

Docket Item # 4
BAR CASE # 2011-0055

BAR Meeting
March 21, 2012

ISSUE: Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate
APPLICANT: The Protestant Episcopal Theological Seminary in Virginia
LOCATION: 3737 Seminary Road (campus), 3591 Aspinwall Lane (Immanuel Chapel)
ZONE: R-20 / Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends:

1. Approval of the Permit to Demolish for partial demolition of the chapel; and
2. That the Board find that the proposed new chapel will not adversely affect the remaining 100 Year Old Buildings located at Virginia Theological Seminary.

In addition, the previous requirements for documentation and archaeology in the May 4, 2011 approval are hereby incorporated in this recommendation.

*EXPIRATION OF APPROVALS NOTE: In accordance with Sections 10-106(B) and 10-206(B) of the Zoning Ordinance, any official Board of Architectural Review approval will expire 12 months from the date of BAR approval if the work is not commenced and diligently and substantially pursued by the end of that 12-month period.

**BUILDING PERMIT NOTE: Most projects approved by the Board of Architectural Review require the issuance of one or more construction permits by Building and Fire Code Administration (including signs). The applicant is responsible for obtaining all necessary construction permits after receiving Board of Architectural Review approval. Contact Code Administration, Room 4200, City Hall, 703-838-4360 for further information.

BOARD ACTION, MAY 4, 2011: Mr. von Senden made a motion to approve the application with conditions. Mr. Smeallie seconded the motion, which was approved by roll call vote, with conditions, 5-2.

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL:

1. That the applicant document the building in accordance with the requirements of Chapter 4: *Demolition of Existing Structures* application requirements for Significance Buildings. This documentation will include History of the Structure, Photographs and Measured Drawings, as outlined in Chapter 4 of the *Design Guidelines*.
2. That the following archaeology conditions shall appear in the General Notes of all site plans and on all site plan sheets that involve demolition or ground disturbance (including Basement/Foundation Plans, Demolition, Erosion and Sediment Control, Grading, Landscaping, Utilities, and Sheeting and Shoring) so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirements:
 - A. The applicant/developer shall call Alexandria Archaeology (703/838-4399) two weeks before the starting date of any ground disturbance so that a monitoring and inspection schedule for city archaeologists can be arranged.
 - B. The applicant/developer shall call Alexandria Archaeology immediately (703-838-4399) if any buried structural remains (wall foundations, wells, privies, cisterns, etc.) or concentrations of artifacts are discovered during development. Work must cease in the area of the discovery until a City archaeologist comes to the site and records the finds.
 - C. The applicant/developer shall not allow any metal detection or artifact collection to be conducted on the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology.

SPEAKERS

Duncan Blair, Attorney, presented the revised application. He outlined the work that has been done to the scope of the project since the last meeting. He noted that the project team has held meetings and conducted site visits with selected members of the BAR and Staff. The Board is being presented with an interim stabilization plan which begins to preserve and memorialize the chapel.

Mary Kay Lanzillotta, architect, presented a PowerPoint slide show illustrating the conditions assessment, the proposed selective demolition of the chapel and interim stabilization of the chapel.

John Hynan, Historic Alexandria Foundation (HAF), presented that the Foundation wants restoration of the chapel. He expressed that the walls are essentially not damaged. He noted that the Foundation believes that the Chapel is “one of the foremost historic buildings in Alexandria.” He also stated that other churches in Alexandria have been damaged by fire and rebuilt, including the Presbyterian Meeting House.

Tim Behr, Student at the Virginia Theological Seminary, supports the complete demolition of the Chapel. He stated that the Seminary is not just a historic landmark to the students. He did not believe that the restoration of the chapel is the best use of the stewardship of the Seminary’s resources.

Audrey O'Brien supported the proposal for the prayer garden. She believed that the proposal is a compromise.

Mernie Keleher, inquired if there was a cellar below the chapel, if the walls are being dismantled and stored off-site and the location for the new chapel. Duncan Blair clarified that the cellar is in the front of the chapel and some of the walls will be dismantled, cataloged and palletized and stored off-site and the location of the new chapel is being proposed near the visitor's center.

Linda Serabian, Architect and member of Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill, supports the revised proposal to retain more of the historic walls. However, she objected to the prayer garden concept and supported the utilization of the walls in the new church.

Gail Rothrock, architectural historian, supported the proposal to retain the historic fabric however, does not support the prayer garden. She does not believe a detailed structural analysis was provided to give the Board adequate information to make an informed decision. She encouraged a selective demolition of charred roof trusses, protection of the walls with coping, retainment of window surrounds, the tarping of the building and fencing the site.

BOARD DISCUSSION

The Chairman began noting that Mr. Smeallie and Mr. von Senden were asked to represent the Board as a sub-committee for this project and requested a report from their meetings.

Mr. Smeallie began by summarizing the BAR's jurisdiction on 100 year old buildings. He stated that the BAR only has jurisdiction over demolition of the structure. He noted that their role for new construction was advisory. He concluded noting that the product that is being presented to the Board is a product of their discussions with the project team.

Mr. von Senden wants to see the project move forward. He noted that without a roof you have interior materials that are not designed to weather. He also expressed that while it would take work, the walls could be conserved. He also believes that the proposal is a compromise. He also appreciates the inclusion of documentation in the submittal.

Dr. Fitzgerald noted that 45% of the existing building is being proposed for demolition including the modern additions. He believes based on the information provided that the chapel could be rebuilt.

Mr. Keleher inquired about the interim temporary structure. He also was concerned about the fact that a tarp was not installed over the structure to preserve the interior woodwork.

Mr. Smeallie noted that there is a struggle between building codes and preservation. The chapel would not be able to be reconstructed under the current building codes. He has determined that the best solution is the revised proposal as submitted.

Mr. Neale believes that it is the church's decision to selectively demolish and not rebuild. He would like to see the walls adaptively reused. He also encouraged the design team to re-study retaining the piers that define the naïve.

Mr. Carlin expressed that he sees this as the preservation of a sacred space. He notes that it is an edifice itself as one of the early buildings on campus and this has a value. He also states that it is important and it relates to the historic context. He also believes that the prayer garden will be a rebirth forward for the Seminary.

Mr. von Senden noted that he would like to see forward progression on the chapel project. He is also disappointed that there was not any interim stabilization immediately after the fire. He believes that the proposal is a conservation effort. Mr. von Senden made a motion to approve the application with conditions.

Mr. Smeallie seconded the motion.

Mr. Keleher asked for additional clarification on selective demolition.

The motion was approved by roll call vote, with conditions, 5-2.

REASON

The Board found that the applicant had responded to previous comments and believes that the documentation and careful salvage of the walls and the stabilization of portions of the walls will preserve the Chapel's general form, plan and spatial relationship.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION, MAY 4, 2011: Staff recommends approval of the prayer garden concept, as described in the Interim Stabilization Plan, with the following conditions:

1. That the applicant document the building in accordance with the requirements of Chapter 4: *Demolition of Existing Structures* application requirements for Significance Buildings. This documentation will include History of the Structure, Photographs and Measured Drawings, as outlined in Chapter 4 of the *Design Guidelines*.
2. That the following archaeology conditions shall appear in the General Notes of all site plans and on all site plan sheets that involve demolition or ground disturbance (including Basement/Foundation Plans, Demolition, Erosion and Sediment Control, Grading, Landscaping, Utilities, and Sheeting and Shoring) so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirements:
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- C. The applicant/developer shall not allow any metal detection or artifact collection to be conducted on the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology

BOARD ACTION, April 6, 2011: Deferred for further study, 7-0

SPEAKERS

Duncan Blair, attorney, presented the application. He noted that the building was only safe because it was secured by a fence. He said that memorial tablets needed to be removed from the walls but were structurally integral and required selective demolition. He asked that the south and west walls be removed as quickly as possible but agreed to work with Staff on the north and east walls. The Seminary is not interested in restoration of the existing chapel, as it does not meet their institutional needs.

John Hynan, representing the HAF, said that they had no choice but to urge restoration. However, they supported the staff recommendation, and especially retention of the tower and east wall.

Murney Keleher, 208 N. Royal St., supported retention of the ruins as a forecourt to a new chapel and believed this could be a very attractive design.

Gail Rothrock, 209 Duke St., concurred with the others and urged conservation.

Linda Huntington, 219 Wolfe St., supported the proposed prayer garden with low walls.

Linda Serabian, Alexandria resident, Immanuel Chapel congregant and architect agreed with both the preservationists and the Seminary but believed that the building remains should be incorporated into a new contemporary building on this site.

Ian Markham, Dean and President of the Seminary, said that there were nine stained glass windows that had been salvaged and more artifacts would be used in the new chapel. He asked for a decision so that the ruins behind the fence may be reopened to the school while the new church is being planned and built.

David Peabody, Alexandria resident, Immanuel Chapel congregant and architect, asked "If this building is not worth saving, what is?" He stated that as much damage had been done by weather since the fire as was done by the fire. He urged denial of the demolition and integration of the remains into a new chapel.

Bill Dickinson, 805 N Quaker Lane, supported the Seminary and Staff recommendation.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Mr. von Senden noted that he is on the Vestry of the Immanuel Church which has a contractual relationship with the Seminary but that it is below the threshold described by the City Attorney's Office for abstention from this case. He noted that no effort had been made to maintain the fabric since the fire in October. He said he found no valid reason in the structural reports submitted to remove the walls and noted that the walls had survived the winter weather without any protection. He thanked the Dean for the dialogue with the City and for proposing to preserve

some of the walls but disagreed with the limited amount now proposed for preservation. He was not altogether opposed to the concept of a prayer garden but was opposed to any demolition until a new architect is retained to study the maintenance of the existing historic fabric and perhaps its integration into and new chapels, which he understands the need for and fully supports.

Mr. Smeallie noted that this was new territory for the Board. He said the Board's charge was to preserve historic fabric but use was not was not their concern. He favored retention of the building form on the east elevation as a character defining feature. He supported staff recommendation of a deferral.

Mr. Keleher said that this case was not complicated at all for him. He did not believe that the needs of the Seminary were preservation criteria within the Board's purview. This building ought to be restored totally and rebuilt because it can be. A new larger chapel can be built nearby.

Mr. Neale encouraged restoration of the building but would like an engineering report that indicated what portions of the building could or should be preserved. He encouraged preserving as much as possible and believed more could be preserved if the architect was challenged to do so. He recommended deferral for restudy.

Mr. Carlin concurred with Mr. Keleher and Mr. Neale. He said that this group of buildings and the entire hill on which these buildings sit was extremely important and encouraged restoration or retention to the maximum extent possible.

Mr. Fitzgerald encouraged retention of the building to preserve the memories and tradition of the church. He asked for a good faith effort to restudy. He asked for a report about the structural integrity and to keep an open mind. He made a motion to restudy the demolition. Mr. Keleher seconded the motion.

Chairman Hulfish noted his family ties to the Seminary and this church. He framed the question before the Board as one of demolition of a portion of the remaining walls. He noted that the walls had not been protected since the fire. He asked Mr. Blair what they needed from this hearing.

Mr. Blair said the immediate need was to get inside the chapel to remove the relics and to make the site safe so that the security fence can be removed. He asked for assistance from the City's technical staff to assess the damage. He said they cannot wait until the new chapel is designed to make a decision about the ruins of the existing chapel. He said all of the relics that can be removed without a crane have been removed.

Chairman Hulfish asked Staff for additional information about what is standing, what can stay and what has to go. He said the Board needed more input to make a decision about what is salvageable and what is not.

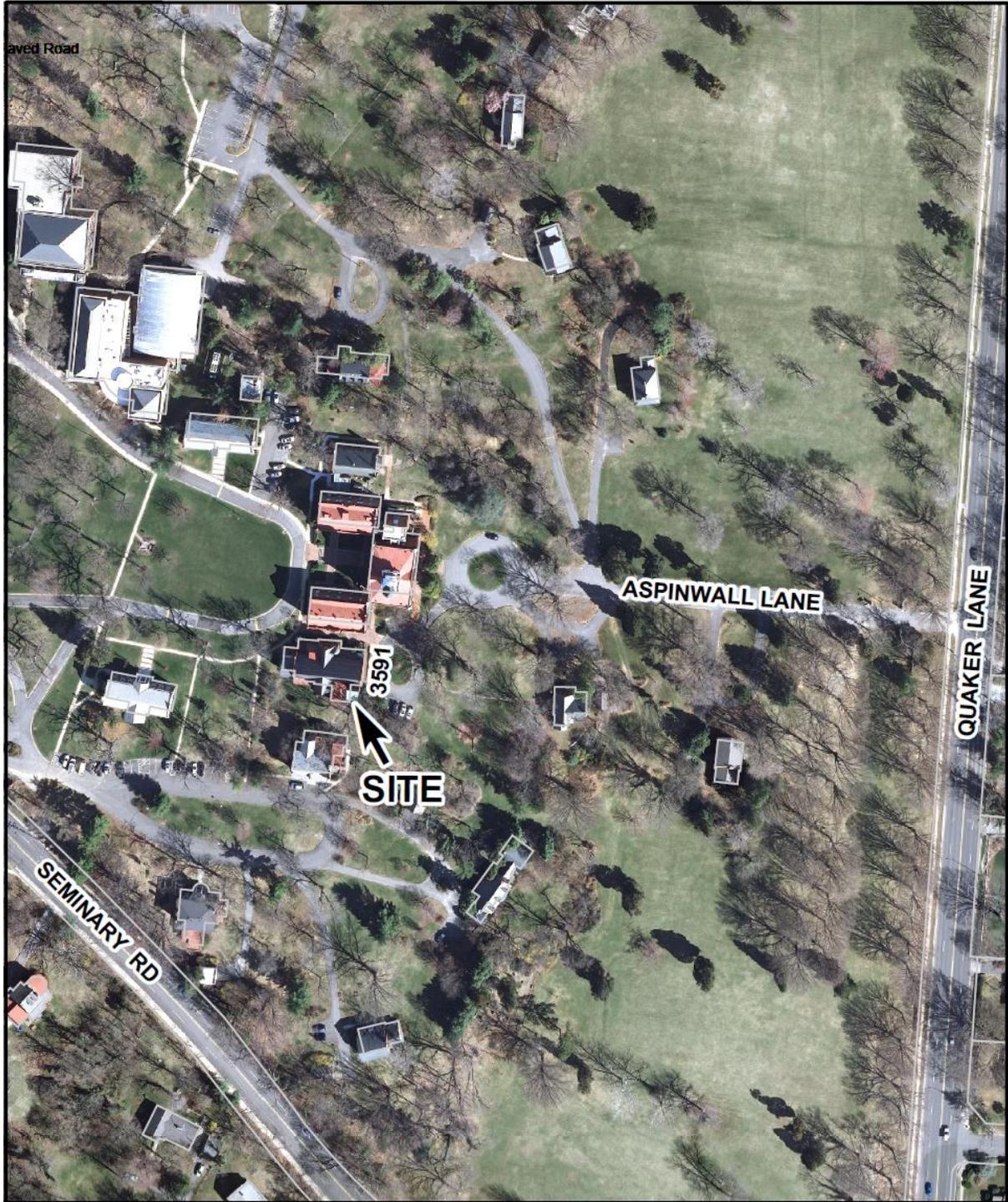
The motion to defer for restudy passed 7-0.

