

BAR Meeting
December 17, 2008

ISSUE: Alterations and Signage

APPLICANT: City of Alexandria (Patrice McAuliffe, Agent)

LOCATION: 134 North Royal Street (Gadsby's Tavern)

ZONE: CD / Commercial Downtown Zone

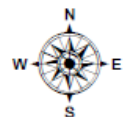
STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness application with the following conditions.

1. That the final design and historic accuracy of the text and graphics applied to the glass exhibit panels will be reviewed and approved by the City Archaeology and Historic Preservation Planning staff.
2. That the applicant and their design team will work with Historic Preservation Planning staff to modify the lighting program to reduce the lighting levels and impacts of the proposed lighting design on the Right-of-Way and adjacent buildings, and that the implemented lighting design will be approved by the Historic Preservation staff prior to the project's final permit inspections.
3. The applicant/developer shall call Alexandria Archaeology (703/838-4399) two weeks before the starting date of any ground disturbance so that an inspection schedule for city archaeologists can be arranged.
4. 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.
5. The applicant/developer shall not allow any metal detection to be conducted on the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology.
6. The statements in archaeology conditions above 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.



BAR CASE #2008-0235

12/17/2008



I. **ISSUE:**

The Applicant is requesting approval for improvements to the sidewalk and viewing areas of the historic ice well at the Gadsby's Tavern Museum located at 134 North Royal Street. The program proposes the following changes and alterations to the site surrounding the historic resource:

Viewing Area

The design proposes to reduce the depth of the viewing area to about 42" below the current sidewalk, and install new curvilinear steps, with a more gradual slope. These evening lit steps are designed in an amphitheatre configuration to serve as standing and sitting areas for museum patrons.

Glass Exhibit Panels

The existing metal guard rails will be replaced with internally lit, glass exhibit panels. These panels will be fabricated in a frosted safety glass. The applicant is requesting conceptual approval for the images and text to be displayed on these panels, with the final design and historic accuracy of the text to be reviewed and approved by the City Archaeology and Historic Preservation Planning staff. The glass panels are an educational medium for the museum to convey the cultural and historical significance of the Tavern and Ice Well.

Ice Well Viewing Windows

Frameless, operable, lockable safety glass panels will be installed in the Ice Well's viewing windows to promote the visibility of the resource and reduce glare. One of the glass panels will be fixed.

Changes to Brick Sidewalk

A square, glass panel will be installed flush into the sidewalk directly above the center of the ice well, representing the location of the original access hatch, and symbolizing a block of ice.

Limits of Disturbance - Archaeology

The proposed design will have very minimal impacts to undisturbed earth. The applicant has provided a drawing indicating the Limits of New Disturbance for the project (see page 24). The shaded area in the drawing indicates where the Applicant proposes to cut into earth that has not already been previously impacted. As shown, these areas are very minimal, and will be monitored by City Archaeology staff.

Accessibility

The historic context and physical constraints of the site will not allow for a handicap accessible ramp, however, the proposed design does provide reasonable accommodation. The exhibit design will provide graphics and information at the sidewalk level, with visual contrast and legibility to meet ADA requirements. Views into the ice well will be possible from the sidewalk level through a fixed glass panel, for museum patrons who cannot traverse steps. Graphic

timelines mounted on a sloped rail are being designed for legibility for the visually impaired.

Ventilation

The current ventilation of the ice well is entirely passive. The new viewing windows will contain horizontal grills at the top and bottom to allow for natural convection.

Lighting

The lighting proposed for inside the ice well will greatly enhance the visitor experience by highlighting the unique features identified by the museum curators as well as creating an overall illumination program for the resource. The interior lighting has been designed to be slightly brighter than its surroundings, as it is the focal point of the exhibit.

The exterior lighting proposed for the ice well will also improve the patron's daytime and evening visibility of the historic resource and complement and not compete with the existing lighting on the street. The glass exhibit panels, which will be replacing the metal guard rails, will be internally illuminated providing a soft glow of light. As a result, the illumination design provides more locations to view the historic resource without obstructions or glare, and more uniform illumination of the ice well from the street.

The subject lighting design also proposes new, marker lights on the top of each stair on the new staircase to present pedestrians with a visual identification marker at the sidewalk level. The 'Tradesman's Entrance' staircase that serves the Tavern basement, and flanks the ice well, has also been integrated with marker lights to increase the lighting of this staircase and landing.

The new lighting and other electrical devices will be served by circuit(s) in the building, in exterior rated wiring and conduits, run concealed.

Stormwater

The current two (2) area drains connect to piping that enters the building and connects to a sump pump that ties into existing storm water piping (to be verified). The proposed design ties a new trench drain and the two (2) area drains into this same piping. The amount of impervious area and associated volume of water remains the same.

