

Docket Item # 7  
BAR CASE #2008-0234

BAR Meeting  
February 17, 2010

**ISSUE:** Alterations and Signage

**APPLICANT:** City of Alexandria (Patrice McAuliffe, Agent)

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

**ZONE:** CD / Commercial Downtown Zone

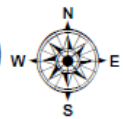
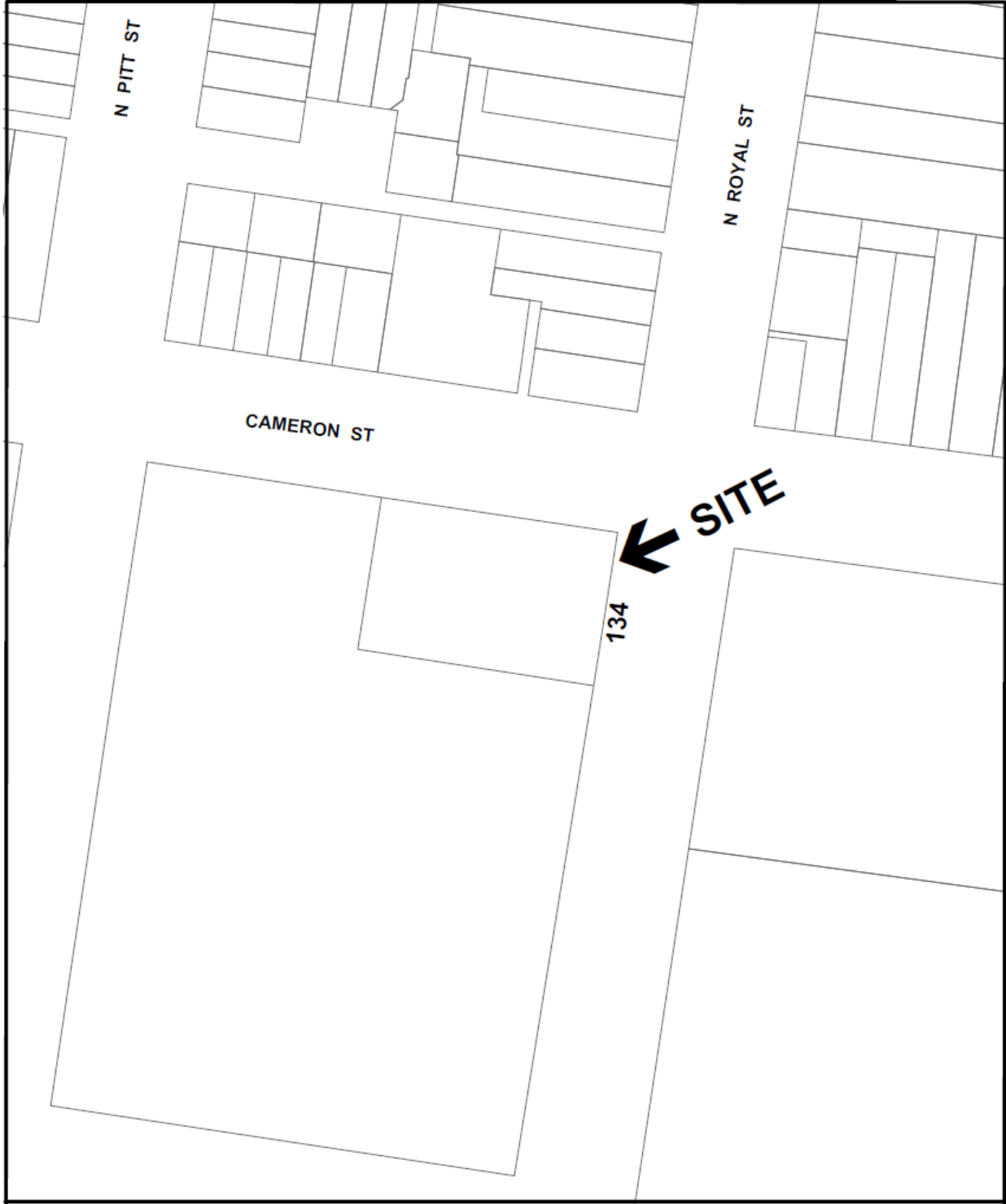
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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends approval of the applicant's response to conditions of the previously approved Certificate of Appropriateness with the following final conditions:

1. The final text, images and copy of the interpretive signage is subject to City Staff review for historic accuracy;
2. The installation of interpretive signage on masonry walls will be through mortar joints.
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; and,
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.

**\*\*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 final 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, 703-746-4200 for further information.