REASON

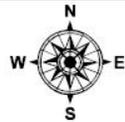
The Board needed more information to make a decision about what is salvageable and what is not.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION, April 6, 2011: Staff recommends approval of the prayer Garden concept with deferral to restudy the specific wall areas to be demolished and with the following additional conditions:

1. That the applicant document the building in accordance with the requirements of Chapter 4: *Demolition of Existing Structures* application requirements for Significance Buildings. This documentation will include History of the Structure, Photographs and Measured Drawings, as outlined in Chapter 4 of the *Design Guidelines*.
2. That the following archaeology conditions shall appear in the General Notes of all site plans and on all site plan sheets that involve demolition or ground disturbance (including Basement/Foundation Plans, Demolition, Erosion and Sediment Control, Grading, Landscaping, Utilities, and Sheeting and Shoring) so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirements:
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Note: This docket item requires a roll call vote.

UPDATE

After the May 4, 2011 BAR approval to demolish portions of the existing chapel, the applicant began to pursue temporary stabilization while the structural and architectural design for permanent stabilization requirements could be completed. On August 23, 2011, a magnitude 5.8 earthquake hit the region, resulting in structural damage to many historic buildings in the area. Although the majority of Immanuel Chapel remained intact, a post-earthquake structural analysis indicated that the chapel, and the tower specifically, had sustained significant structural damage which was unrelated to its present unroofed, post-fire condition. Potential long-term stabilization schemes were considered in the fall of 2011 for the areas of the chapel proposed to remain. The engineering analysis indicated that a substantial buttressing system or permanent scaffolding would be required, with substantial visual and fiscal drawbacks for the Seminary.

Following that structural analysis, the applicant again considered almost complete demolition of the chapel walls and studied a more landscape oriented design emphasis for the prayer garden, as they simultaneously developed plans for a new chapel site on the campus. Since the Board's previous approval, the Seminary has selected Robert A. M. Stern Architects to construct a Chapel for the Ages to the southwest of the chapel ruins. In early 2012, at the applicant's request, the previously appointed subcommittee of Peter Smeallie and John von Senden met to consider revisions to the Board's previous approval. At the initial meeting, the applicant proposed demolishing all of the chapel's walls and tower to a height of approximately five feet above exterior grade for the majority of the chapel, this being the maximum height the structural engineer said the unsupported masonry walls could stand without external bracing. The BAR sub-committee felt strongly that such a scheme did not retain enough of the chapel for the structure to continue to read as a chapel and was not warranted, despite the earthquake damage. The applicant restudied their proposal and, at a subsequent meeting, discussion centered on retention of a significantly greater portion of the east elevation, including the majority of the tower and the character-defining lancet windows and brownstone columns. The current application is a compromise resulting from the two very constructive sub-committee meetings.

The applicant is now requesting partial demolition of the remaining building fabric which includes the majority of the north, south and west elevations and portions of the east elevation. Window location and sill height have dictated proposed areas of demolition. As noted in the application, some walls will be retained to existing window sill heights that range from 4.5 feet to 10.5 feet above exterior grade. Other wall portions will be salvaged to a height of approximately 2.25 feet to 4.8 feet above exterior grade. The east elevation wall will be retained to a height of 16 feet and the tower to approximately 34 feet. Staff estimates that the revised proposal for partial demolition will now result in the demolition of approximately 70% of what remains from the fire.

*The majority of what follows below is from the Board's previous review however in the interest of brevity, some items no longer relevant have been omitted. New information to the previous staff report is noted throughout the report below in **italics**.*

I. ISSUE

The applicant is requesting a Permit to Demolish *and approval of the final design details for stabilizing and retaining* portions of the remaining walls of the fire damaged shell of the Immanuel Chapel at the Protestant Episcopal Theological Seminary in Virginia, *as the chapel will be reused as a memorial prayer garden.* A fire on Friday, October 22, 2010 destroyed the entire wooden roof structure of this building but left the majority of the solid masonry walls and tower intact. The applicant requests demolition of approximately 70% of the remaining wall area and proposes to create a prayer garden for meditation and outdoor services at grade within the remains of the masonry walls.



Figure 1: Existing conditions, east elevation.



Figure 2 & 3: Existing north and west elevations.

The Chapel and seven adjacent buildings are individually listed on the City's 100 Year Old Building list. There is no local historic district at the Seminary campus. Based on the criteria in Zoning Ordinance Sec. 10-305, no more than 25 square feet of additional wall material may be demolished without approval of a Permit to Demolish from the BAR. It should be noted that the Board has no authority to require restoration of the building *and the Board has already approved partial demolition of the existing walls (May 4, 2011)*. In addition, should the entire remains of the chapel be demolished, the Board would have limited authority to review any new structure on this site, because it is not within a historic district, and the Board's purview would be limited to the protection of the landscapes and settings of the adjacent buildings listed on the 100 Year Old Building list. As plans for a new chapel, the Chapel of the Ages, are now underway, the Board must also make a determination as to whether the new chapel's design or location will adversely affect the adjacent 100 Year Old Buildings.



Figure 4: Previously approved plans for Immanuel Chapel as a prayer garden.



Figure 16: Perspective of previously approved plans, looking southwest

II. HISTORY

The Seminary was established in 1823, and constructed on a site purchased in 1827. **Construction for Immanuel Chapel was begun in 1879 and it was consecrated in 1881.** Immanuel Chapel represents an important component of the mid 19th-century building campaign that forms the architectural and liturgical core of the campus. The academic complex dating from this period includes Aspinwall Hall, Bohlen and Meade Halls, Francis Scott Key Hall and Immanuel Chapel, according to the National Register nomination. The National Register nomination also notes that “The seminary’s core of early buildings stands as a tribute to the talents of their architects and as a document of the taste of the Episcopal Church at the time of their erection in the 19th century.”¹ The Chapel was designed by “the Baltimore church architect Charles E. Cassell...[and] contained such exoticisms as a chancel rail of rosewood ‘brought by Bishop Penick from Africa.’ The chapel stands as an excellent example of Ruskinian Gothic architecture as built on the collegiate scale.”²

The Chapel represents a textbook example of the Gothic Revival style with its steeply pitched roof, large lancet (or “pointed”) windows, two-story entry tower, cruciform plan, dark red brick and polychrome slate roof. The Gothic Revival style arose in 18th-century England as a reaction against the Neoclassical style and the effects of industrialization. By the 19th-century, the Gothic Revival style was embedded with a deep sense of Christianity and medievalism. The Anglican Church in England pursued a building campaign in the 18th- and 19th-centuries that resulted in the construction of many Gothic Revival churches and chapels and was concurrent with several academic and religious movements, including the Oxford Movement. The use of the Gothic Revival style at the Seminary represented not just the application of a popular architectural style but the intentional selection of a style imbued with a deep sense of religiosity, most appropriate for a recently-founded theological seminary.

The Protestant Episcopal Theological Seminary in Virginia was listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register in 1978 and on the National Register for Historic Places in 1980. Immanuel Chapel is one of eight buildings at the Seminary listed on the City’s 100 Year Old Building list, subject to

¹ Protestant Episcopal Theological Seminary in Virginia National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form, State of Significance, 1978.

² Ibid.

individual review by the Old and Historic Alexandria District Board of Architectural Review. These buildings were approved for listing by City Council in 1984 (Ordinance No. 2957). Section 10-301 of the Zoning Ordinance states the purpose of “the creation of the 100 year old building lists, to protect community health and safety and to promote the education, prosperity, and general welfare of the public through the identification, preservation, protection and enhancement of buildings, structures, places or features, together with their landscapes and settings...”

The BAR has reviewed several applications for alterations to these buildings over the years.

Following the April 6 hearing, Chairman Hulfish asked two of the OHAD Board members, Peter Smeallie and John von Senden, to serve on a sub-committee to meet on site with Seminary representatives, the Historic Preservation Staff, and the City’s Structural Engineer from Code Administration to evaluate the existing condition of the building and the applicant’s earlier proposal. The initial purpose was to create an interim stabilization plan for the chapel with the goal of making the site safe enough to remove the security fence, for both aesthetic and safety reasons, as soon as possible. After the initial meeting, an Interim Stabilization Plan was created. The Board approved partial demolition of the chapel walls and concept approval of the adaptive reuse of the chapel as a prayer garden on May 4, 2011, with final design details of the wall stabilization system to be brought back to the Board once the schematic design for the new chapel was created. When the applicant decided to request additional demolition, the sub-committee reconvened to review the proposal and provide feedback.

III. ANALYSIS

The Zoning Staff advises that the proposed demolition and adaptive reuse per the submitted plans complies with zoning.

Permit to Demolish

In considering a Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate, the Board must consider the following criteria set forth in the Zoning Ordinance, §10-105(B):

- (1) Is the building or structure of such architectural or historical interest that its moving, removing, capsulating or razing would be to the detriment of the public interest?
- (2) Is the building or structure of such interest that it could be made into a historic house?
- (3) Is the building or structure of such old and unusual or uncommon design, texture and material that it could not be reproduced or be reproduced only with great difficulty?
- (4) Would retention of the building or structure help preserve the memorial character of the George Washington Memorial Parkway?
- (5) Would retention of the building or structure help preserve and protect an historic place or area of historic interest in the city?
- (6) Would retention of the building or structure promote the general welfare by maintaining and increasing real estate values, generating business, creating new positions, attracting tourists, students, writers, historians, artists and artisans, attracting new residents, encouraging study and interest in American history, stimulating interest and study in architecture and design, educating citizens in

American culture and heritage, and making the city a more attractive and desirable place in which to live?

Staff *continues* to find that criteria 1, 3, 5 and 6 are met. Immanuel Chapel is significant for what it represents individually as an example of Gothic Revival architecture as well as collectively in its position in the historic core of the Seminary. The Chapel, even in its current fire-damaged state, clearly articulates its significance and retains a high level of integrity with respect to location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.³ The Chapel was previously identified as, and continues to be, an excellent example of the Gothic Revival style. In addition, the Chapel is an integral component to the academic and spiritual center of the Seminary. This grouping of hilltop buildings, including the Chapel, Aspinwall Hall and others, expresses the 19th-century origins of the Seminary as both an academic and religious institution, a view which is readily apparent from North Quaker Lane.

From a pure preservationist's perspective, Staff preference is that the building be restored as closely as possible to what had existed previously, including the installation of a new roof. Under such a scheme, the Chapel would be returned to a fully functioning Chapel, as it had been prior to the fire, or adapted to another use serving the Seminary. City Staff from several departments met with the representatives of the Seminary several times shortly after the fire. In those meetings, the Seminary noted that they had identified a need over 30 years ago for a significantly larger chapel with a floor plan that met their modern liturgical needs for training priests. They noted that they needed to dedicate as much of the fire settlement proceeds as possible toward the new, larger chapel. Nevertheless, throughout the process Dean Markham and other Seminary representatives have shown a remarkable good faith effort to reach out to the stakeholders of this building and the school to identify a way to commemorate the previous chapel while addressing the 21st century needs of the school.

Recognizing the potential constraints of a full restoration, as well as the Seminary's programmatic desire to construct an entirely new chapel, Staff is cognizant of the importance of finding a scheme that balances the appropriate preservation of the Chapel's remains and meets the Seminary's long-range needs. *During the Board's previous review, no specific design or a location for a new chapel had been proposed and no architect had been selected, although the Seminary was developing their programmatic requirements which included a new chapel twice as large as Immanuel Chapel. At this time, plans for the new chapel are well underway. The architect is Robert A. M. Stern Architects and the proposed location is to the southwest of the Immanuel Chapel ruins. The proposed chapel will be located immediately to the east of the Welcome Center. The new chapel includes a new tower, as well as an oratory, to provide a physical and spiritual connection with the adjacent chapel ruins.*

The proposal before the Board *is now an increase in the total area proposed for demolition, with the remaining walls enclosing a prayer garden within the confines of the stabilized ruins of Immanuel Chapel. As this is such a unique application, there are no Design Guidelines to reference for analysis. From the beginning, Staff has supported a stabilized ruin scheme conceptually, noting that the reuse of religious buildings has created very interesting spaces in*

³ The National Register traditionally recognizes a property's integrity through seven aspects or qualities: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. A property conveys its significance through its integrity.

examples around the world. Such a space references the original structure through the retention of walls, columns, towers and the like, while creating a new, and often spiritual place, open to the elements, for contemplation, prayer and ceremonies. Staff researched this type of adaptive reuse and found examples including the Old Sheldon Church in South Carolina, Church Ruins in Port Arthur, Tasmania, Australia, and St. Catherine's Church in Nuremberg, Germany. A very successful local example of an outdoor chapel in a garden ruin is the St. Thomas Parish Episcopal Church garden near Dupont Circle in Washington, DC. The walls of other historic buildings destroyed by fire were intentionally stabilized as a ruin rather than restored, such as Thomas Jefferson's design for Governor Barbour's house in Barboursville, Virginia which is now used as a backdrop for plays and special events at the winery.