Materials

Glass

The glass for the viewing windows and exhibit panels are a low-iron, safety glass in clear and frosted finishes. This material is selected to evoke ice with rounded and exposed edges. The metal supports will not be prominently visible, but where the metal is visible, it will be stainless steel.

Stainless Steel

The handrails, hardware and those features intended for human touch will be a smooth, satin

finish stainless steel. All other stainless steel will be blast finished with a medium-toned, coarse aluminum oxide surface.

Brick

The brick paving at the sidewalk level will retain the same configuration and materials, as per the standards set by the City of Alexandria.

Stone

The steps and paving below the sidewalk level will be medium, brownish-grey granite evoking the sense of earth which has been excavated or eroded by water. Flamed granite was chosen as it is durable and slip resistant.

II. HISTORY/SITE DESCRIPTION:

History

The ice well was probably constructed for tavern use in 1792 by John Wise, who consolidated several properties and enlarged or replaced the existing structures on the lot. The property was leased to John Gadsby from 1796 until 1808, during which time the City Tavern and Hotel became well-known for its generous hospitality.

Site Description

The historic tavern is located on an 11,106 sq. ft. lot and “L” shaped in form with a central private courtyard. Eight (8’) foot wide sidewalks run along the property frontage. To preserve the tavern’s associated ice well, the sidewalk is extended to 17.5’ wide at the intersection of Cameron and North Royal Street. The resource is currently accessed by a set of brick stairs enveloped by a metal wrought iron railing. There are currently no identifying markers for the resource or interpretive signage at the site.

III: ANALYSIS

The project complies with the zoning ordinance requirements.

The proposed alterations are intended to improve the appearance of the Ice Well, elevate the museum visitor’s experience and promote two of the City’s prominent historic artifacts. This new design provides less visual obstructions and enables the museum to convey the history of the resource without negatively impacting the historic fabric or the surrounding built environment. Additionally, the proposed materials were selected for their compatibility, yet differentiation, from the original historic fabric and their ability to be consistent with the museum’s interpretation of the historic resource.

The glass exhibit panels are conceptual in form. It is recommended that the Board conceptually support the exhibit panel’s design with the understanding that the applicant, their design team, and the City Archaeology and Historic Preservation Planning Staff will work to develop the final text and graphics to successfully design unique, historically accurate interpretive signage for this

resource.

Per Staff's request, the applicant has provided an existing and proposed photometric study of the site (see page 23). The data generated reflects the lighting design goals, which is to maintain the Ice Well as the focal point, while instituting a uniform and safe experience for patrons in and around the site. Staff is concerned with the current lighting design, the intensity of the lighting shown, and corresponding light spillage beyond the ice well into the surrounding public Right-of-Way (ROW). The lighting levels shown are the maximum levels that are possible with the proposed fixtures and are much higher than Staff believes is appropriate at this location. Staff recommends a reduction in lighting levels and corresponding impacts to pedestrians, drivers and the adjacent community. Such a reduction can be achieved though encouraging illumination levels of 0.6 footcandles or below in the public ROW. Staff understands from the applicant that the light fixtures proposed can be adjusted to emit lower levels of light. As this is a complex project where lighting is a key design element, Staff recommends that the applicant work with Staff to modify the lighting levels to reduce the project's lighting level photometric calculations and approve the final installed design prior to the project's final permit inspections.

The new design will have very minimal impacts to undisturbed earth. The applicant only proposes to excavate a very small piece of earth that has not already been previously impacted (see pg 24). The remaining project will be fabricated on the existing site's footprint. As shown in the recommended conditions, the City Archaeology staff proposes to monitor all phases of the project to ensure the project maintains conformance to the strict Limits of Disturbance (LOD) and footprint.

The Ice Well project is anticipated to increase pedestrian foot traffic for the businesses on Cameron Street and patronage for the museum, which ultimately generates revenue for the City. Though these are not findings the Board is charged with evaluating or making a determination, they are important to highlight.

Finally, all the proposed alterations are within the existing footprint of the site, as such, the pedestrian circulation pattern through and around the site will remain unaffected by this proposal.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

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2. That the applicant and their design team will work with Historic Preservation Planning staff to modify the lighting program to reduce the lighting levels and impacts of the proposed lighting design on the Right-of-Way and adjacent buildings, and that the implemented lighting design will be approved by the Historic Preservation staff prior to

the project's final permit inspections.

