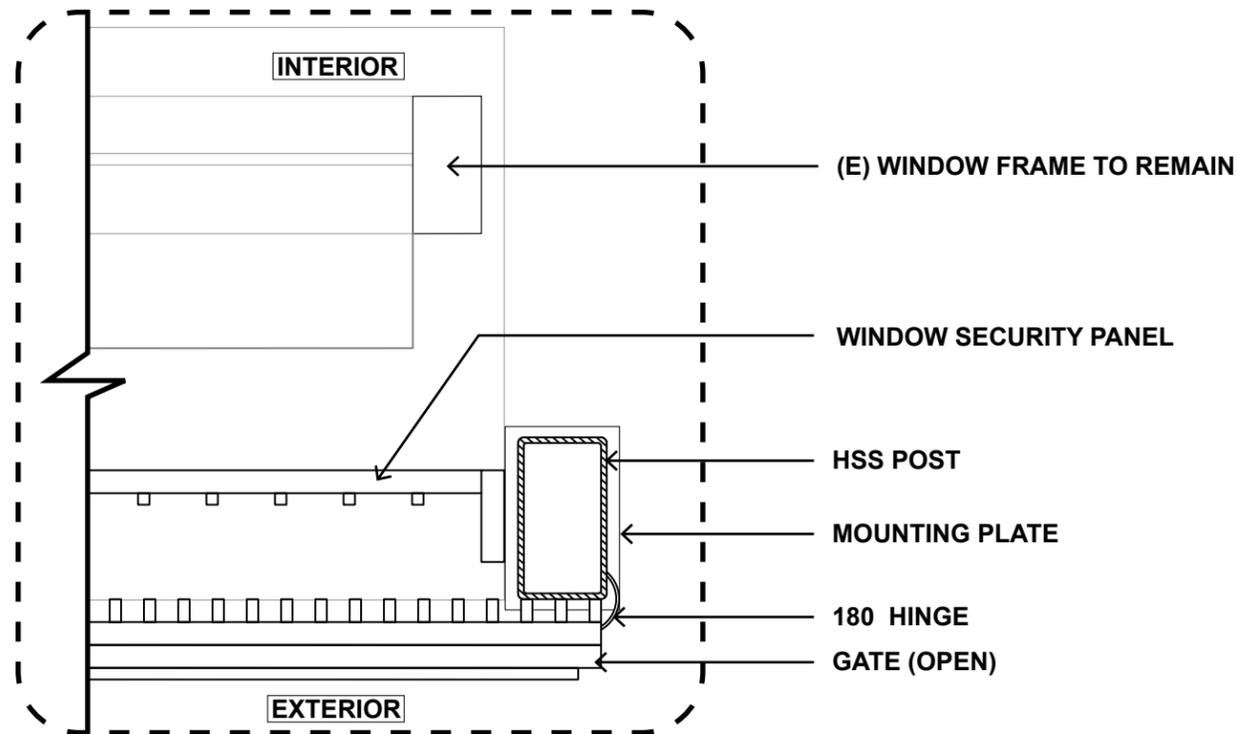