Staff's preference has always been to retain as much as possible of the fire-damaged chapel. Staff previously commended the Seminary for including the east gable end and tower and for studying potential retention of a small roofed area above the north transept. Staff felt that preservation of the east gable end and tower, in particular, maintained the visual rhythm and spacing of the most historic buildings on the campus as viewed by the public from Quaker Lane. In the prior application Staff believed that enough of the walls would be preserved to retain the previous Chapel's general form, plan and spatial relationship among the buildings of the historic core.

Following engineering design analysis and design development of the wall stabilization system, Staff and the BAR sub-committee met with the applicant on site twice in 2012. At the first meeting the applicant proposed to demolish such a significant portion of the remaining walls that it was impossible to discern what the architectural style of the chapel was, or even that this was once a chapel. The applicant was asked to explore wall heights that would allow more of the character defining features to remain, yet which did not require new large wall buttresses. At the second meeting, the applicant's architect had successfully revised the plans to retain more perimeter wall area at varying heights and incorporated former window sills to indicate previous opening locations. However, on the east elevation, the gable end and tower previously identified by the BAR as the most visually important and character defining features of the chapel, still lacked architectural definition. The applicant was asked again to restudy these elements to see if they could not be elevated enough to recall more of the original chapel's character and to maintain the architectural rhythm of the six historic facades facing Quaker Lane. As a result, the applicant now proposes to retain the tower to approximately 35 feet in height, the base of the uppermost opening. In addition, the lower half of the east façade wall will remain, with its signature herringbone brick, brownstone columns and lancet windows. The proposal before you now is supported by Staff and the BAR Sub-committee.

While not as extensive as what the Board had previously approved, Staff believes that the east elevation will continue to convey its former significance and will still maintain a strong visual relationship with the adjacent 100 Year Old Buildings. The remaining three walls will be increased in height in some areas and lowered in others to visually open the interior space to the new chapel and the campus, befitting a memorial prayer garden. The wall heights will vary but will include most of the former window sills. A new parged mortar coping will cap these walls to express their stabilized ruin character, though Staff recommends that slate roof tiles salvaged from the chapel be used as wall coping wherever possible for weather protection. Several

interior columns will also be reused, though they will be reduced to heights similar to the adjacent exterior walls.

Finding regarding Adverse Effects on 100 Year Old Buildings

As noted in Section 10-301 of the Zoning Ordinance, designation as a 100 Year Old Building by City Council results in “the identification, preservation, protection and enhancement of buildings, structures, places, or features, together with their landscapes and settings....which have special historical, cultural, artistic, or architectural significance.” Because the Seminary campus is not a historic district, only the individual designated buildings and their settings are reviewed by the BAR. Therefore, although the design of the new chapel itself is not subject to review by the Board, the Board must make a finding that the new chapel will not have an adverse effect on the landscape and setting of nearby 100 Year Old Buildings.

Although the new chapel will be located in close proximity to the 100 Year Old Buildings and will have its own iconic tower feature, it is slightly set back and the perimeter walls of the chapel are compatible with the scale of adjacent historic buildings. The proposed red brick and slate roofing materials are characteristic of both new and historic buildings on the campus. The chapel will clearly be new construction yet architecturally compatible with its context, while assuming its new role as a visual and spiritual focal point of the Seminary.

Therefore, Staff does not believe that the new chapel will have a negative or adverse impact on the nearby 100 Year Old Buildings at the Seminary and recommends that the Board make this finding.

IV. SUMMARY

Staff regrets the tragic fire at the school and what that cultural and artistic loss represents to both the Seminary and the community at large. Staff believes that documentation and careful salvage of identified portions of the walls and relics and the stabilization of portions of the remaining walls for the proposed prayer garden is an internationally accepted preservation practice. Staff, therefore, recommends approval of the Permit to Demolish *and approval of the final design for stabilizing and retaining* portions of the remaining walls, as proposed. *Staff notes that the proposed scheme is a compromise that balances the Seminary’s concerns and objectives with the Board’s charge to maintain buildings of historic and architectural merit.*

Finally, Staff commends the applicant for providing extremely clear and thorough application materials, which made understanding the building history, present condition and complex design relationship between the historic ruin and the proposed new chapel much easier. The applicant has already submitted preliminary copies of high quality black and white photographs taken immediately after the fire and has made measured drawings and performed historic research to document the building. Staff recommends that originals of these materials be submitted in the format described in Chapter 4 of the Design Guidelines for Demolition of Existing Structures, to be deposited in Specials Collection at the Alexandria Library.

STAFF

Catherine Miliaras, Historic Preservation Planner, Planning & Zoning
Al Cox, FAIA, Historic Preservation Manager, Planning & Zoning

IV. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

Legend: C - code requirement R - recommendation S - suggestion F- finding

OFFICE OF HISTORIC ALEXANDRIA

R1 Approval. If the Seminary is not planning to retain all the window frames that were in place after the fire, OHA requests that an example be donated for the City's collection.

CODE ADMINISTRATION

F-1 The review by Code Administration is a preliminary review only. Once the applicant has filed for a building permit, code requirements will be based upon the building permit plans. If there are any questions, the applicant may contact Ken Granata, Acting Plan Review Supervisor at ken.granata@alexandriava.gov or 703-746-4193.

F-2 The following comments are for BAR case review only and are not intended to grant approval for demolition.

Code Administration: Previous comment dated 3-15-11.

F-3 The Registered Design Professional shall indicate the Use Group classification for the Memorial Garden per USBC116.2

C-1 A **demolition and building** permit will be required to be issued prior to the start of this work.

Code Administration: Comment dated 3-15-11 has been altered to include a building permit.

C-2 BAR approval and five sets of plans are required to be submitted for review prior to the issuance of the permit.

Code Administration: Previous comment dated 3-15-11.

C-3 At a minimum the plans shall be sealed by a PE licensed in the Commonwealth of VA and shall include;

- Extent, method (hand, machine, combination) and sequence of demolition,
- Any shoring required prior to removal of structural elements,
- Utility disconnect letter (**See comment C-5**)
- Termination of all water and sewer lines
- Rodent baiting and abatement plan (**See comment C-13**)
- Final plan of all remaining building elements, bracing, etc. (**See comment C-8**)

Code Administration: Previous comment dated 3-15-11.

- C-4 Where a structure has been demolished or removed, if left vacant the lot shall be filled and maintained to the existing grade (USBC 3303.4).**
- C-5 Service utility connections shall be discontinued and capped approved rules and (USBC 3303.6).**
- C-6 Provisions shall be made to prevent the accumulation of water or damage to any foundation on the premises or adjoining property (USBC 3303.5).**
- C-7 The proposed use is a change in use group classification; a new Certificate of Occupancy is required for the change of use to the Memorial Garden.**
- C-8 Demolition - Five sets of *construction documents* sealed by a *Registered Design Professional* shall be submitted to the Dept. of Code Administration for review prior to issuance of a demolition permit. Construction documents shall include a structural evaluation of all walls that will remain in place, all shoring/bracing that may need to be added and any other structural features that may be used to confirm stability of the existing structure.**
- C-9 Any proposed future alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).**
- C-10 A soils report maybe required with the building permit application if additional structural stability maybe needed to support the existing structure.**
- C-11 Required exits, parking, and accessibility within the structure for persons with disabilities must comply with USBC Chapter 11.**
- C-12 Prior to the issuance of a demolition permit or land disturbance permit, a rodent abatement plan shall be submitted to Code Enforcement that will outline the steps that will be taken to prevent the spread of rodents from the construction site to the surrounding community and sewers.**

TRANSPORTATION & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES (from previous report)

Recommendations

- R1. The building permit plans shall comply with requirements of City Code Section 5-6-224 regarding the location of downspouts, foundation drains and sump pumps. Refer to Memorandum to Industry dated June 18, 2004. [Memorandum is available online at the City web site under Transportation\Engineering and Design\Memos to Industry.]. (T&ES)
- R2. Applicant shall be responsible for repairs to the adjacent city right-of-way if damaged during construction activity. (T&ES)
- R3. All improvements to the city right-of-way such as curbing, sidewalk, driveway aprons, etc. must be city standard design. (T&ES)

- R4. No permanent structure may be constructed over any existing private and/or public utility easements. It is the responsibility of the applicant to identify any and all existing easements on the plan. (T&ES)
- R5. An erosion and sediment control plan must be approved by T&ES prior to any land disturbing activity greater than 2,500 square feet. (T&ES)
- R6. Compliance with the provisions of Article XIII of the City's zoning ordinance for stormwater quality control is required for any land disturbing activity greater than 2,500 square feet. Any changes shall be shown within a revision to DSP2002-00047; The Stormwater Master Plan. (T&ES)

Findings

- F1. An approved grading plan may be required at the time of building permit application. Insufficient information has been provided to make that determination at this time. In summary, City Code Section 5-6-224 requires that a grading plan be submitted to and approved by T&ES prior to the issuance of building permits for improvements involving: (T&ES)
Questions regarding the processing of grading plans should be directed to the T&ES Site Plan Coordinator at (703) 746-4064. Memorandum to Industry No. 02-08 was issued on April 28, 2008 and can be viewed online via the following link.
<http://alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/tes/info/gradingPlanRequirements.pdf>

City Code Requirements

- C-1 The applicant shall comply with the City of Alexandria's Solid Waste Control, Title 5, Chapter 1, which sets forth the requirements for the recycling of materials (Sec. 5-1-99). (T&ES)
- C-2 The applicant shall comply with the City of Alexandria's Noise Control Code, Title 11, Chapter 5, which sets the maximum permissible noise level as measured at the property line. (T&ES)
- C-3 All secondary utilities serving this site shall be placed underground. (Sec. 5-3-3) (T&ES)
- C-4 Any work within the right-of-way requires a separate permit from T&ES. (Sec. 5-3-61) (T&ES)

V. IMAGES



Figure 4: Existing conditions, east and north elevations.



Figure 5: Existing conditions, north and west elevations.



Figure 6: Existing conditions, south elevation.

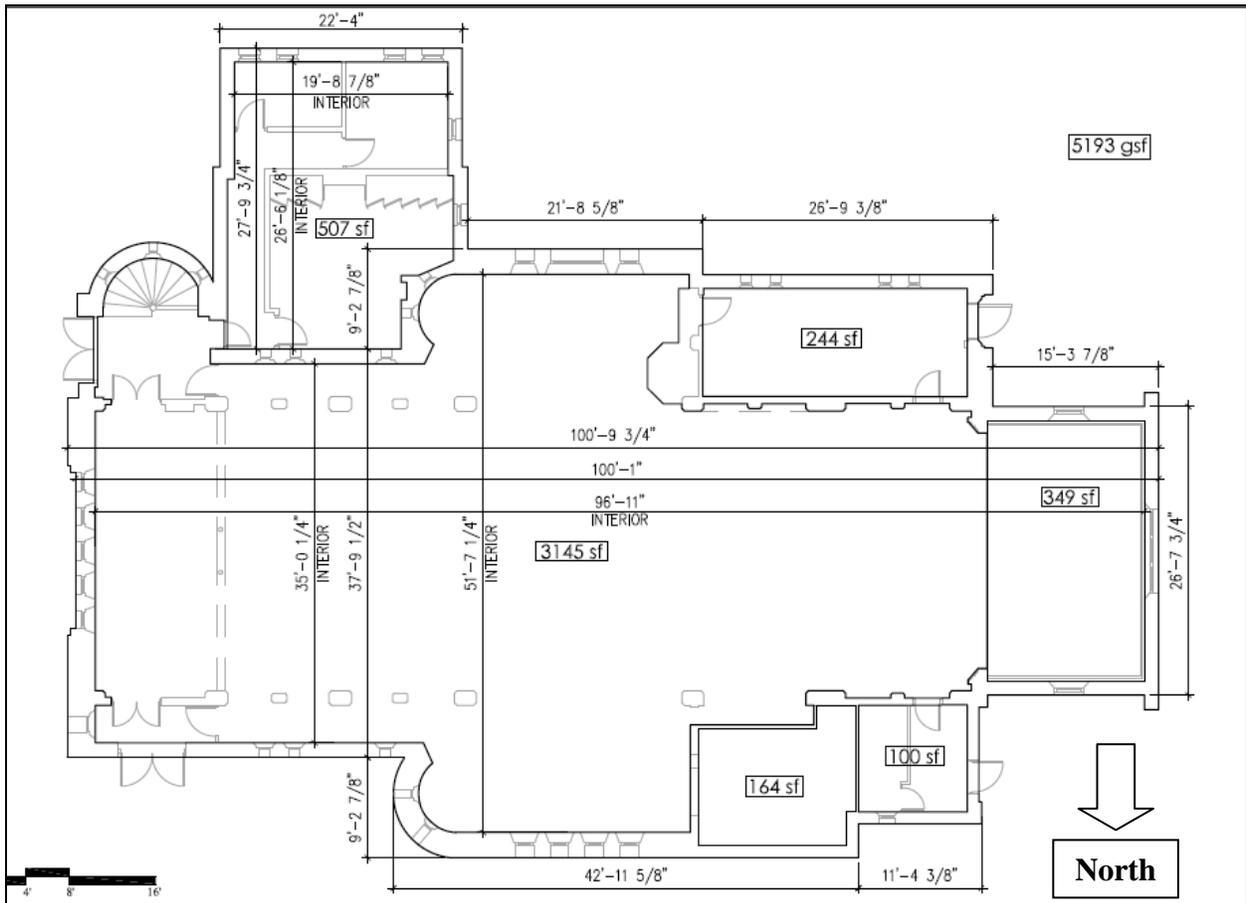
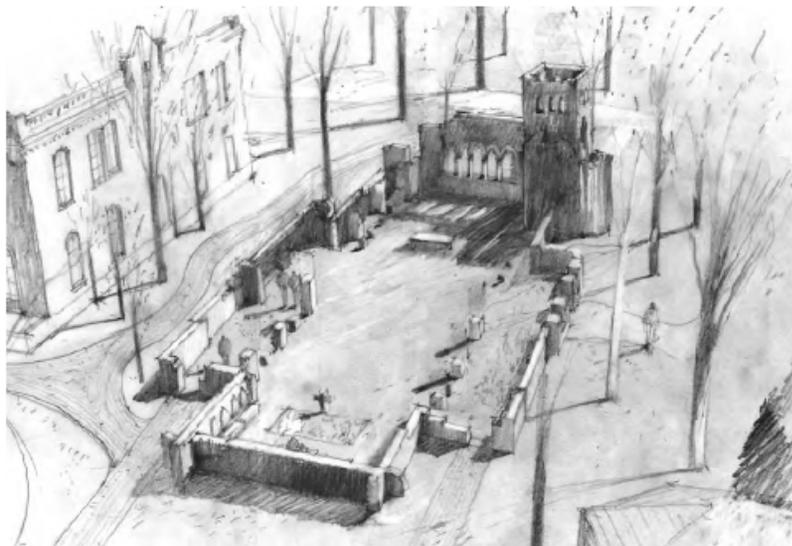