3. The applicant/developer shall call Alexandria Archaeology (703/838-4399) two weeks before the starting date of any ground disturbance so that an inspection schedule for city archaeologists can be arranged.
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V. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- C-1 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-2 Alterations to the existing structure and/or installation and/or altering of equipment therein requires a building permit. Five sets of plans, bearing the signature and seal of a design professional registered in the Commonwealth of Virginia, must accompany the written application. The plans must include all dimensions, construction alterations details, kitchen equipment, electrical, plumbing, and mechanical layouts and schematics.
- C-3 Construction permits are required for this project. Plans shall accompany the permit application that fully details the construction as well as layouts and schematics of the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems.
- C-4 The new handrails must comply with USBC for a minimum/maximum height of 30 to 34 inches. The ends must extend 12" beyond the top and bottom risers. The handgrip position must not be more that 2-1/4" in cross-sectional dimension, or the shape must provide an equivalent gripping surface. The handgrip portion must have a smooth surface with no sharp corners. The space between the wall and handrail must not be less that 1-1/2".
- C-5 Handrails must comply with USBC 1009.10.
- C-6 The accessible ramp must comply with the requirements of USBC 1010.1. The front approach to the exterior door (which is on the pull side) must comply with the landing requirements of USBC 1010.6. Handrails must comply with USBC 1010.8
- C-7 Ventilation requirements must comply with the requirements of International Mechanical Code.

Office of Historic Alexandria:

- R-1 Approve.