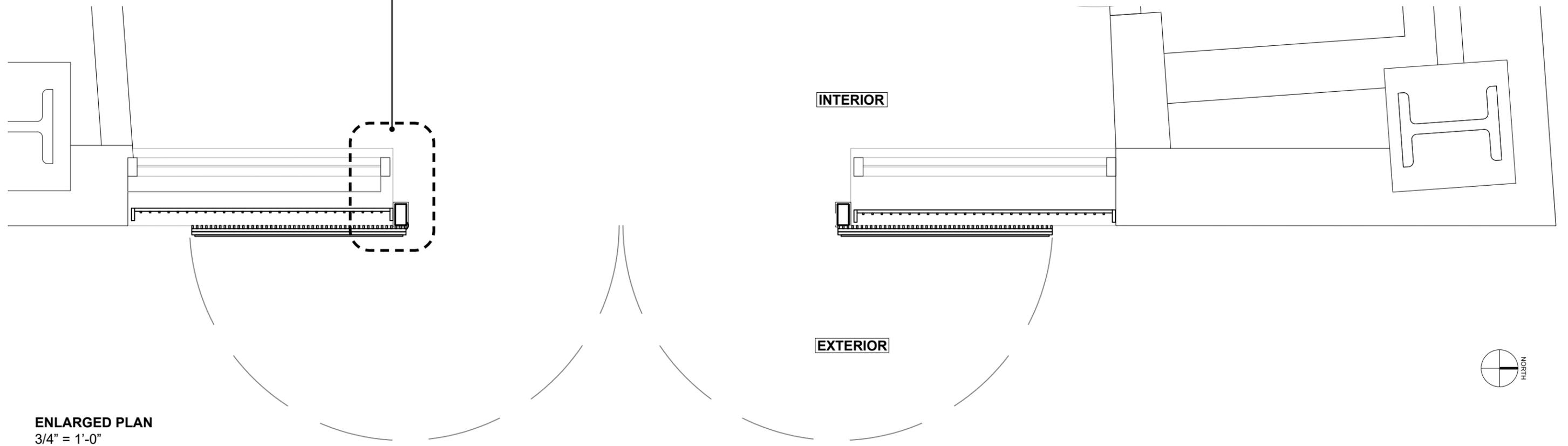
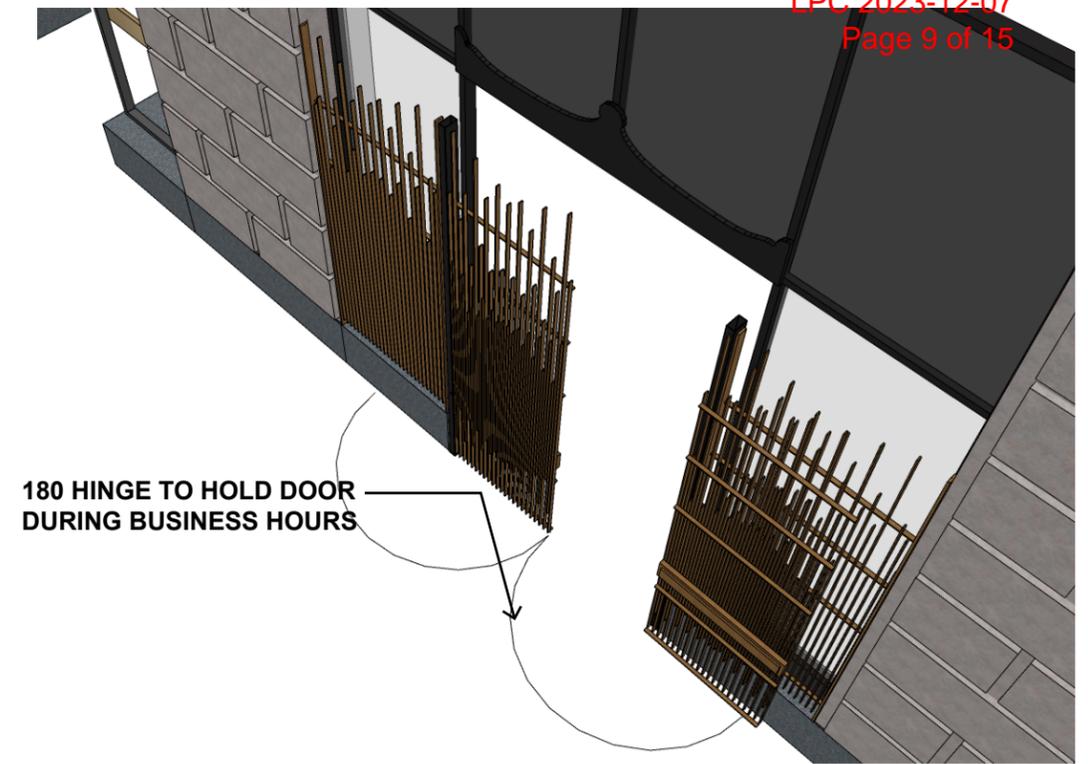