**UPDATE:**

The Board, on a motion by Dr. Fitzgerald and seconded by Mr. Smeallie voted (5-0) to approve the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness, as amended, for the Ice Well rehabilitation design and interpretive signage at the July 8, 2009 hearing with the following conditions:

1. That the proposed language to be installed in the stone band is to return to the BAR for review and approval.
2. That the applicant will study the feasibility of an operable sidewalk hatch.
3. That the applicant will study the proposed glass viewing area to ensure its design provides maximum visibility into the ice well.
4. That if an additional staircase railing is required by code, the applicant will return to the BAR for its review and approval.

**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.

A City Council vote in 1974, provided Gadsby's Tavern the resources to design and install the existing exhibit and preservation program for the ice well.

*Site Description:*

The historic tavern is located on an 11,106 square foot "L" shaped lot with a central private courtyard. Eight foot wide sidewalks run along the north and east property frontage. To preserve the tavern's associated ice well, the sidewalk is extended to 17.5 foot wide at the intersection of Cameron and North Royal Street. The resource is currently accessed by 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. ISSUES:**

The applicant is requesting approval of the following responses to conditions imposed during the Board's July 8, 2009 Certificate of Appropriateness approval:

1. Location, materials and general content for the ice well's interpretive signage (see pages 6-19)
2. Deletion of the horizontal brass bar from the ice well's glass viewing windows (see page 5)
3. Deletion of the central handrail from the project (see page 6)

### **III. ANALYSIS:**

The applicant has addressed the outstanding issues raised by the Board in their July 8, 2009 conditional approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness.

The location, materials and scale of the proposed signage sympathetically weighs the desire for interpretation and the project goal of preserving the historic resource itself as the focal point of the exhibit. The location of the interpretive panel on the subterranean foundation wall of the Tavern is appropriate, as this wall was historically covered with earth and not visible. The wording and images of the signs are not being reviewed at this time, only the quantity and overall character.

Additionally, the proposed interpretive programming for the hatch is consistent with current preservation practice, as there is no historical evidence for its accurate reconstruction to the Tavern's established period of significance. Adding conjectural features or recreating forms which are not documented would falsify the resource's history.

The revised design for the glass viewing panels eliminates the horizontal brass railing from the BAR's approved design, providing an unobstructed view into the well. This design refinement achieves the Board's goal of providing maximum visibility into the ice well.

The question of the requirement for an additional staircase railing to be installed in the center of the amphitheatre steps has been reviewed by the City's Code Administration office. They have determined that the current design complies with the Uniform Statewide Building Code and the intermediate railing does not need to be added.

Staff recommends approval of the applicant's responses to conditions of the previously approved Certificate of Appropriateness, with the final conditions listed below. These responses, as conditioned, will not adversely impact the historic integrity of the ice well or the context of the Tavern complex. The museum staff will be able to interpret the resource without negatively impacting its character-defining features and, with the proposed rehabilitation programs, the structure will be protected for future generations.

**IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends approval of the proposed responses to the approved Certificate of Appropriateness conditions with the following final conditions:

1. The final text, images and copy of the interpretive signage is subject to City Staff review for historic accuracy;
2. The installation of interpretive signage on masonry walls will be through mortar joints.
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