VI. IMAGES:



Figure 1: View of Site

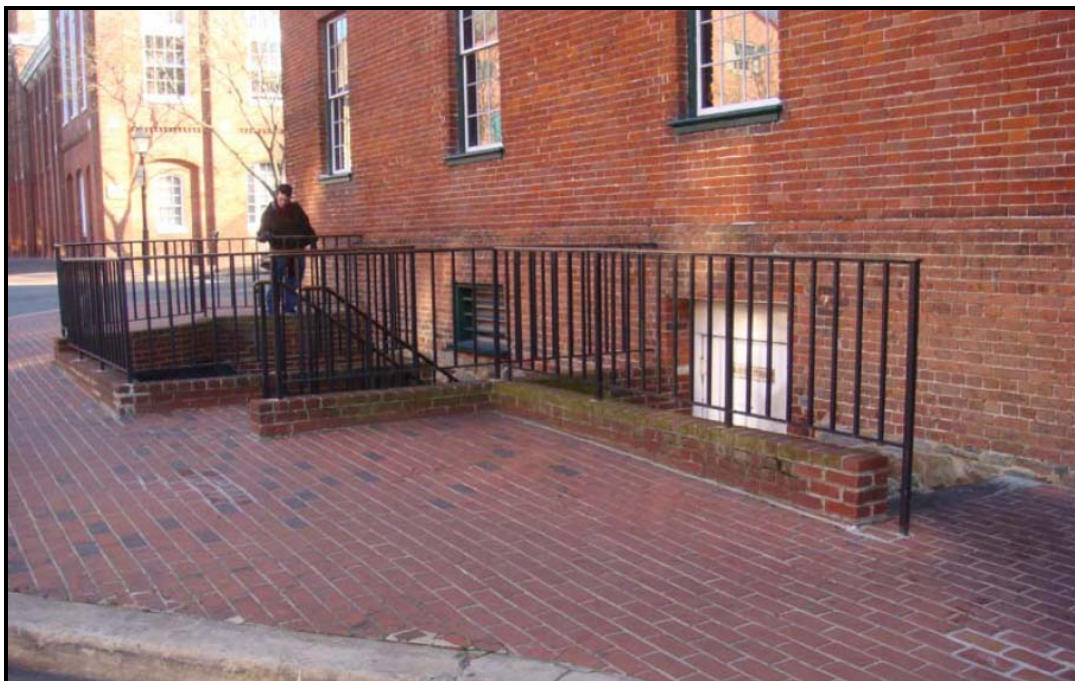




Figure 3: Interior of Ice Well



Figure 4: Existing Evening View

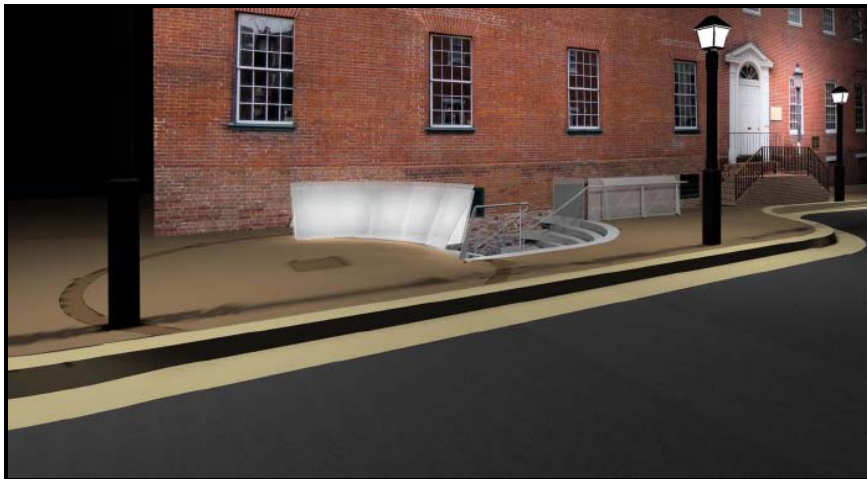
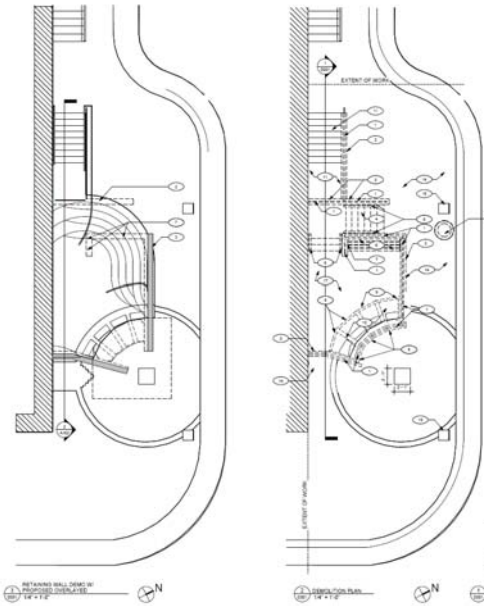
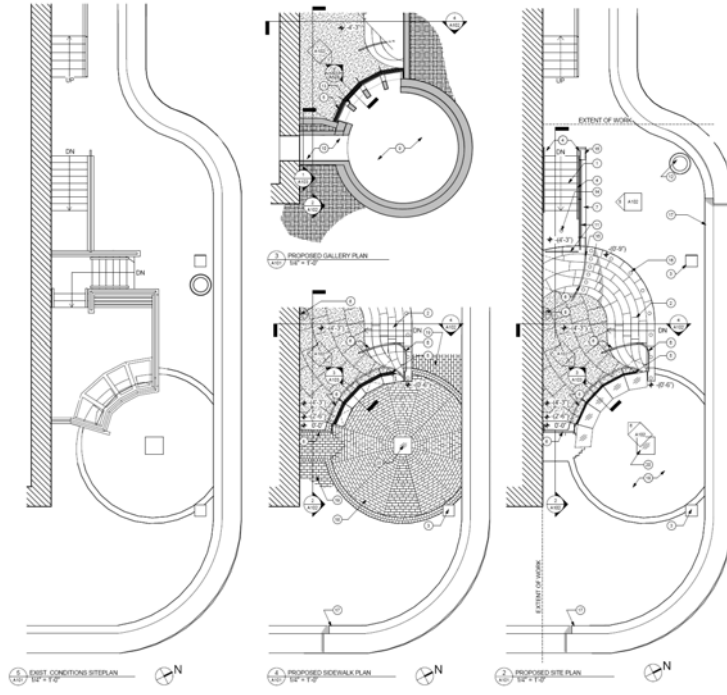
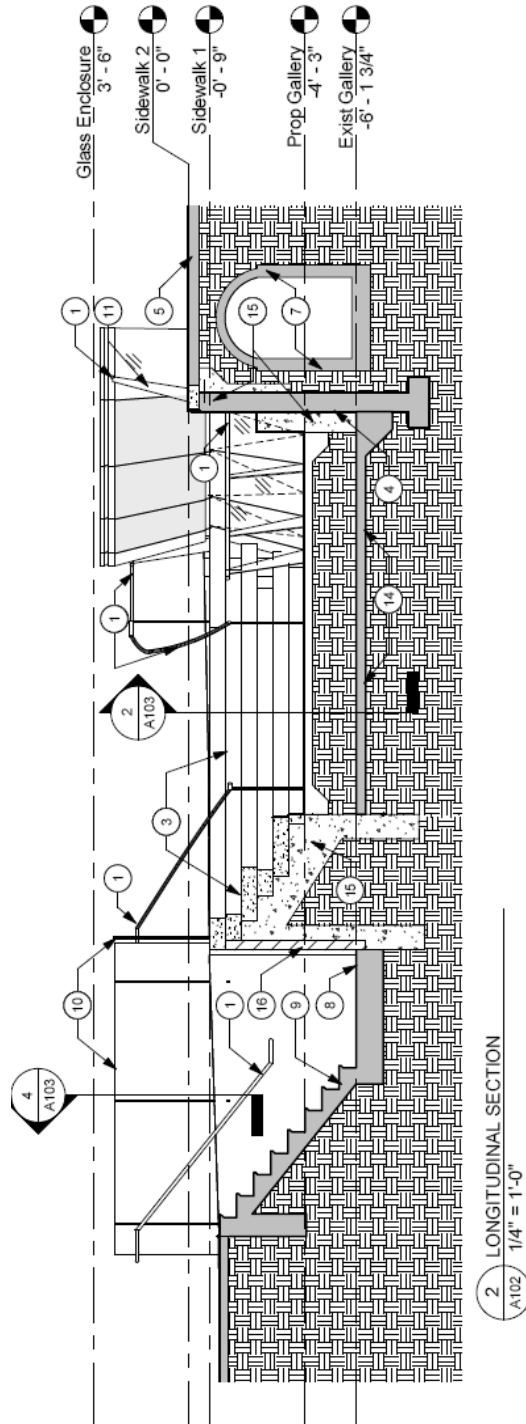
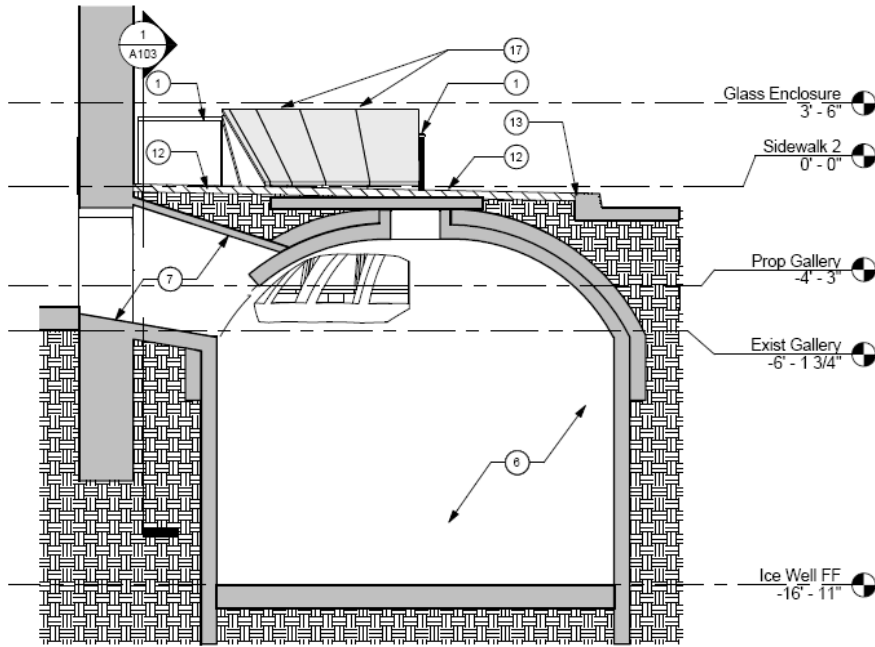