SIDEWALK

ALTERNATE OPTION

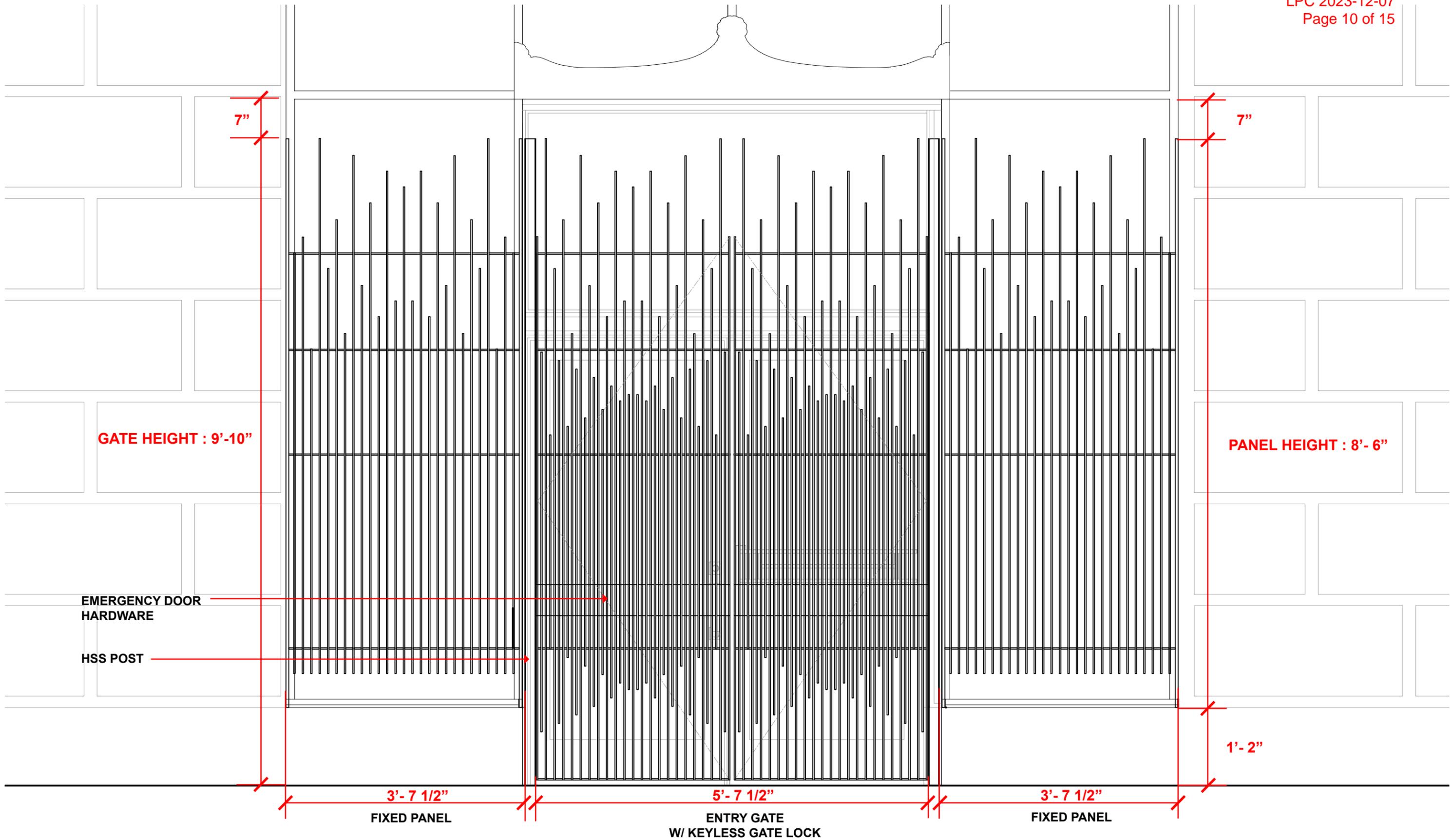