**February 17, 2010**

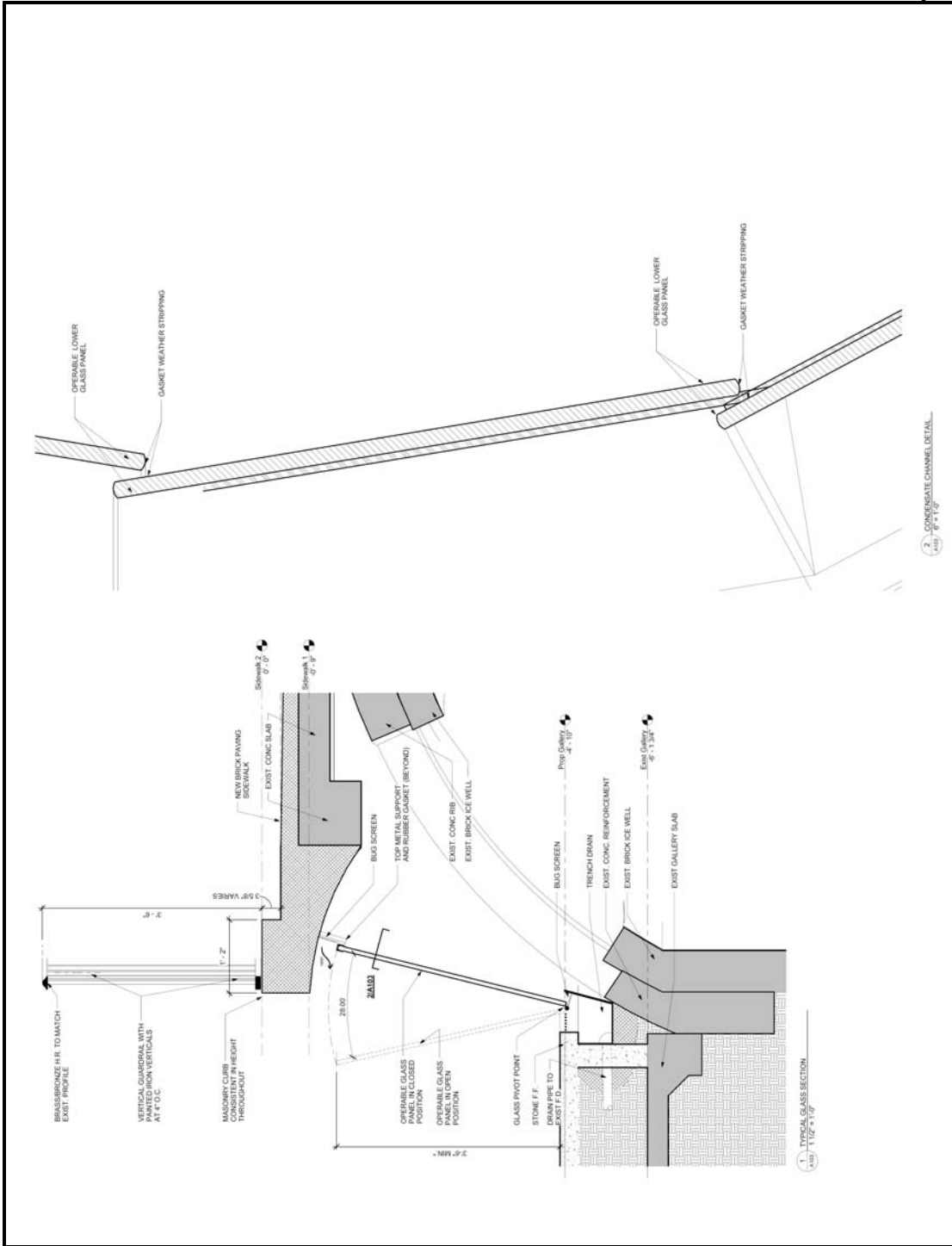
any buried structural remains (wall foundations, wells, privies, cisterns, etc.) or concentrations of artifacts are discovered during development. Work must cease in the area of the discovery until a City archaeologist comes to the site and records the finds;

5. The applicant/developer shall not allow any metal detection to be conducted on the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology; and,
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.

**STAFF:**

Michele Oaks, Historic Preservation Planner, Planning & Zoning  
Al Cox, Historic Preservation Architect, Planning and Zoning