Figure 7: Floor of Chapel, prior to fire.

Context

On October 22, 2010 the building of Immanuel Chapel on the campus of the Virginia Theological Seminary was damaged by fire. Since that sad day, the Seminary has searched for a way to honor the original historic fabric which remains of the 1881 Chapel. The 1881 Chapel was erected on a holy site where one other chapel had stood. The first chapel was torn down in order to build the chapel which was consecrated to the Glory of God in 1881.

Early on, the Seminary decided that rebuilding on this holy site was not wise. We saw the raging flames and know how closely we came to losing Meade Hall and the iconic Aspinwall Hall with its Italianate cupola. Also, the Seminary needs a chapel well-equipped for today's church and for our primary purpose: forming women and men to lead congregations across the landscape of American Christianity. At the same time, however, we were perplexed. How do we honor the historic fabric which remains of the 1881 Chapel on a holy site?



The Vision

As the vision of Robert A. M. Stern Architects for a new Immanuel Chapel becomes more and more focused, it has become clear that the new must be in conversation with the holy site where two chapels have stood. The preliminary drawings of the new Chapel reveal an oratory which "reaches out" to the holy site. The oratory or small chapel will incorporate some of the treasures which survived the 1881 chapel fire, such as the vintage Rowan LeCompte stained glass windows, the Lee Family baptismal font, the wooden lectern eagle and the pew on which President Gerald Ford sat the first Sunday after he became President of the United States. With the help of Washington architects, Hartman-Cox and renowned landscape architect, Michael Vergason, the Seminary is now convinced that the holy site of two chapels must become the 1881 Memorial Garden and very much part of the new chapel. Virginia Theological Seminary has been blessed to work with some of the great minds in modern-day architecture and landscaping.

The footprint of the 1881 Chapel will be retained. Walls will be retained but with no intrusive stabilization. The architecturally significant east wall of the chapel with its lancet windows, herring-bone brick and brownstone columns will be preserved. The 1881 Memorial Garden will feature a plaque to remember with gratitude the First Responders who tried valiantly to fight the flames of October 22, 2010. The sanctuary of the 1881 Chapel will become an area for the interment of ashes, a place for the faithful to rest in peace. The fine marble plaques of the 1881 Chapel will be installed in the walls of this area, connecting the history of the second chapel to a Memorial Garden "for the ages."

The Memorial Garden will also be a "beautifully landscaped room" for seminary and parish functions. It will become a large outdoor fellowship area for coffees and services, such as celebrations of the Holy Eucharist, baptisms, weddings and funerals. The Class of 2012 has decided to give a wooden altar for the 1881 Memorial Garden. Easter Egg Hunts, cocktail parties and dinners will make the 1881 Memorial Garden a lively place of purpose for the Seminary and Immanuel Church on the Hill. The design of the 1881 Memorial Garden makes adaptive reuse of the original fabric of the 1881 Chapel—giving us the opportunity to treasure the past as we face the future.

God willing, the new Immanuel Chapel, like the 1881 Chapel, will become a landmark of formation in the Episcopal Church. Most importantly, the site of the 1881 Chapel will remain holy, as it always has been.

Figure 8. Applicant's description.

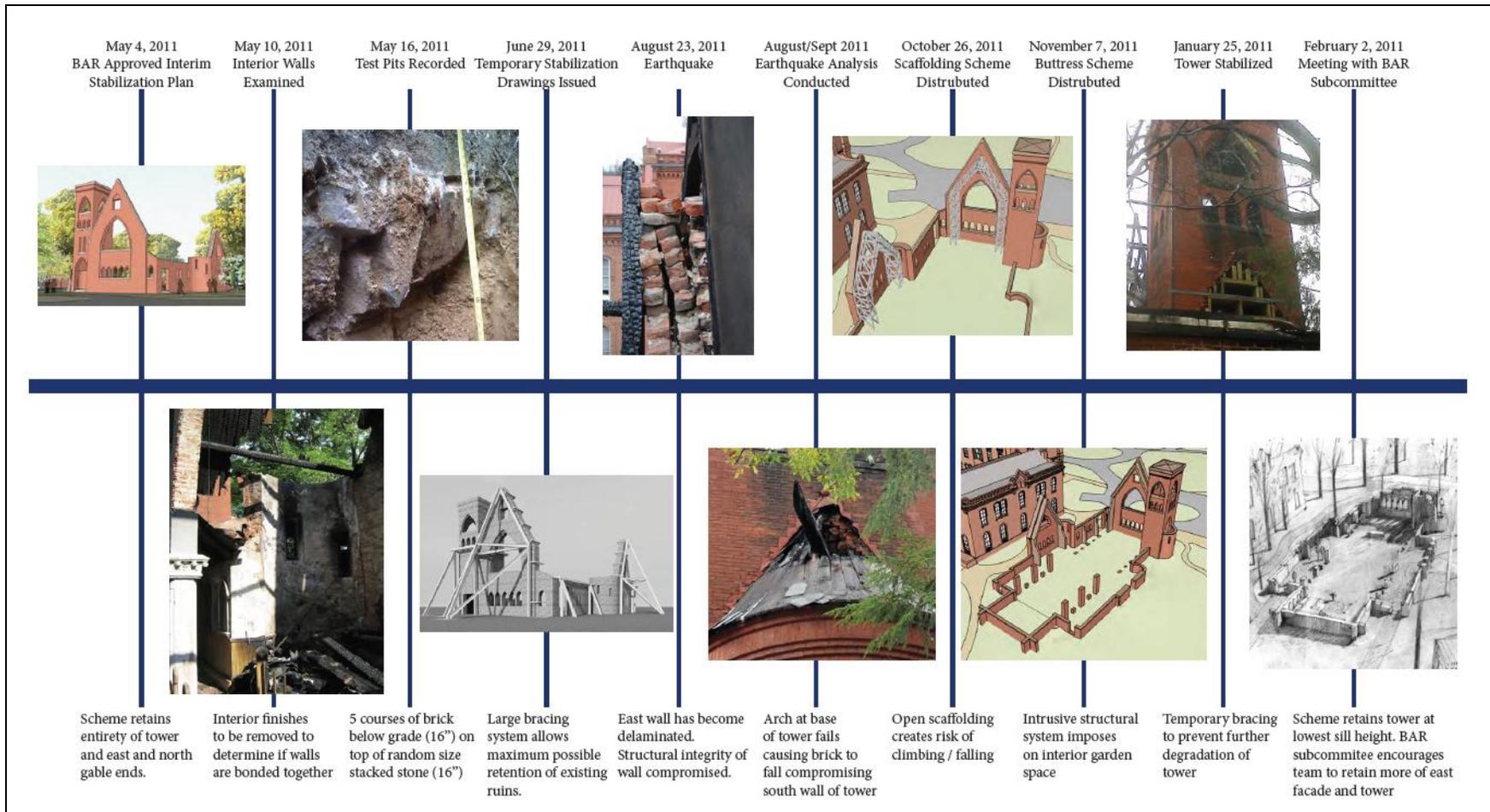


Figure 9. Timeline of events since May 4, 2011 BAR approval.



Figure 10. Aerial view of Virginia Theological Seminary showing proposed new chapel and ruins of Immanuel Chapel.



Figure 11. Proposed site plan showing the relationship of the new chapel to the memorial prayer garden

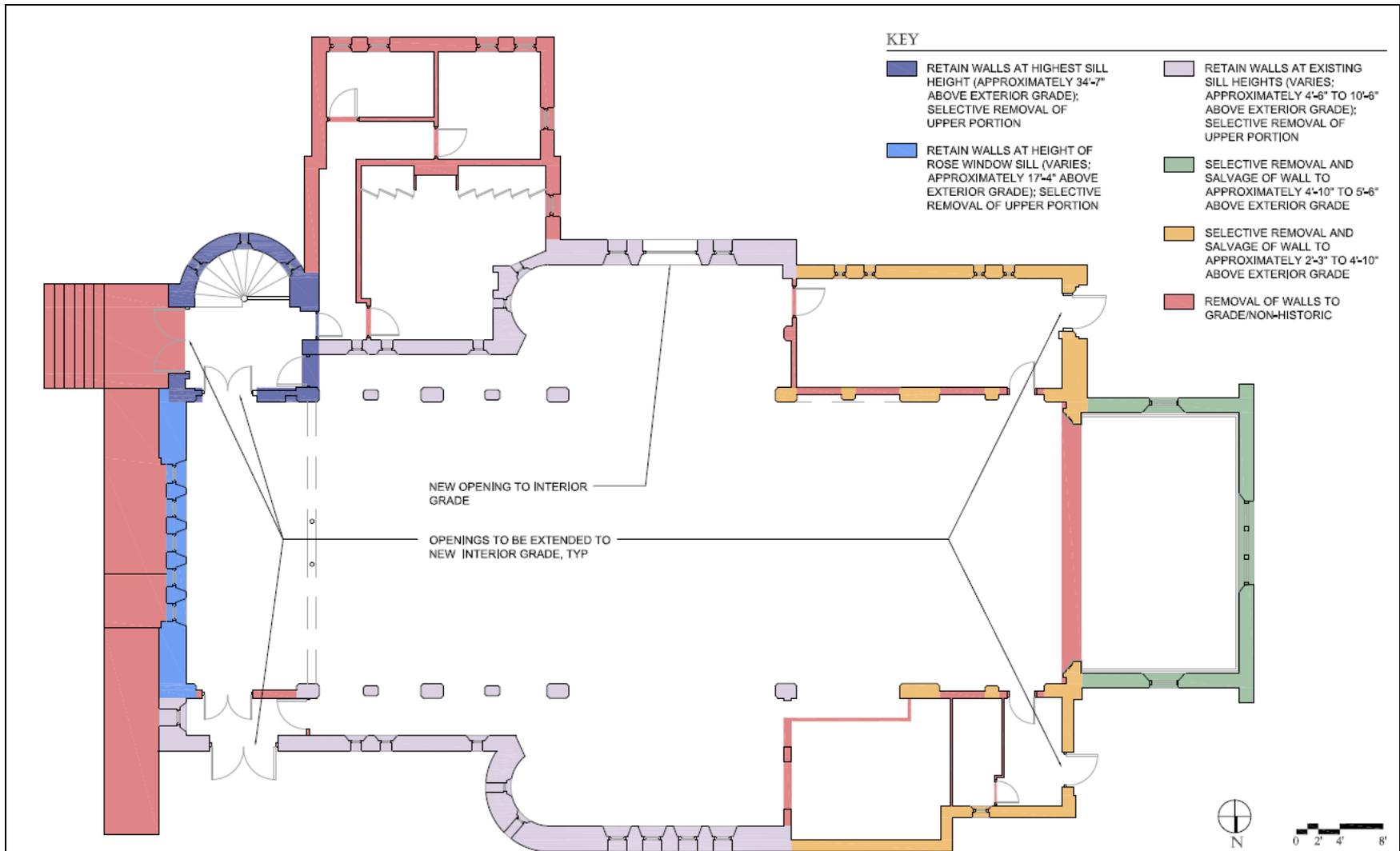


Figure 12. Plan showing proposed wall heights after demolition.