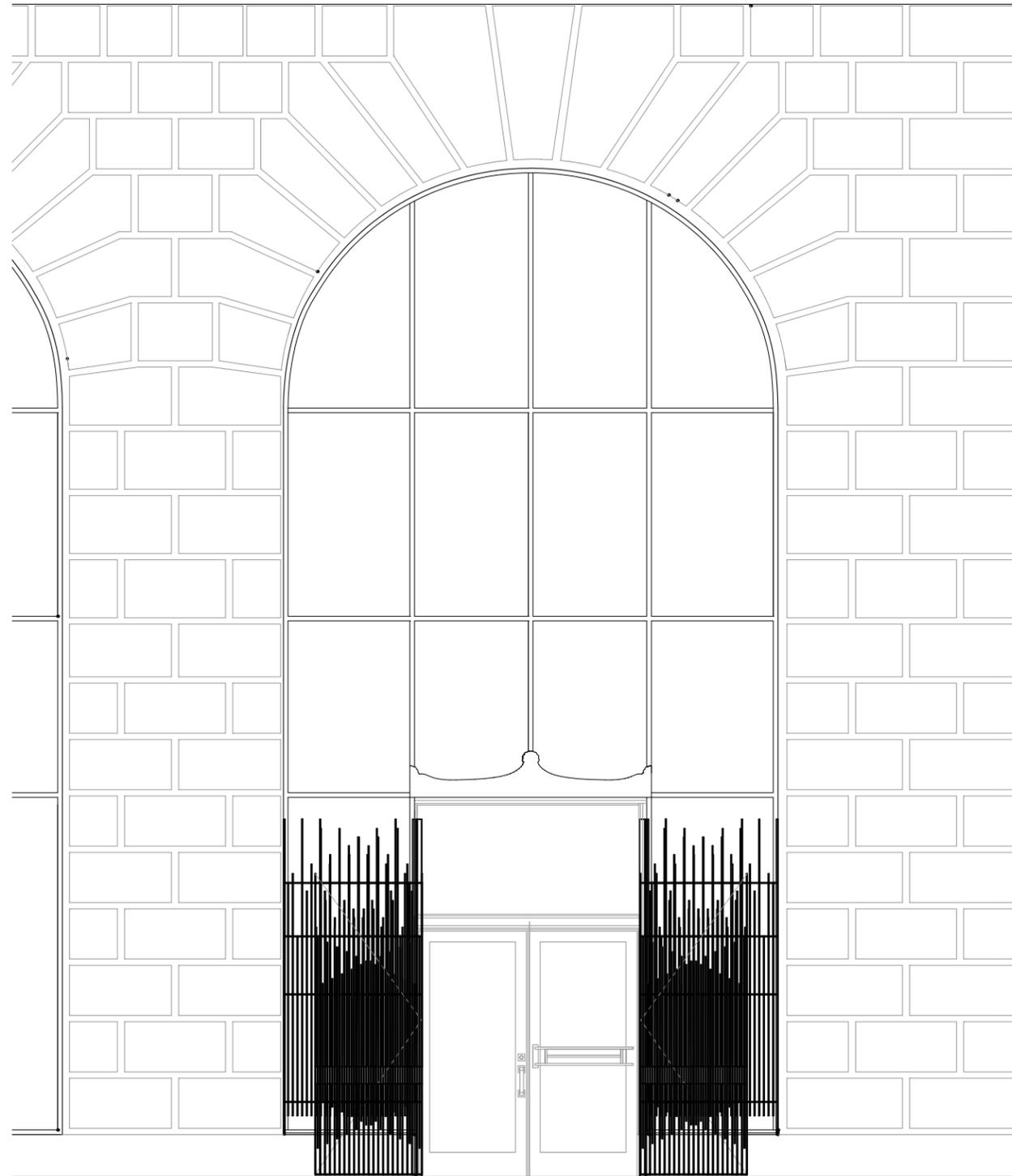
GATE JAMB DETAIL
 3" = 1'-0"