V. ILLUSTRATIONS:



Office of Historic Alexandria

Gaubby's Tavern Museum - Ice Well

Preliminary Exhibition Design Concept - January 7, 2010

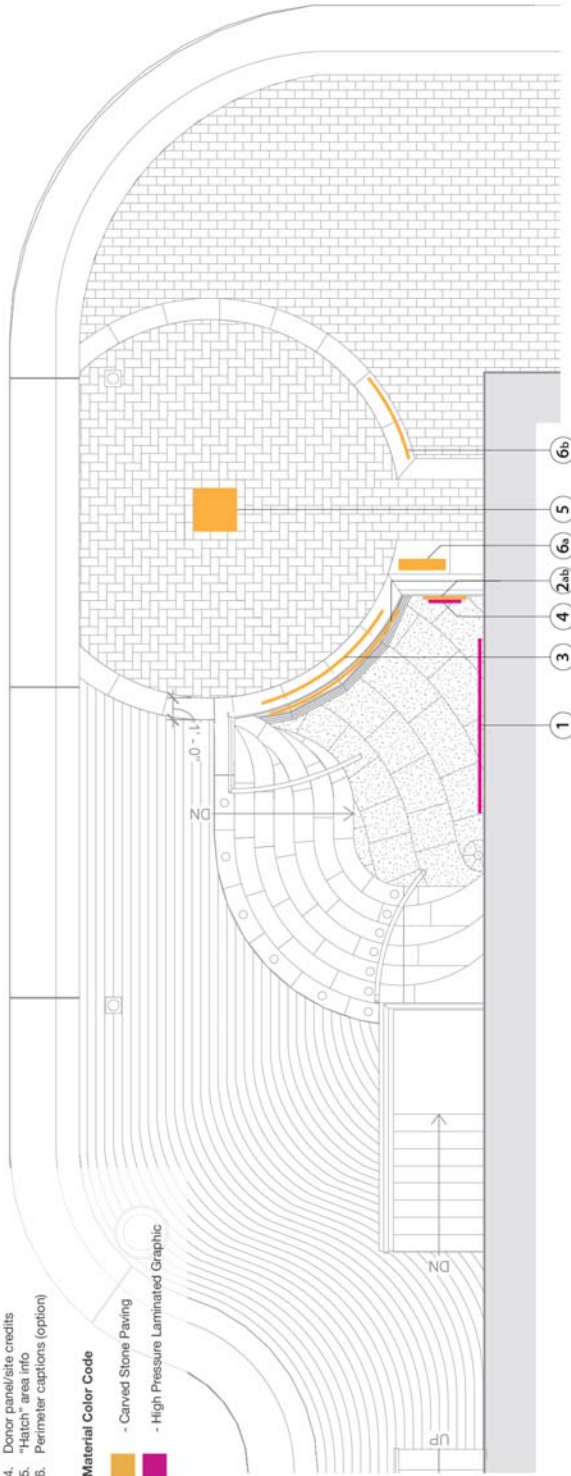
Exhibit Area Overview -- Plan View

Graphic Listing

1. Interpretive graphics/diagrams
2. Four site specific captions
3. Site title
4. Donor panel/site credits
5. "Hatch" area info
6. Perimeter captions (option)

Material Color Code

- Carved Stone Paving
- High Pressure Laminated Graphic



Note: Exact positioning, sizes and content area are subject to change pending final architectural design. This sketch is for concept presentation only.



Office of Historic Alexandria  
Gadsby's Tavern Museum - Ice Well

Preliminary Exhibition Design Concept - January 7, 2010

Sidewalk Level Graphics

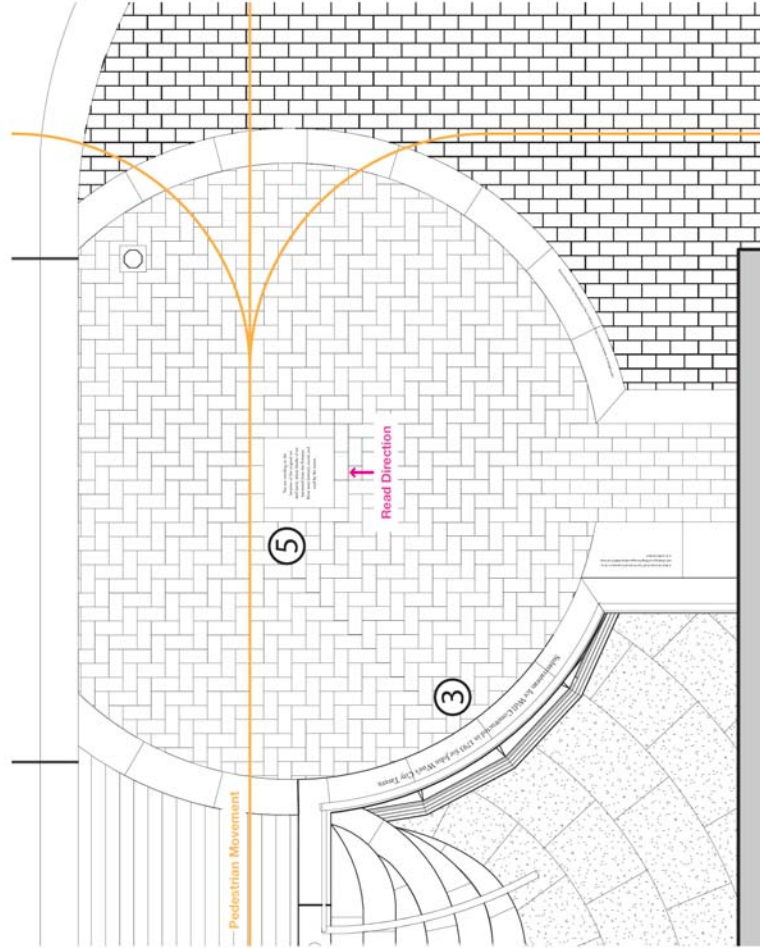
Graphic 3: Site Title:

- Location:**  
Paving in front of guard rail  
Aligned vertically centered to stone pavers  
Aligned horizontally centered to railing
- Dimensions:**  
Single line text string - exact dimensions dictated by final text  
(current text spans approx. 77" w x 2" h)
- Material:**  
Carved stone with black polished lettering
- Typofaces:**  
Adobe Caslon Pro, Regular, 192pt (approx. 2" high for Cap. O)
- Transcript:**  
Subterranean Ice Well Constructed in 1793 for John Wise's City Tavern.