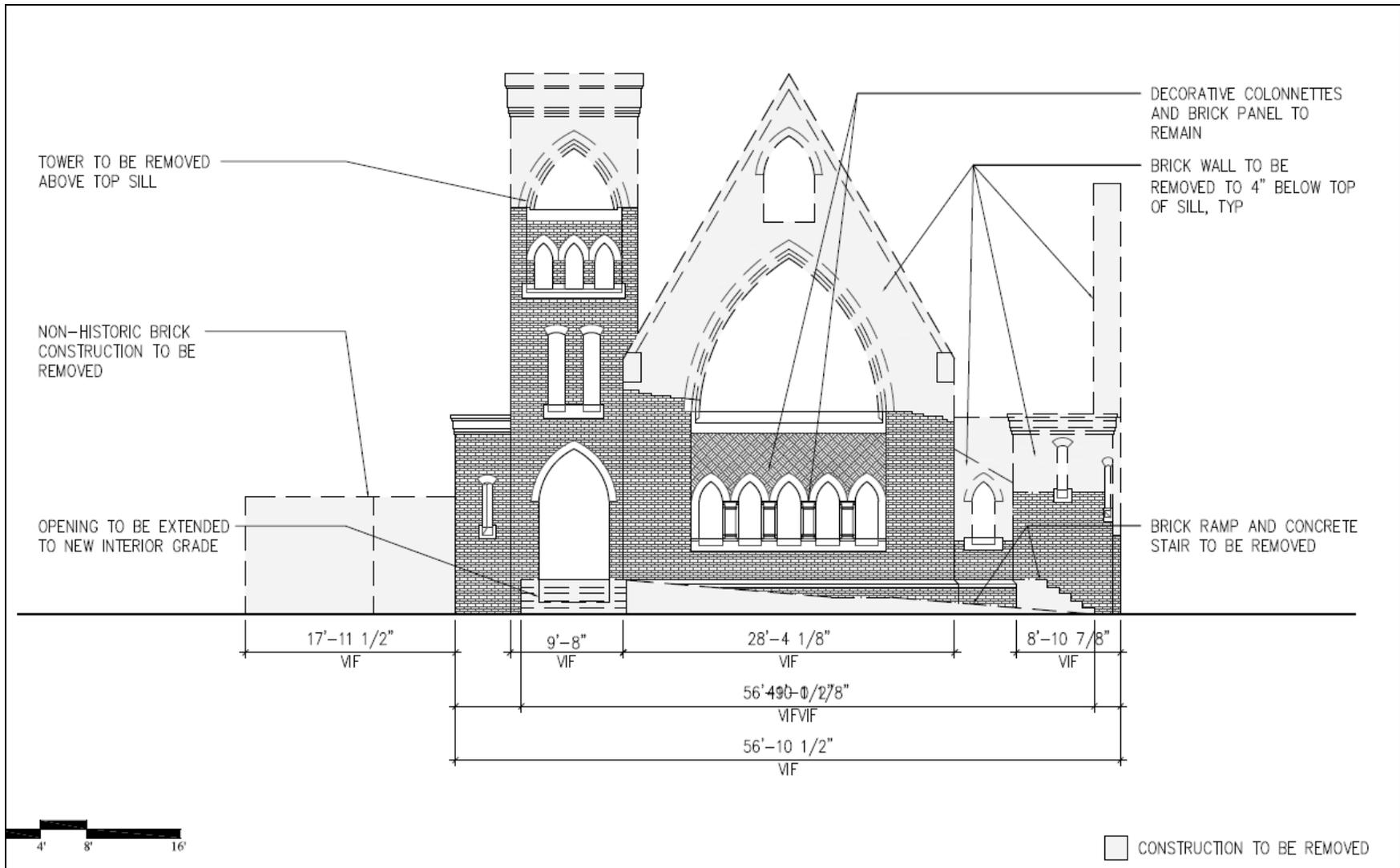


Figure 13. Area proposed for demolition on east elevation.

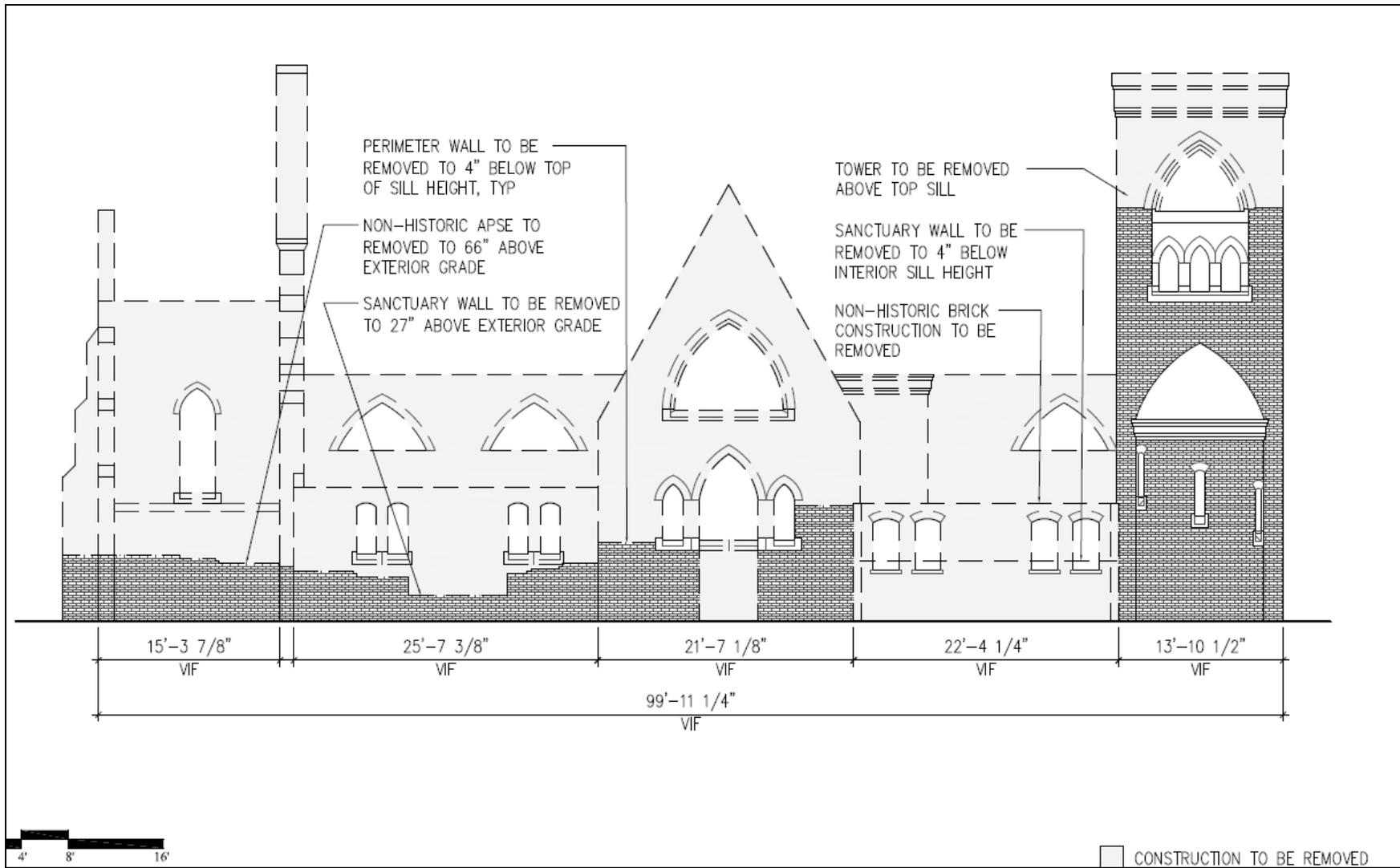


Figure 14. Area proposed for demolition on south elevation.

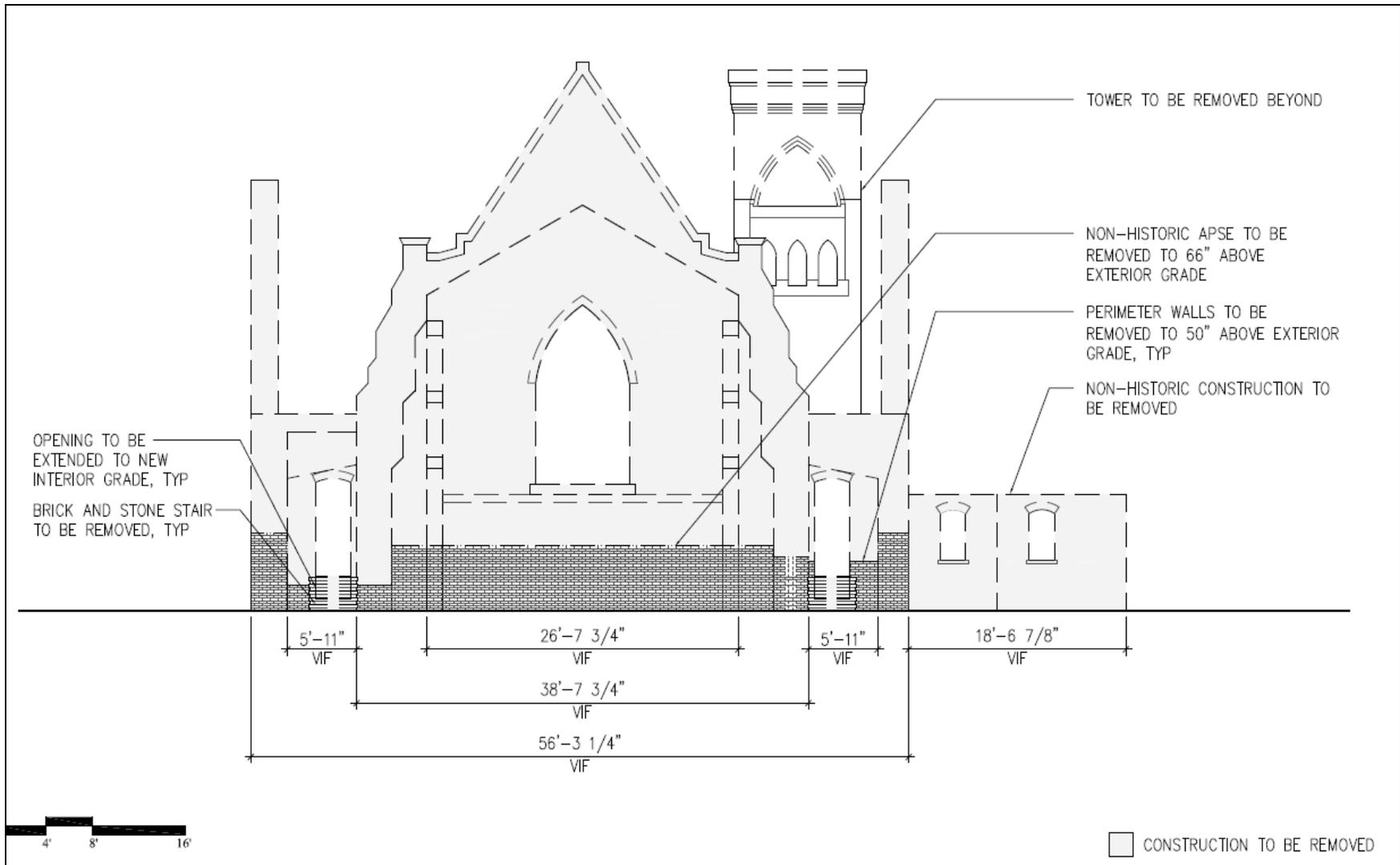


Figure 15. Area proposed for demolition on west elevation.

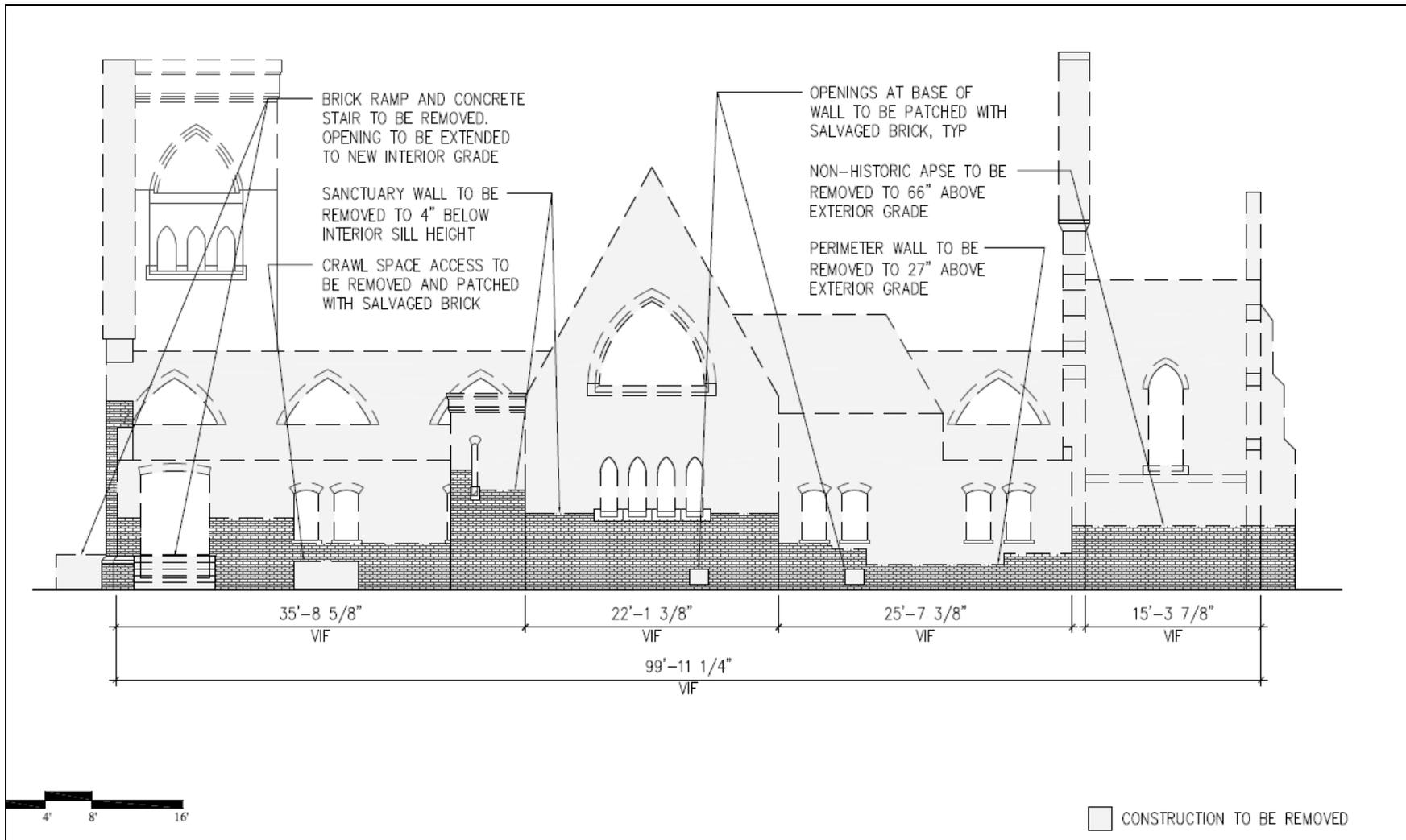


Figure 16. Area proposed for demolition on north elevation.