Figure 5: Interior of Ice Well

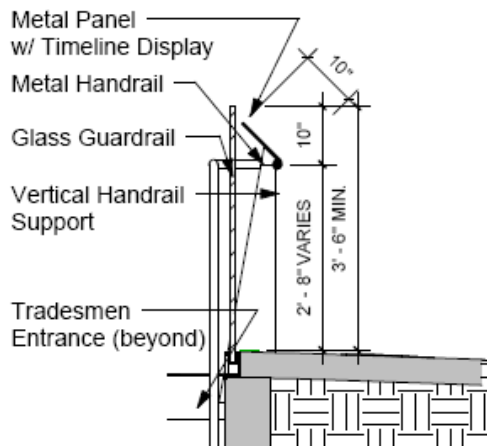




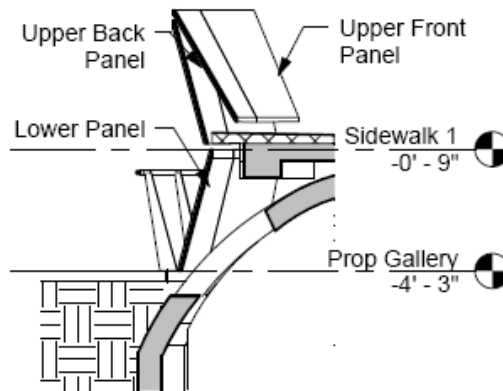




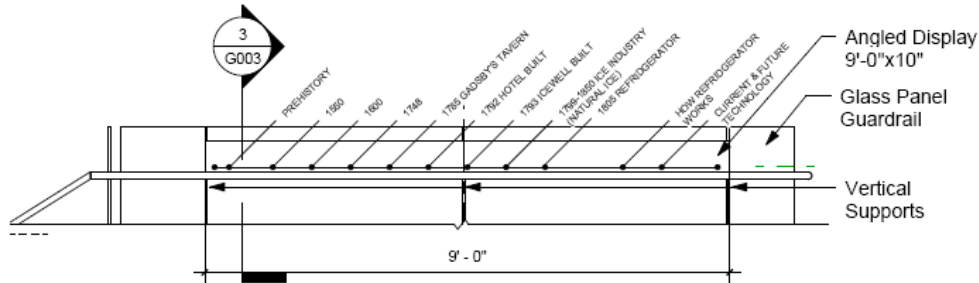
3 TUNNEL SECTION
 A102 1/4" = 1'-0"