Graphic 5: "Hatch" Area:

- Location:**  
Paving marking original location of ice well's hatch
- Dimensions:**  
Multi-line caption set within 24" x 24" square with 3" margin  
Text aligned centered horizontally and vertically
- Material:**  
Cast glass
- Typofaces:**  
Adobe Caslon Pro, Regular, 96pt (approx. 1" high for Cap. O)
- Transcript:**  
You are standing on the location of the original ice well hatch, where blocks of ice harvested from the Potomac River were lowered, stored, and used by the tavern.

Note: Exact positioning, sizes and content area are subject to change pending final architectural design. This sketch is for concept presentation only.



Office of Historic Alexandria

Gadsby's Tavern Museum - Ice Well

Preliminary Exhibition Design Concept - January 7, 2010

Sidewalk Level Graphics

Graphic 6a: "Tunnel" Caption:

**Location:**  
Paving marking perimeter of tunnel

**Dimensions:**  
Maximum of three-line caption  
Approx. size 26" w x 4.5" h

**Material:**  
Carved stone with black polished lettering.

**Typefaces:**  
Adobe Caslon Pro, Regular, 72pt (approx 0.75" high for Cap. O)

**Transcript:**  
A brick-lined tunnel led from the tavern's basement to the ice well, allowing ice, chilling beverages, and perishable food items to be readily retrieved.

Graphic 6b: "Perimeter" Caption:

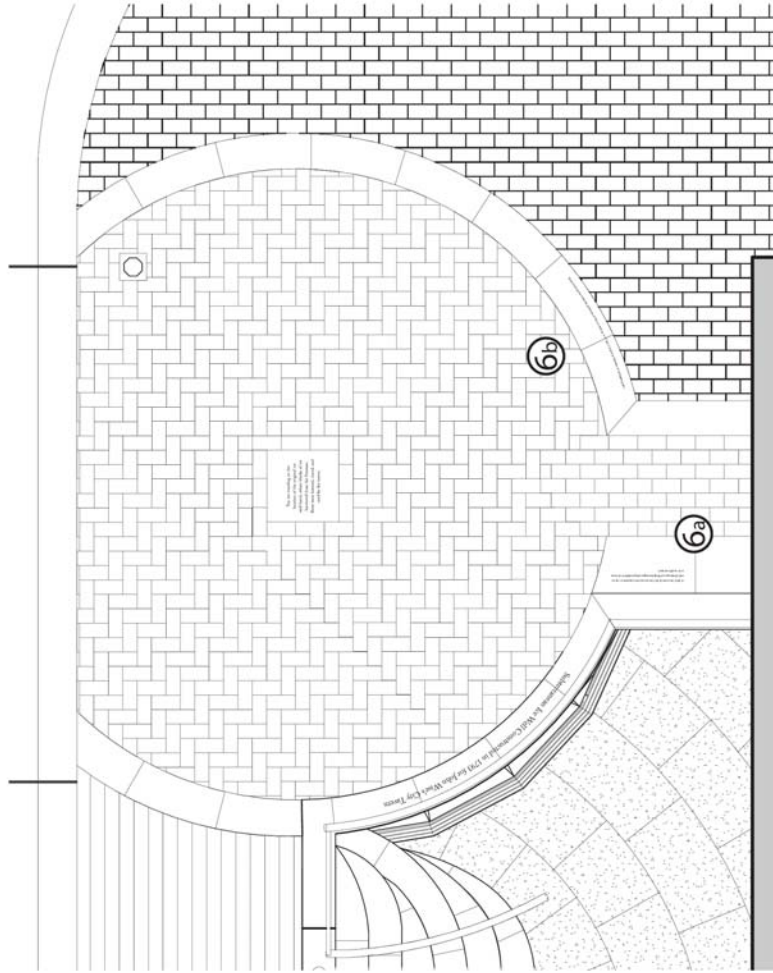
**Location:**  
Paving marking perimeter of ice well

**Dimensions:**  
Single line text string - exact dimensions dictated by final text  
(current text spans approx. 44" w x 0.75" h)

**Material:**  
Carved stone with black polished lettering.

**Typefaces:**  
Adobe Caslon Pro, Regular, 72pt (approx 0.75" high for Cap. O)

**Transcript:**  
These stone pavers mark the perimeter of the ice well, up to 17 feet 3 inches in diameter at its largest point.



**Note:** Exact positioning, sizes and content area are subject to change pending final architectural design. This sketch is for concept presentation only.