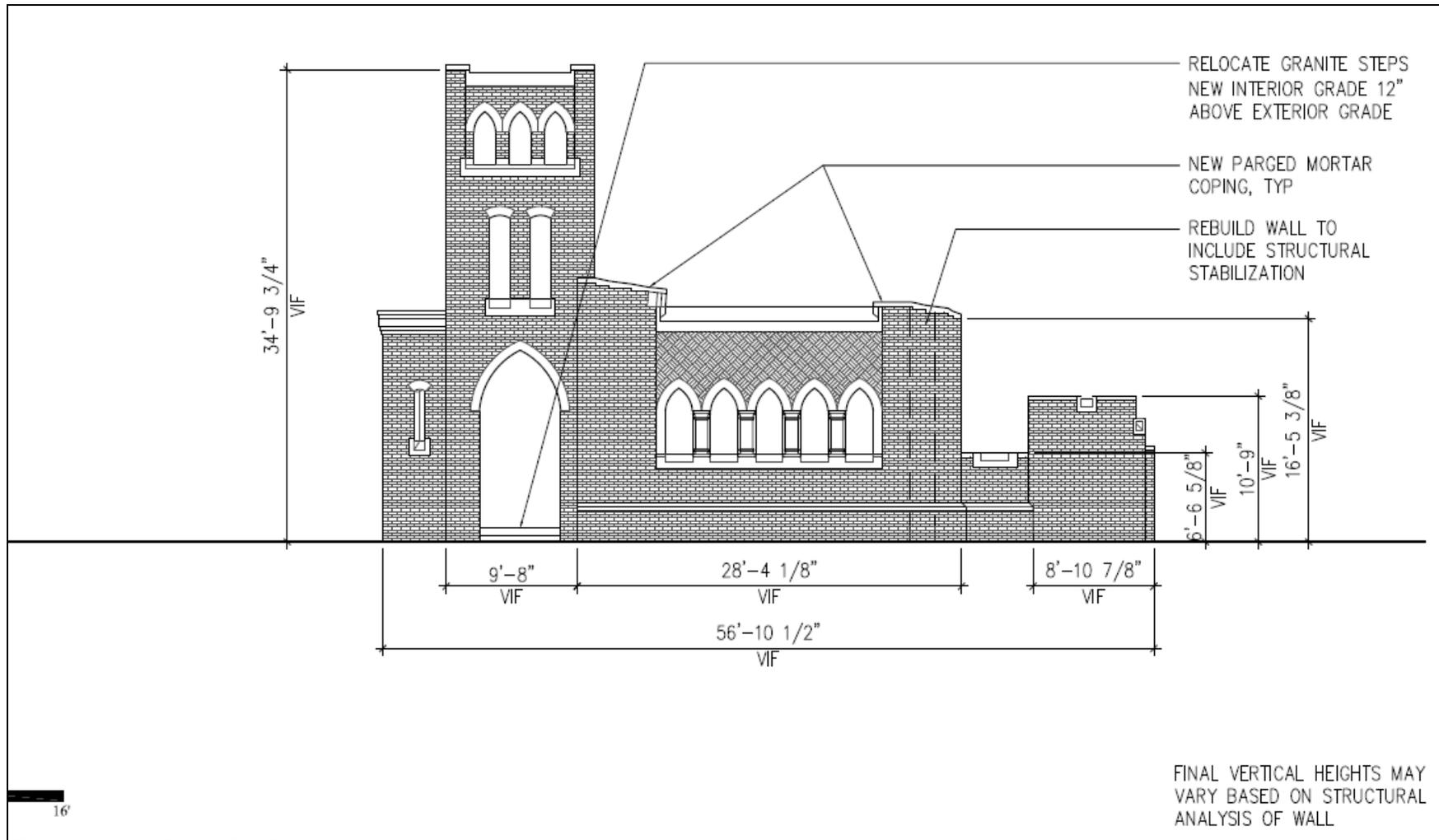


Figure 17. Proposed east elevation.

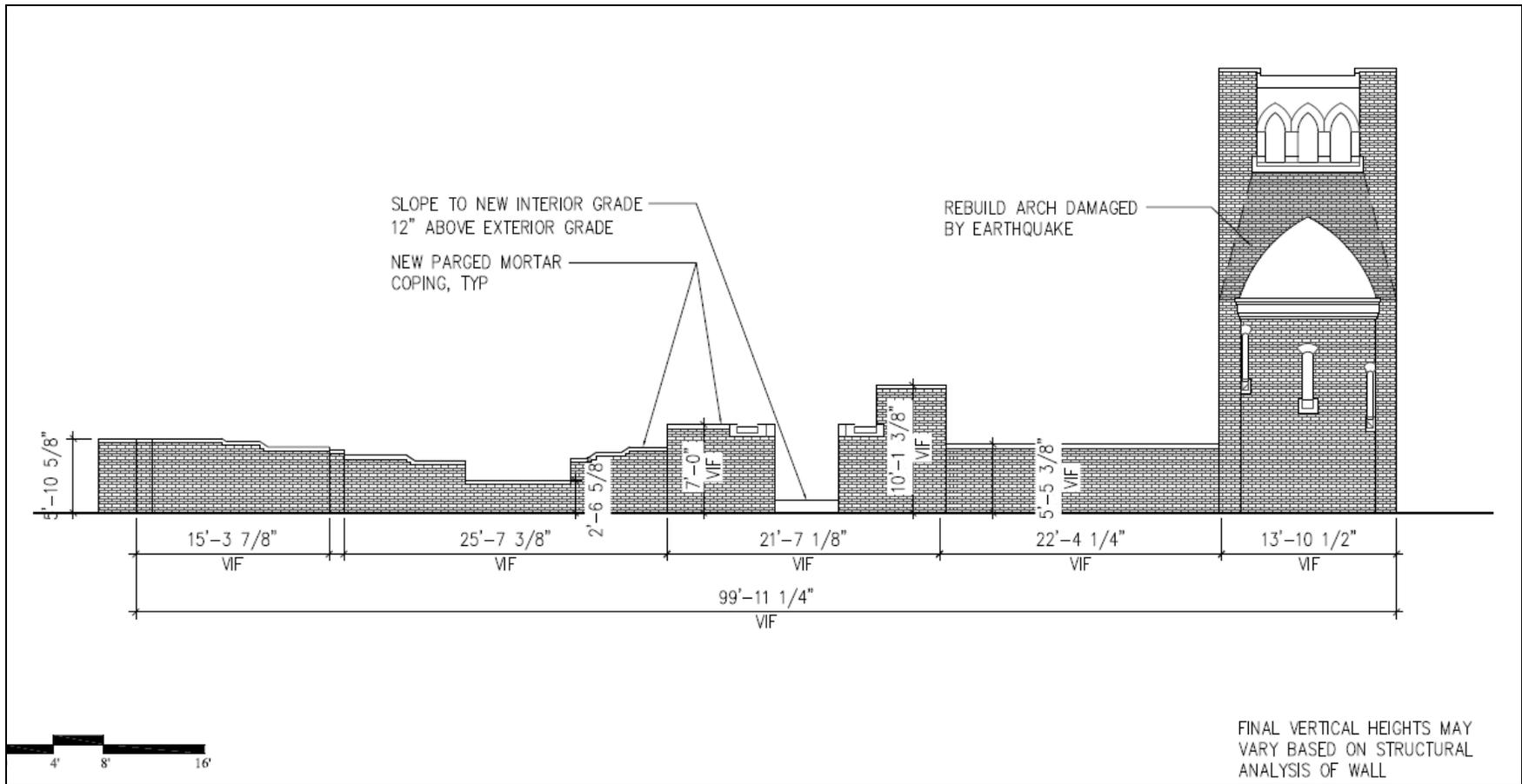


Figure 3. Proposed south elevation.

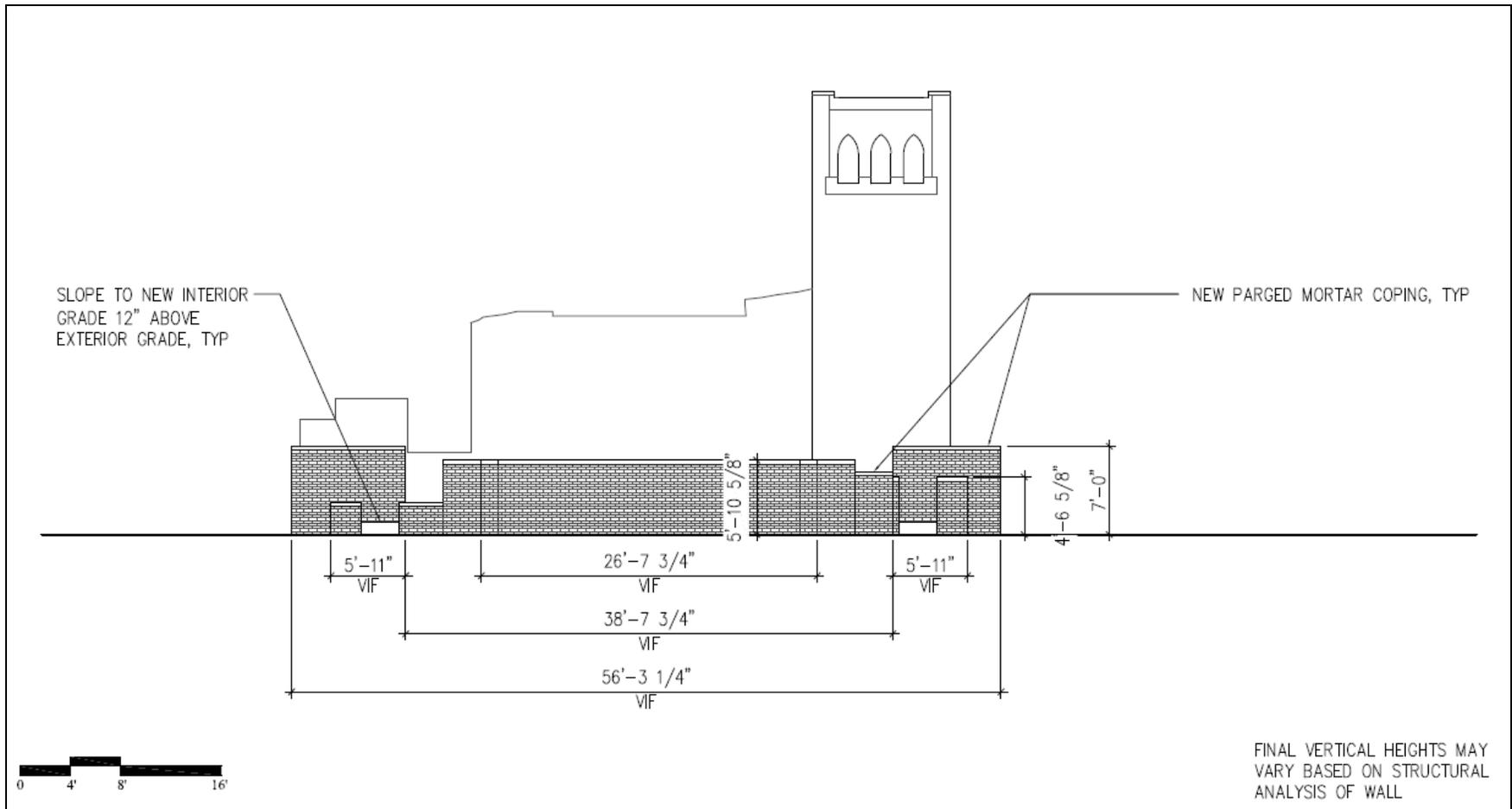


Figure 19. Proposed west elevation.