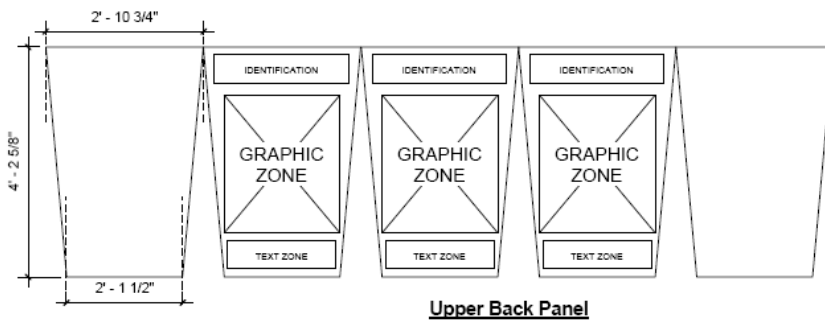
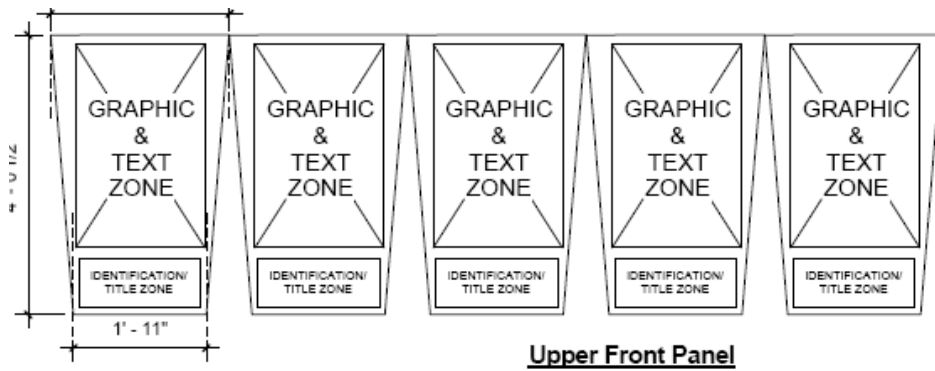
3 GUARDRAIL SECTION
 G003 1/2" = 1'-0"



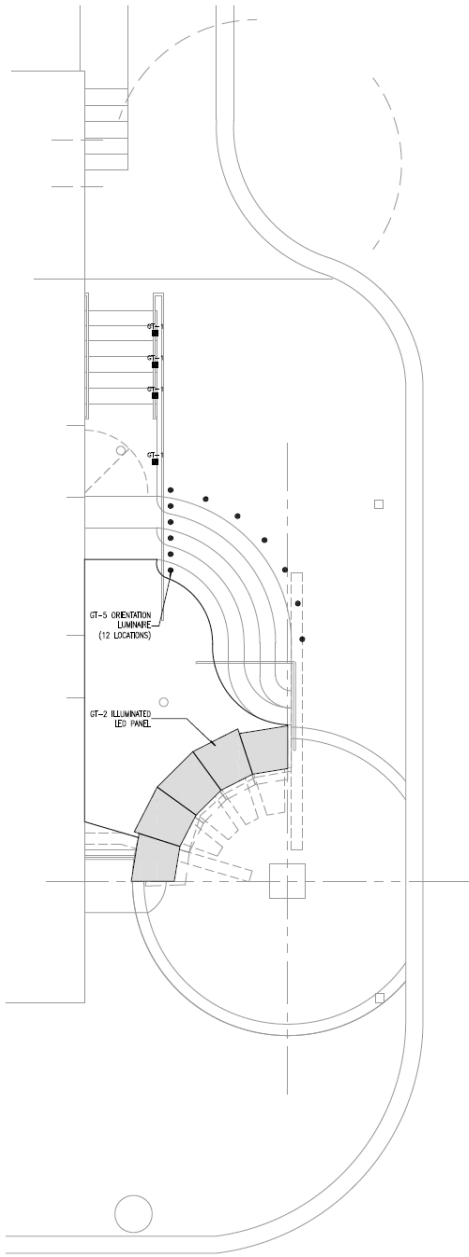
4 GLASS ENCLOSURE SEC.
 G003 1/4" = 1'-0"