Sidewalk Level Graphics - Full Scale Type Samples

Graphic 3  
Adobe Caslon Pro, Semibold, 102pt

# Subterranean

Graphic 5  
Adobe Caslon Pro, Semibold, 96pt

## Potomac River

Graphics 6a, 6b  
Adobe Caslon Pro, Semibold, 72pt

### Seventeen feet

Office of Historic Alexandria

Gadsby's Tavern Museum - Ice Well

Preliminary Exhibition Design Concept - January 7, 2010

Lower Level Graphics (Carved Graphics Only)

Graphic 2a: Site Specific Captions:

**Location:**  
Capping stones above viewing windows

**Dimensions:**  
32" w x 9" h ea. (four total) with 1.5" margin  
Text aligned centered horizontally and vertically

**Material:**  
Carved stone with black polished lettering.

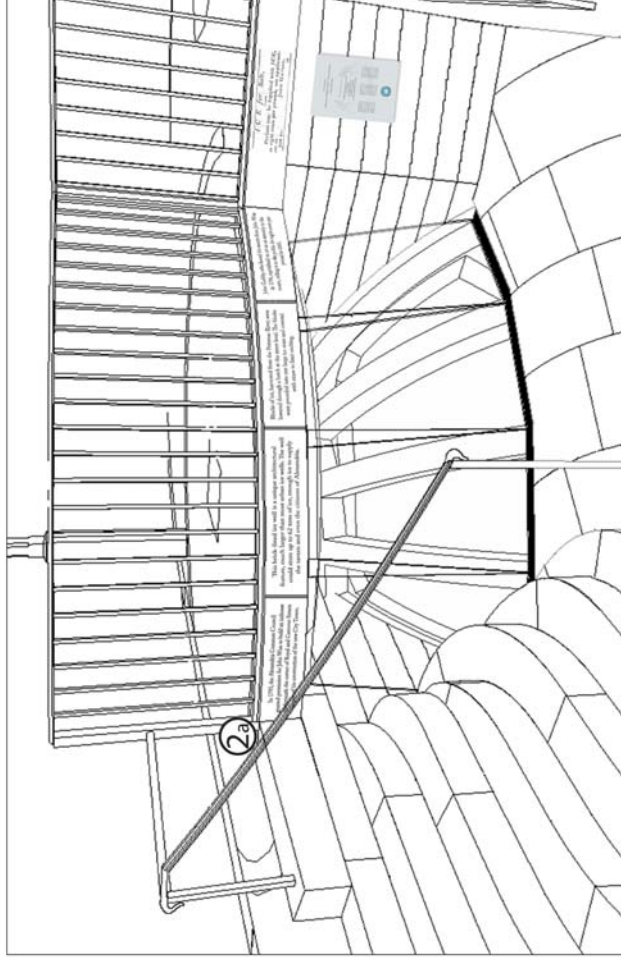
**Typefaces:**  
Adobe Caslon Pro, Regular, 96pt (approx 1" high for Cap. O)

**Transcript (Panel 1):**  
In 1793, the Alexandria Common Council granted permission for John Wise to build an icehouse underneath the corner of Royal and Cameron Streets as part of his construction of the new City Tavern.

**Transcript (Panel 2):**  
This brick-lined ice well is a unique surviving architectural feature, much larger than most urban ice wells. The well could store up to 62 tons of ice, enough ice to supply his tavern and even the citizens of Alexandria.

**Transcript (Panel 3):**  
Blocks of ice, harvested from the Potomac River, were lowered through a hatch at the street level. The blocks were pounded into one large ice mass and covered with straw to limit melting.

**Transcript (Panel 4):**  
John Gadsby, who leased the tavern from John Wise in 1796, capitalized on ice as an amenity to the tavern, selling it to the public for 8 cents per pound in 1805.



Note: Exact positioning, sizes and content area are subject to change pending final architectural design. This sketch is for concept presentation only.