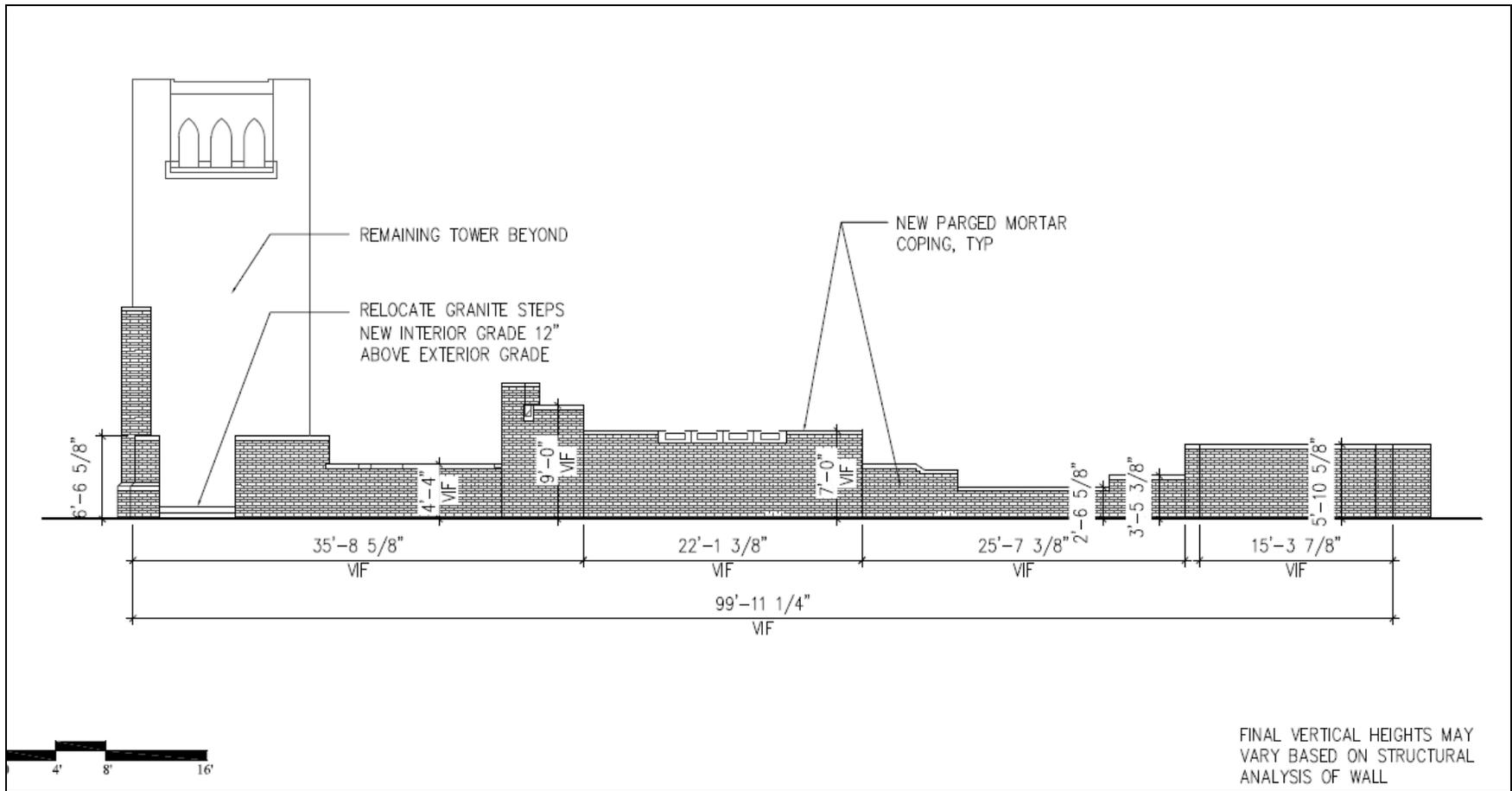


Figure 20. Proposed north elevation.

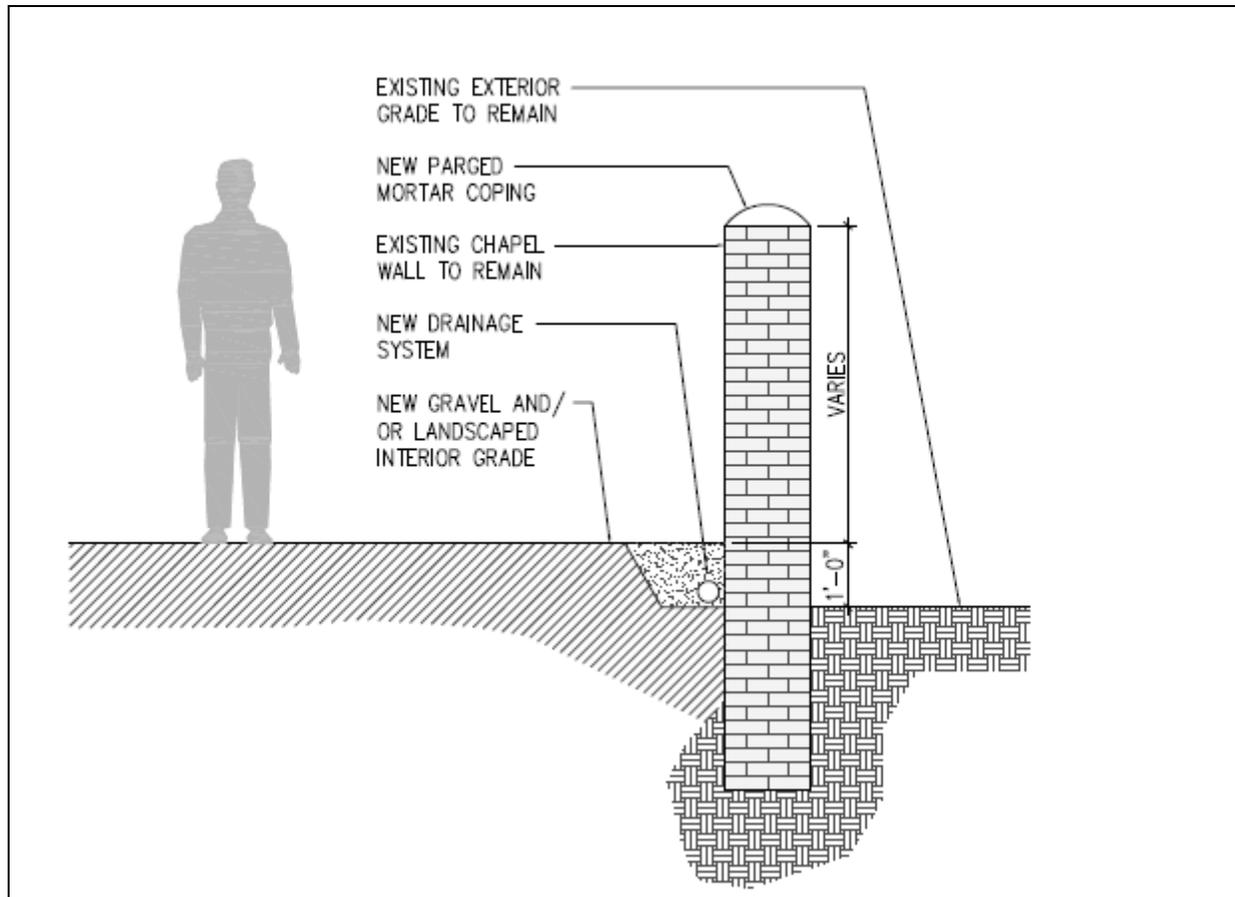


Figure 21. Section of proposed prayer garden walls.

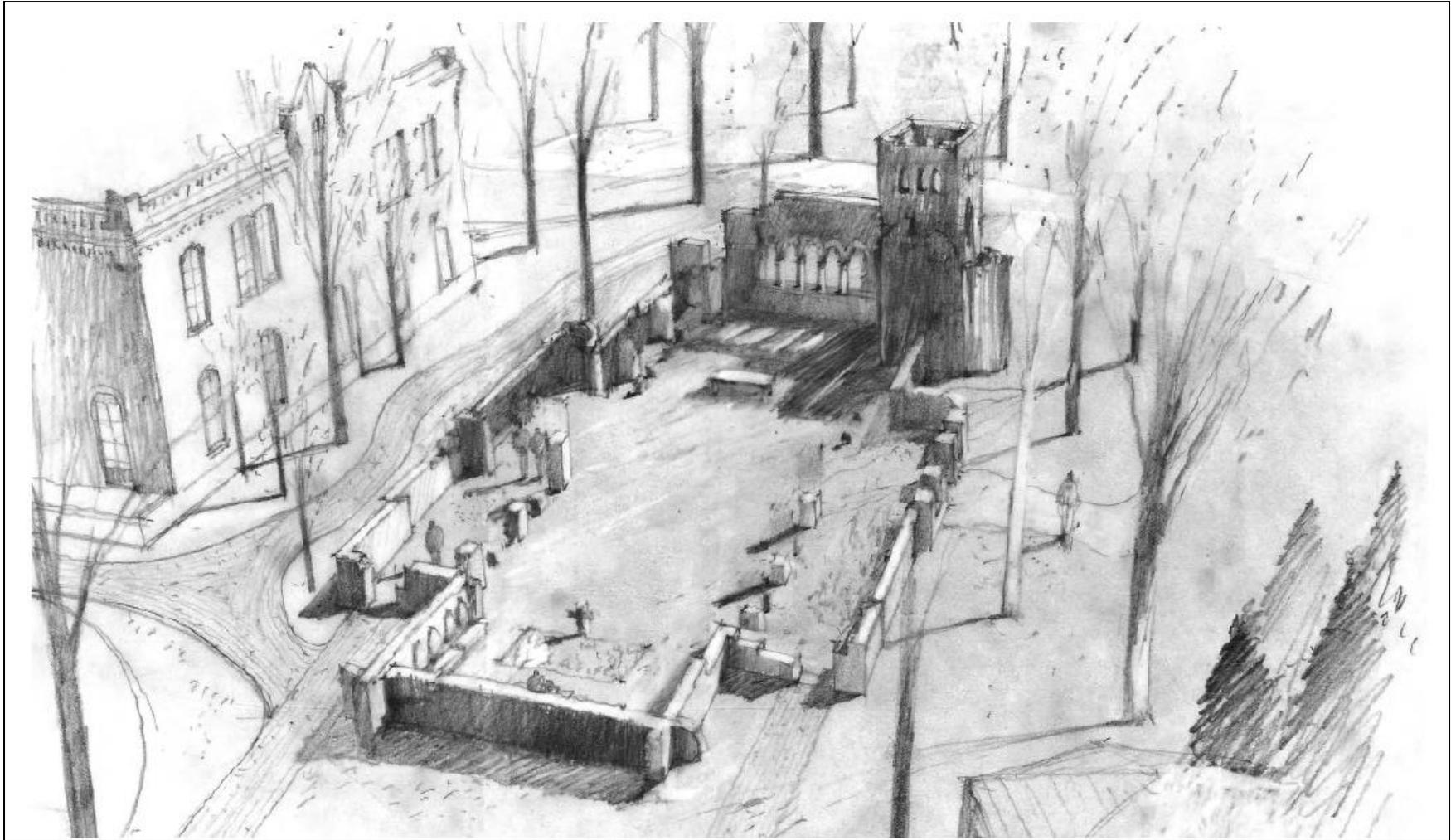


Figure 22. Bird's eye perspective of proposed prayer garden.



Figure 23. Perspective of chapel ruins and new chapel tower, looking west.



Figure 24. Relationship of new chapel to chapel ruins and campus axes and site lines.

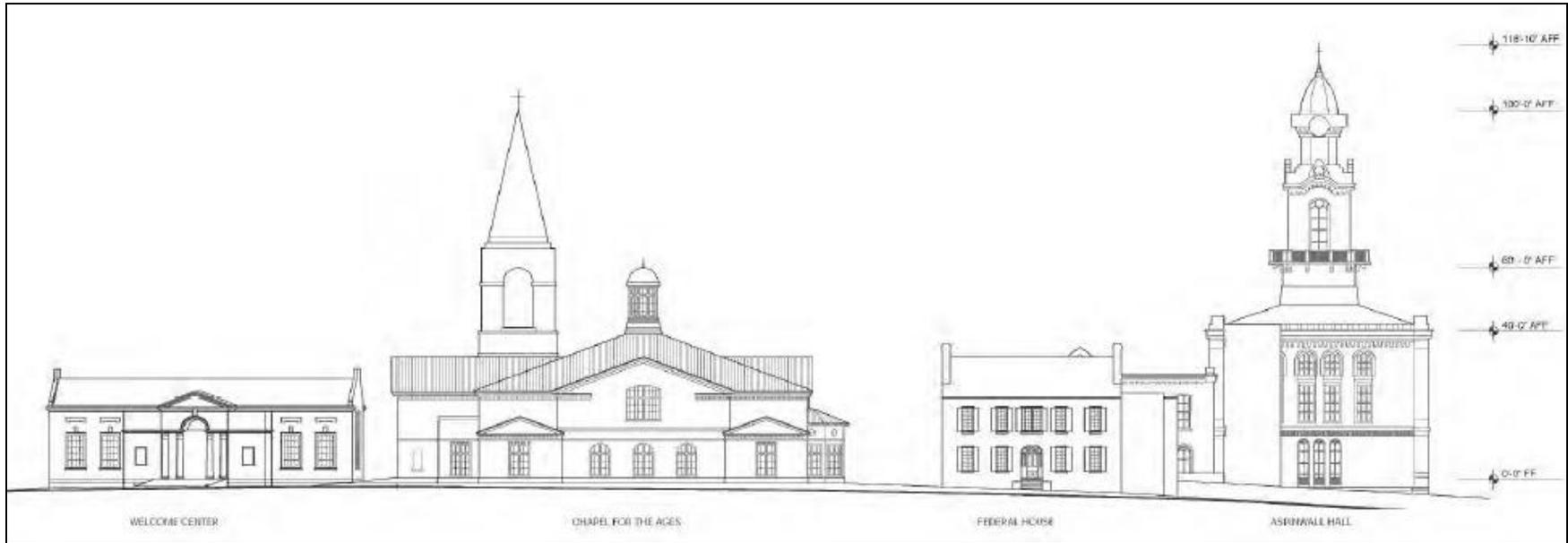


Figure 25. New chapel in context, looking north.



Figure 26. New chapel in context, looking east.