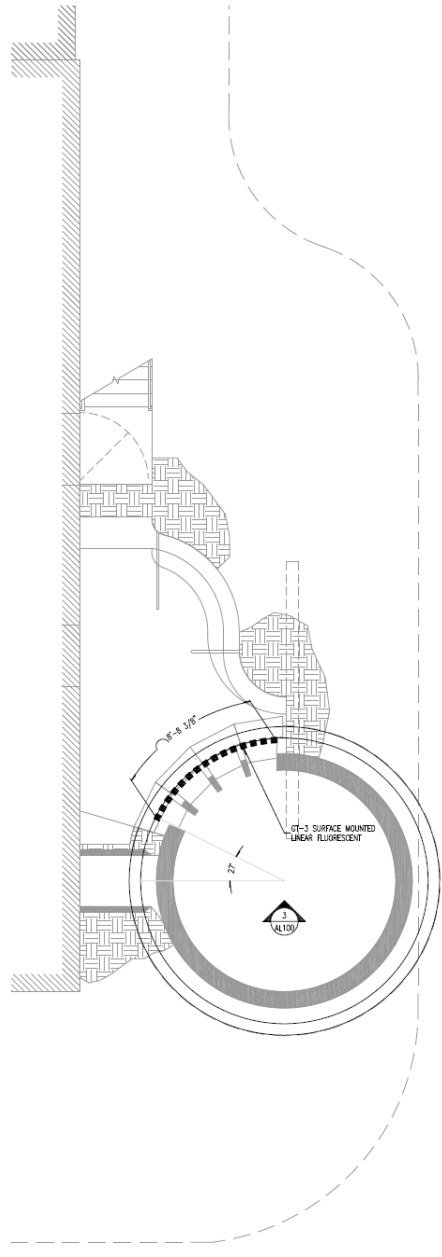
2 TIMELINE PANEL ELEV.
 G003 1/2" = 1'-0"



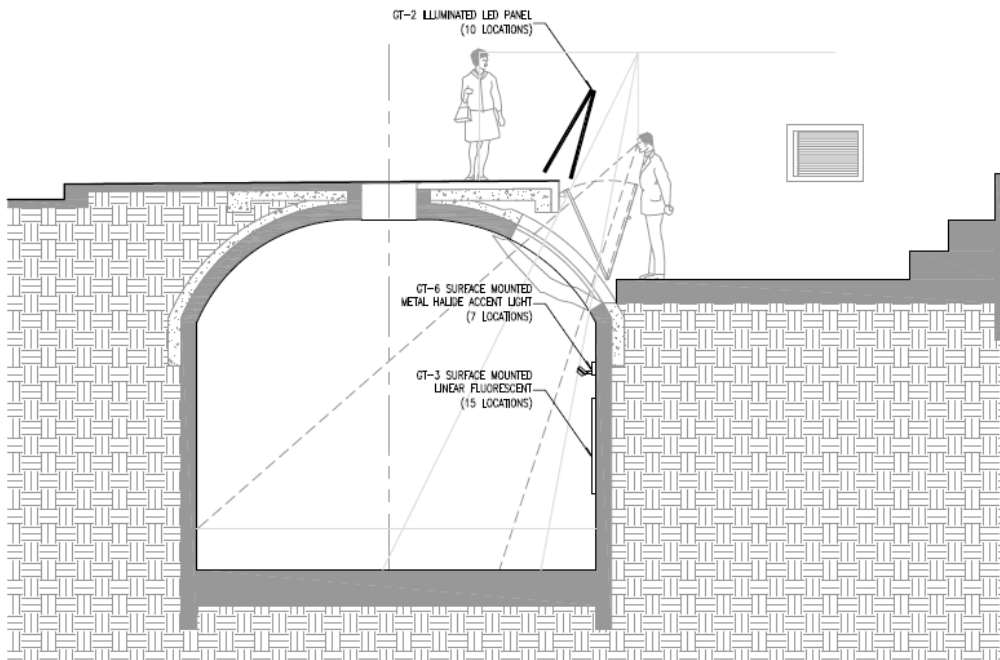
1 GLASS PANEL ELEV. DTL.
 G003 1/2" = 1'-0"