Office of Historic Alexandria

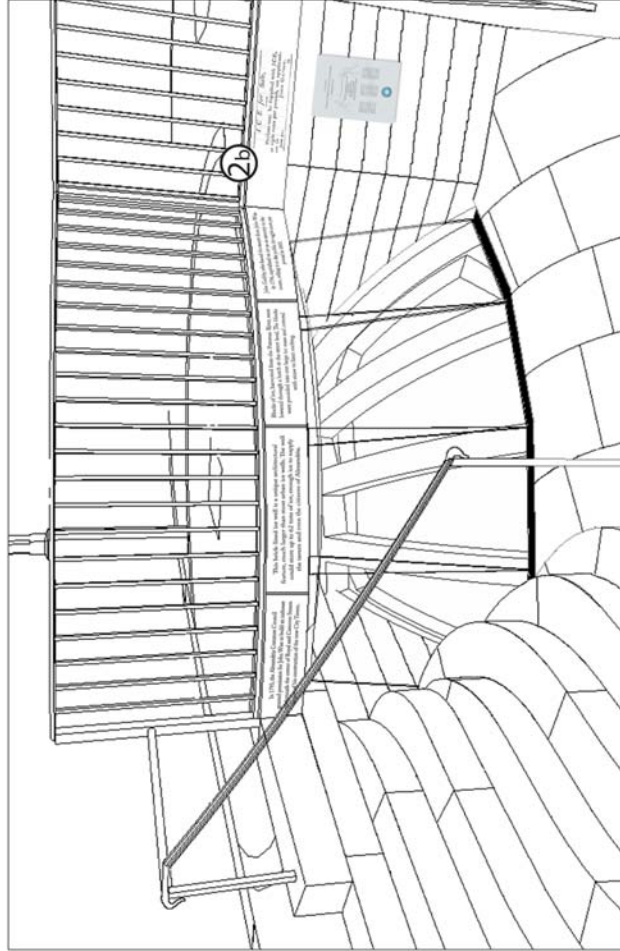
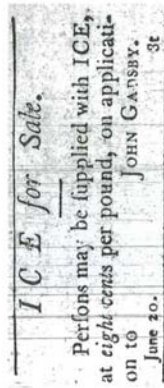
Gadsby's Tavern Museum - Ice Well

Preliminary Exhibition Design Concept - January 7, 2010

Lower Level Graphics (Carved Graphics Only)

Graphic 2b: Site Specific Captions:

- Location:**  
Capping stones above wall adjacent to viewing windows
- Dimensions:**  
32" w. x 9" h.
- Material:**  
Carved stone/photo etching as appropriate to image
- Typefaces:**  
n/a
- Content**  
Reproduction of John Gadsby's 1805, "Ice for Sale" advertisement  
(see inset below)



Note: Exact positioning, sizes and content area are subject to change pending final architectural design. This sketch is for concept presentation only.

Lower Level Graphics (Carved Graphics) - Full Scale Type Samples

Graphic 2a  
*Adobe Caslon Pro, Semibold, 96pt*

Gadsby's Tavern



Office of Historic Alexandria  
Gadsby's Tavern Museum - Ice Wall

Preliminary Exhibition Design Concept - January 7, 2010

Lower Level Graphics (HPL Graphics: Interpretive Graphics)

Graphic 1:

**Location:** Basement wall of Gadsby's Tavern, equidistant between tunnel wall and lower (12" either side). Base of panel lies 40" from ground and top lies 70" from ground (standard viewing heights)

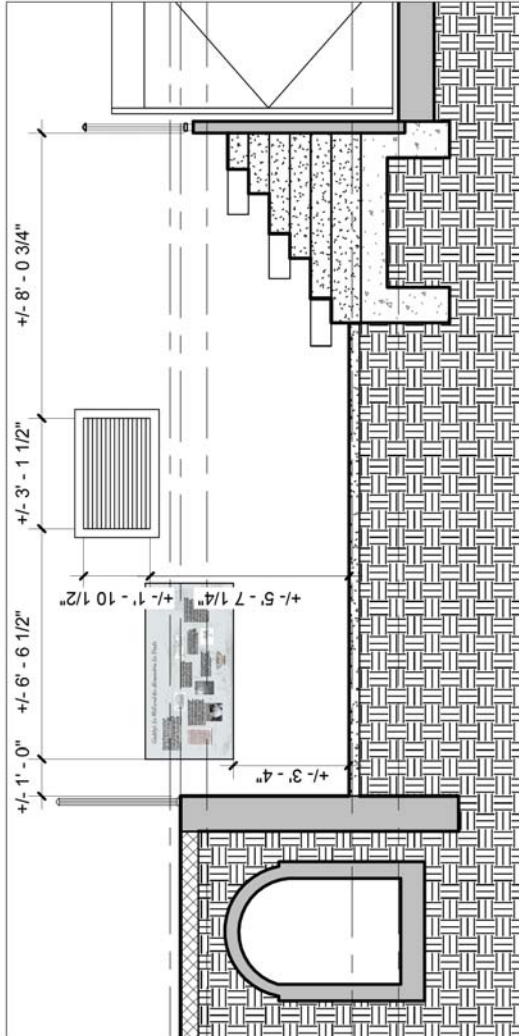
**Dimensions:** 60"W x 30"H

**Material:** High Pressure Laminated Graphic

**Typefaces:**

**Title:** Adobe Caslon Pro, Semibold, 144pt  
**Subtitle:** Adobe Caslon Pro, Semibold, 48pt  
**Caption Title:** Adobe Caslon Pro, Semibold, 24pt  
**Body:** ITC Stone Serif, Medium, 36pt  
**Subtext:** ITC Stone Serif, Medium, 28pt  
**Caption:** ITC Stone Serif, Medium, 18pt  
**Credits:** ITC Stone Serif, Medium, 13pt

**Colors:** Pantone 5497C @ 25%  
**Background:** Black @ 90%  
**Copy (All):**



Note: All content is photo holder and design layout is a sketch only. Final design is subject to change and will be dictated by content.