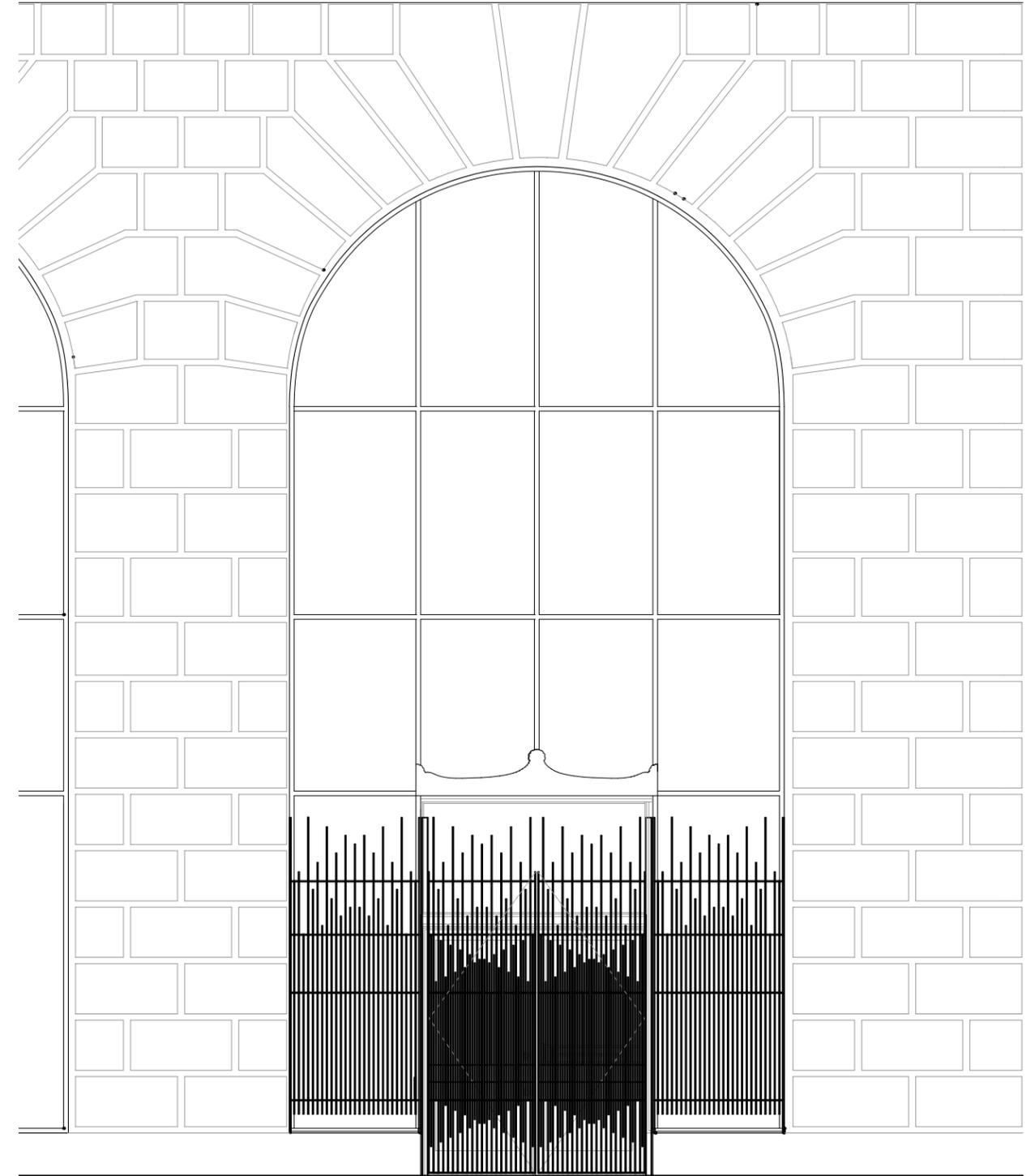
ENLARGED PLAN
 3/4" = 1'-0"