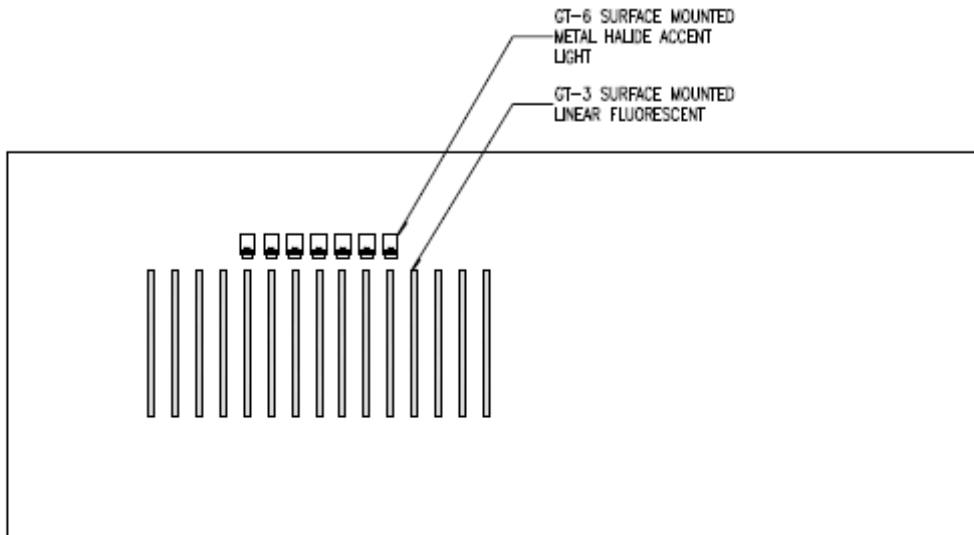
1 PUBLIC SPACE LIGHTING PLAN
AL100 1/4" = 1'-0"



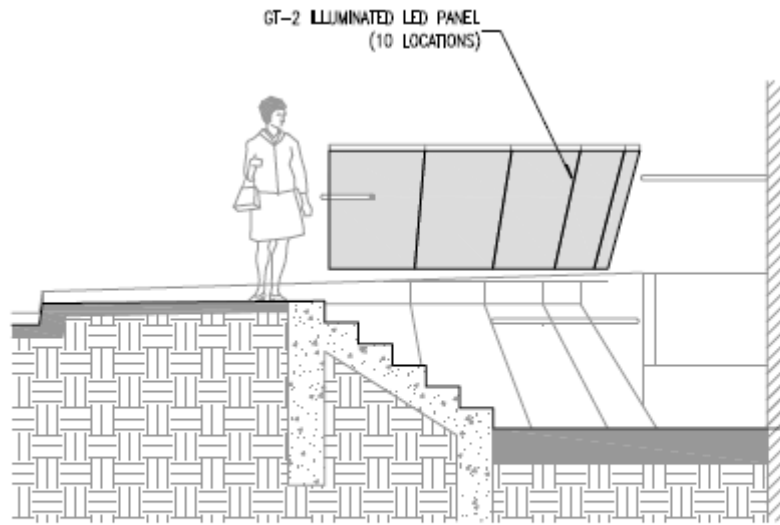
1 GALLERY LIGHTING PLAN
AL100 1/4" = 1'-0"



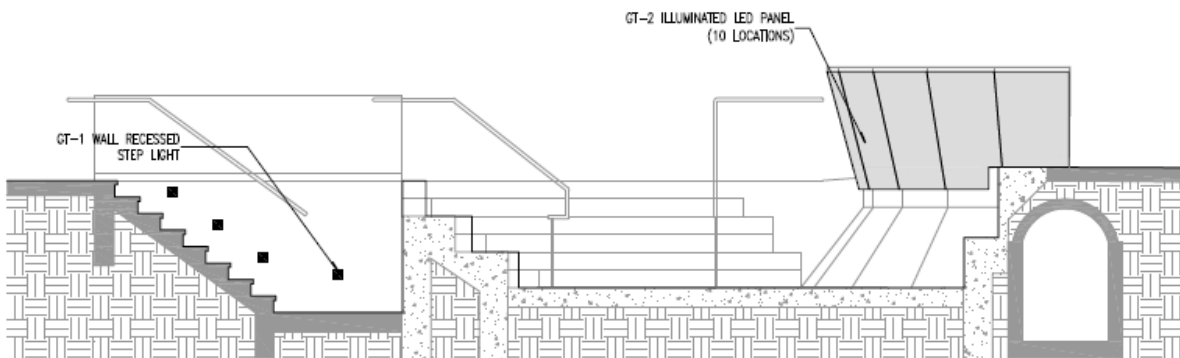
2 GALLERY SECTION
AL100 1/4" = 1'-0"



3 GALLERY INTERIOR ELEVATION
AL100 1/4" = 1'-0"



4 STAIR SECTION
AL100 1/4" = 1'-0"



5 STAIR SECTION
AL100 1/4" = 1'-0"