Figure 27. New chapel in context, looking south.



Figure 28. Bird's eye perspective of new chapel showing oratory overlooking chapel ruins.

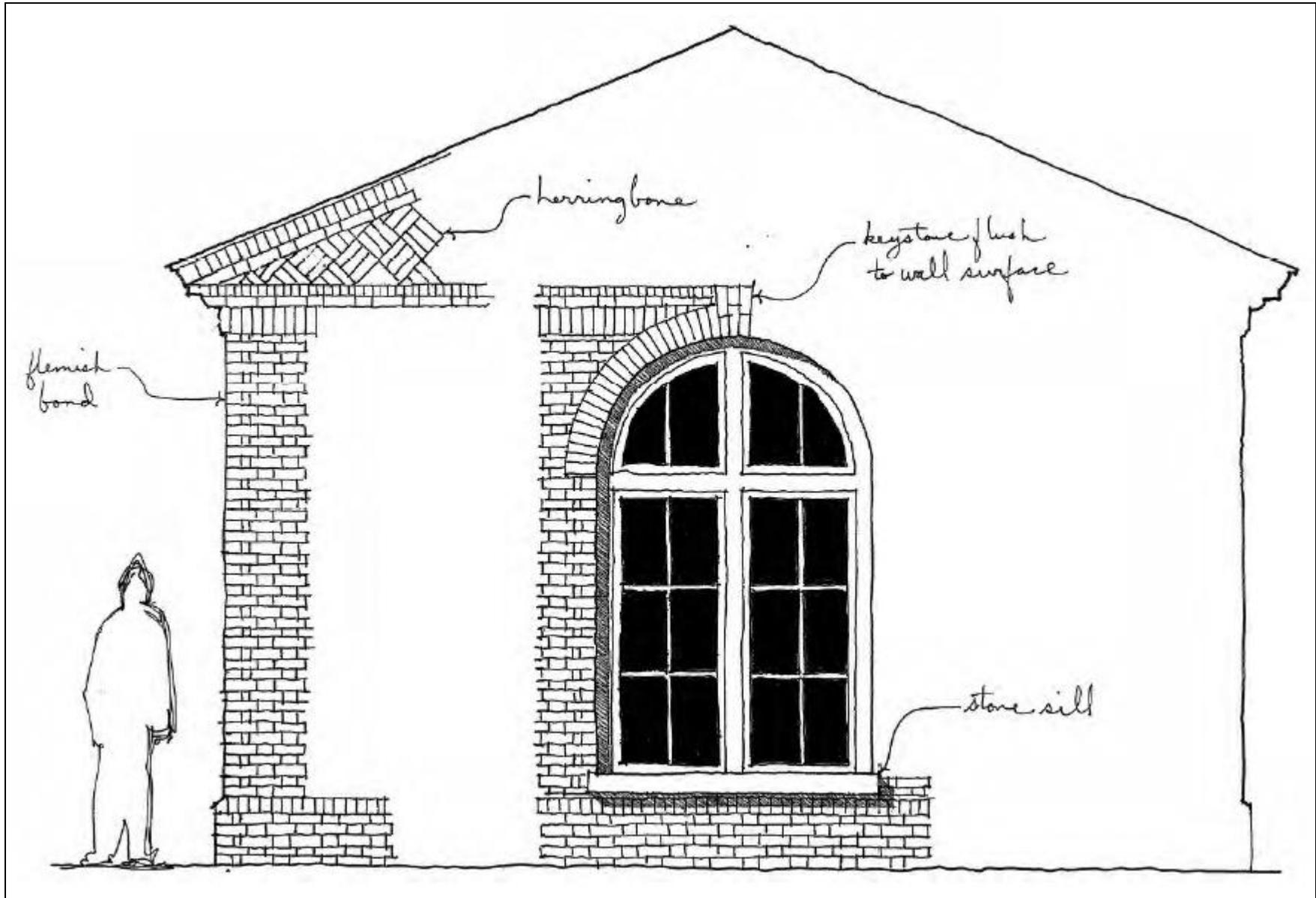


Figure 4. Detailing of proposed chapel.

ADDRESS OF PROJECT: 3737 Seminary Road

TAX MAP AND PARCEL: 040.02-03-01 ZONING: R 20

APPLICATION FOR: *(Please check all that apply)*

- CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
- PERMIT TO MOVE, REMOVE, ENCAPSULATE OR DEMOLISH
(Required if more than 25 square feet of a structure is to be demolished/impacted)
- WAIVER OF VISION CLEARANCE REQUIREMENT and/or YARD REQUIREMENTS IN A VISION CLEARANCE AREA *(Section 7-802, Alexandria 1992 Zoning Ordinance)*
- WAIVER OF ROOFTOP HVAC SCREENING REQUIREMENT
(Section 6-403(B)(3), Alexandria 1992 Zoning Ordinance)

Applicant: Property Owner Business *(Please provide business name & contact person)*

Name: The Protestant Episcopal Theological Seminary in Virginia

Address: 3737 Seminary Road

City: Alexandria State: VA Zip: 22304

Phone: 703 461-1959 E-mail: llanam2@vts.edu

Authorized Agent *(if applicable)*: Attorney Architect _____

Name: Duncan W. Blair Phone: 703 836-1000

E-mail: dblair@landclark.com

Legal Property Owner:

Name: The Protestant Episcopal Theological Seminary in Virginia

Address: 3737 Seminary Road

City: Alexandria State: VA Zip: 22304

Phone: 703 461-1959 E-mail: llanam2@vts.edu

- Yes No Is there an historic preservation easement on this property?
- Yes No If yes, has the easement holder agreed to the proposed alterations?
- Yes No Is there a homeowner's association for this property?
- Yes No If yes, has the homeowner's association approved the proposed alterations?

If you answered yes to any of the above, please attach a copy of the letter approving the project.

NATURE OF PROPOSED WORK: *Please check all that apply*

- NEW CONSTRUCTION
- EXTERIOR ALTERATION: *Please check all that apply.*
 - awning
 - doors
 - lighting
 - other alteration of existing fire damaged structure
 - fence, gate or garden wall
 - windows
 - pergola/trellis
 - HVAC equipment
 - siding
 - painting unpainted masonry
 - shutters
 - shed
- ADDITION
- DEMOLITION/ENCAPSULATION
- SIGNAGE

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED WORK: *Please describe the proposed work in detail (Additional pages may be attached).*

See Attachment A.

SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS:

Items listed below comprise the **minimum supporting materials** for BAR applications. Staff may request additional information during application review. Please refer to the relevant section of the *Design Guidelines* for further information on appropriate treatments.

Applicants must use the checklist below to ensure the application is complete. Include all information and material that are necessary to thoroughly describe the project. Incomplete applications will delay the docketing of the application for review. Pre-application meetings are required for all proposed additions. All applicants are encouraged to meet with staff prior to submission of a completed application.

Electronic copies of submission materials should be submitted whenever possible.

Demolition/Encapsulation : *All applicants requesting 25 square feet or more of demolition/encapsulation must complete this section. Check N/A if an item in this section does not apply to your project.*

- N/A
- Survey plat showing the extent of the proposed demolition/encapsulation.
- Existing elevation drawings clearly showing all elements proposed for demolition/encapsulation.
- Clear and labeled photographs of all elevations of the building if the entire structure is proposed to be demolished.
- Description of the reason for demolition/encapsulation.
- Description of the alternatives to demolition/encapsulation and why such alternatives are not considered feasible.

Attachment A
Protestant Theological Seminary in Virginia
BAR Application

March 7, 2011

Description of Request:

The Protestant Theological Seminary in Virginia, a Virginia nonstock corporation (“VTS”) is requesting a Permit to Demolish to permit the partial demolition of portions of the heavily fire damaged shell of Immanuel Chapel on the VTS grounds and for concept approval of the adaptive reuse as an outside space incorporating into the design portions of the Chapel’s walls that are to remain if the Permit to Demolish is granted.

Additions & New Construction: Drawings must be to scale and should not exceed 11" x 17" unless approved by staff. All plans must be folded and collated into 12 complete 8 1/2" x 11" sets. Additional copies may be requested by staff for large-scale development projects or projects fronting Washington Street. Check N/A if an item in this section does not apply to your project.

- N/A Scaled survey plat showing dimensions of lot and location of existing building and other structures on the lot, location of proposed structure or addition, dimensions of existing structure(s), proposed addition or new construction, and all exterior, ground and roof mounted equipment.
- FAR & Open Space calculation form.
- Clear and labeled photographs of the site, surrounding properties and existing structures, if applicable.
- Existing elevations must be scaled and include dimensions.
- Proposed elevations must be scaled and include dimensions. Include the relationship to adjacent structures in plan and elevations.
- Materials and colors to be used must be specified and delineated on the drawings. Actual samples may be provided or required.
- Manufacturer's specifications for materials to include, but not limited to: roofing, siding, windows, doors, lighting, fencing, HVAC equipment and walls.
- For development site plan projects, a model showing mass relationships to adjacent properties and structures.

Signs & Awnings: One sign per building under one square foot does not require BAR approval unless illuminated. All other signs including window signs require BAR approval. Check N/A if an item in this section does not apply to your project.

- N/A Linear feet of building: Front: _____ Secondary front (if corner lot): _____.
- Square feet of existing signs to remain: _____.
- Photograph of building showing existing conditions.
- Dimensioned drawings of proposed sign identifying materials, color, lettering style and text.
- Location of sign (show exact location on building including the height above sidewalk).
- Means of attachment (drawing or manufacturer's cut sheet of bracket if applicable).
- Description of lighting (if applicable). Include manufacturer's cut sheet for any new lighting fixtures and information detailing how it will be attached to the building's facade.

Alterations: Check N/A if an item in this section does not apply to your project.

- N/A Clear and labeled photographs of the site, especially the area being impacted by the alterations, all sides of the building and any pertinent details.
- Manufacturer's specifications for materials to include, but not limited to: roofing, siding, windows, doors, lighting, fencing, HVAC equipment and walls.
- Drawings accurately representing the changes to the proposed structure, including materials and overall dimensions. Drawings must be to scale.
- An official survey plat showing the proposed locations of HVAC units, fences, and sheds.
- Historic elevations or photographs should accompany any request to return a structure to an earlier appearance.

ALL APPLICATIONS: *Please read and check that you have read and understand the following items:*

- I have submitted a filing fee with this application. (Checks should be made payable to the City of Alexandria. Please contact staff for assistance in determining the appropriate fee.)
- I understand the notice requirements and will return a copy of the three respective notice forms to BAR staff at least five days prior to the hearing. If I am unsure to whom I should send notice I will contact Planning and Zoning staff for assistance in identifying adjacent parcels.
- I, the applicant, or an authorized representative will be present at the public hearing.
- I understand that any revisions to this initial application submission (including applications deferred for restudy) must be accompanied by the BAR Supplemental form and 12 sets of revised materials.

The undersigned hereby attests that all of the information herein provided including the site plan, building elevations, prospective drawings of the project, and written descriptive information are true, correct and accurate. The undersigned further understands that, should such information be found incorrect, any action taken by the Board based on such information may be invalidated. The undersigned also hereby grants the City of Alexandria permission to post placard notice as required by Article XI, Division A, Section 11-301(B) of the 1992 Alexandria City Zoning Ordinance, on the property which is the subject of this application. The undersigned also hereby authorizes the City staff and members of the BAR to inspect this site as necessary in the course of research and evaluating the application. The applicant, if other than the property owner, also attests that he/she has obtained permission from the property owner to make this application.

APPLICANT OR AUTHORIZED AGENT:

Signature: 

Printed Name: Duncan W. Blair

Date: 3/7/11

OWNERSHIP AND DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Use additional sheets if necessary

1. Applicant. State the name, address and percent of ownership of any person or entity owning an interest in the applicant, unless the entity is a corporation or partnership, in which case identify each owner of more than ten percent. The term ownership interest shall include any legal or equitable interest held at the time of the application in the real property which is the subject of the application.

Name	Address	Percent of Ownership
1. The Protestant Episcopal Theological Seminary in Virginia	3737 Seminary Road Alexandria, VA 22304	100%
2.		
3.		

2. Property. State the name, address and percent of ownership of any person or entity owning an interest in the property located at 3737 Seminary Road (address), unless the entity is a corporation or partnership, in which case identify each owner of more than ten percent. The term ownership interest shall include any legal or equitable interest held at the time of the application in the real property which is the subject of the application.

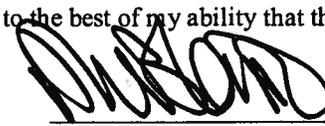
Name	Address	Percent of Ownership
1. The Protestant Episcopal Theological Seminary in Virginia	3737 Seminary Road Alexandria, VA 22304	100%
2.		
3.		

3. Business or Financial Relationship. Each person or entity listed above (1 and 2), with an ownership interest in the applicant or in the subject property is required to disclose any business or financial relationship, as defined by Section 11-350 of the Zoning Ordinance, existing at the time of this application, or within the 12-month period prior to the submission of this application with any member of the Alexandria City Council, Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals or either Boards of Architectural Review.

Name of person or entity	Relationship as defined by Section 11-350 of the Zoning Ordinance	Member of the Approving Body (i.e. City Council, Planning Commission, etc.)
1. The Protestant Episcopal Theological Seminary in Virginia	None	Board of Architectural Review (OHAD)
2.		
3.		

NOTE: Business or financial relationships of the type described in Sec. 11-350 that arise after the filing of this application and before each public hearing must be disclosed prior to the public hearings.

As the applicant or the applicant's authorized agent, I hereby attest to the best of my ability that the information provided above is true and correct.

3/7/11
Date
Duncan W Blaire
Printed Name

Signature