GATE OPEN
DURING BUSINESS HOURS



GATE CLOSED
AFTER BUSINESS HOURS



EMERGENCY DOOR
HARDWARE



GATE OPEN
DURING BUSINESS HOURS



EMERGENCY DOOR
HARDWARE

GATE CLOSED
AFTER BUSINESS HOURS



**EMERGENCY DOOR
HARDWARE**

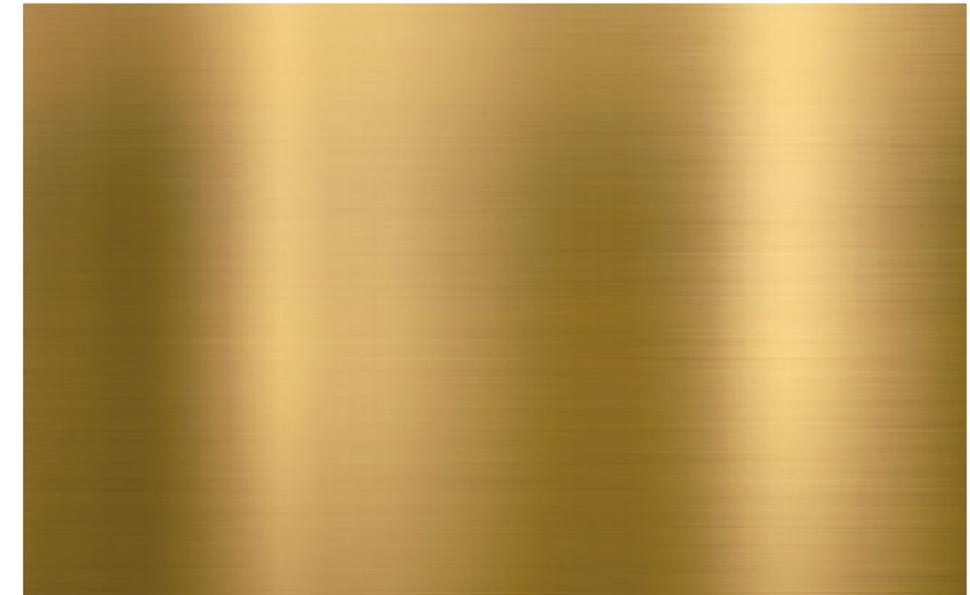
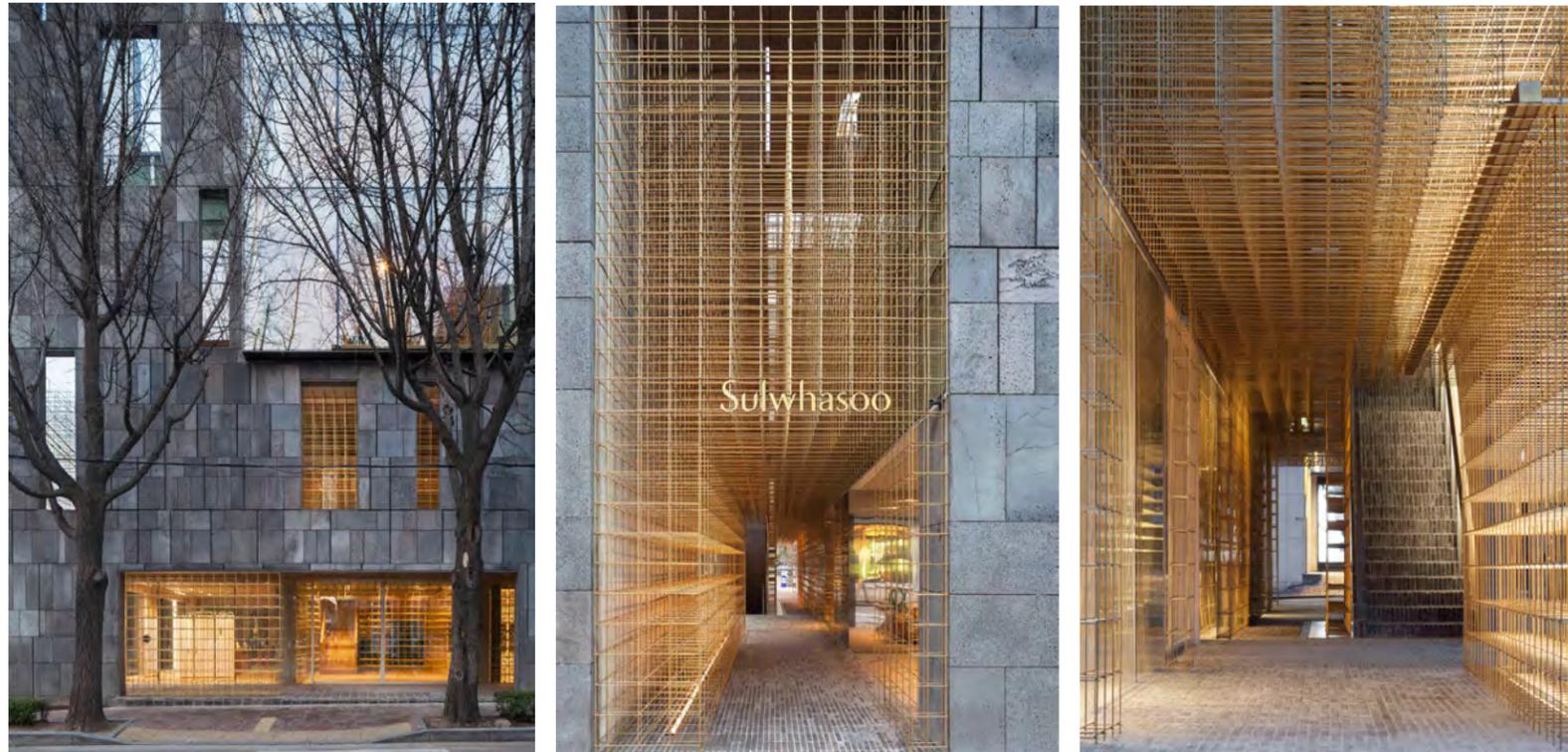


**GATE OPEN
DURING BUSINESS HOURS**



**EMERGENCY DOOR
HARDWARE**

**GATE CLOSED
AFTER BUSINESS HOURS**



EXAMPLES OF CONTEMPORARY BRASS AND BRONZE WORK



2081 CENTER ST ENTRY DESIGN



GATE OPEN
DURING BUSINESS HOURS



GATE CLOSE
AFTER BUSINESS HOURS