Office of Historic Alexandria  
Gadsby's Tavern Museum - Ice Well

Preliminary Exhibition Design Concept - January 7, 2010

Lower Level Graphics (HPL Graphics: Interpretive Graphics)

## Gadsby's Ice Well and the Alexandria Ice Trade

**In the late 18th century**, ice was harvested from the mountains and delivered to nearby icehouses. This was a very expensive and time-consuming process, so ice was generally reserved for wealthy estate owners. As the demand for ice grew, ice-harvesting companies began to sell ice commercially and make deliveries with horse-drawn carts throughout urban areas. In Alexandria, some wealthy residents constructed small ice wells and subterranean ice chambers in their basements.

**This large and commodious** ice well was built by John Wise in 1793, the year he received permission from the Alexandria Common Council to build an icehouse on the corner of Royal and Cameron Streets. For the next four years, John Wise owned the "Alexandria Inn and Coffee House" at the corner of Royal and Cameron Streets. The ice well was built in 1793, the year that Wise began to build an ice well at his own tavern.



The lock-lined ice well that Wise built is much larger than most ice wells, and appears between the two levels of the basement. The well could store enough ice to supply the tavern and even Gadsby's for the next four years. John Wise Gadsby was among the tavern from John Wise Gadsby advertised the sale of ice from the well.

**ICE For Sale**  
Persons may be supplied with ICE at a right time per pound for five years and upwards, however, no Gadsby may have received this selling price. It could be used to fill beverages, preserve food, cool, and even make ice cream.



By the 1790s, filled beverages and ice desserts were becoming fashionable. Early cookbooks illustrate the placement of bowls of ice for cooling drinks. This is the first time that we know of with Gadsby. The tavern was filled with ice and used to fill beverage plates.

With the development of the railroad, it became possible to transport ice from the mountains to it in Southern locations. As technology became available for the manufacturing of ice, the ice trade expanded. Similarly, with the development of iceboxes and refrigerators, ice with better insulation and refrigeration, ice with better insulation and refrigeration for more convenient. As a result, the well at Gadsby's Tavern is one of the few remaining examples of an urban ice well. Today, the well is a historical landmark and a reminder of the size, survival, and accessibility of this ice well. The well is a historical landmark and a reminder of the size, survival, and accessibility of this ice well. The well is a historical landmark and a reminder of the size, survival, and accessibility of this ice well.

Note: All content is office holder and design layout is a sketch only. Final design is subject to change and will be dictated by content.



## Lower Level Graphics (HPL Graphics: Interpretive Graphics) - Transcript

### Intro Text:

In the late 18th century, ice was harvested from local rivers and streams and stored in nearby icehouses. This was a very expensive and time-consuming process, so ice was generally reserved for wealthy estate owners. As the demand for ice grew, ice-harvesting companies began to sell ice commercially and make deliveries with horse-drawn carts throughout urban areas. In Alexandria, some wealthy residents constructed small ice wells and subterranean ice chambers in their basements.

### Subtext 1:

In 1793, the Alexandria Common Council granted permission for John Wise to build an icehouse underneath the corner of Royal and Cameron Streets as part of his construction of the new City Tavern. For the previous four years, John Wise leased the "Alexandria Inn and Coffee House" at 201 N. Fairfax Street from Thomas Herbert. The ad for this lease listed an icehouse as a valuable asset to the property. Perhaps the convenience of having a regular supply of ice at his disposal at the "Alexandria Inn and Coffee House" caused Wise to build an ice well at his own tavern.

### Subtext 2:

The brick-lined ice well that Wise built is much larger than most ice wells, and measures between 16' 11" and 17' 3" in diameter and is 11' 9" deep at the lowest excavation point. The well could store enough ice to supply his tavern and even the citizens of Alexandria. In 1805, when John Gadsby was leasing the tavern from John Wise, Gadsby advertised the sale of ice from the well.

### Subtext 3:

"Ice for sale. Persons may be supplied with ice at eight cents per pound on application to John Gadsby"

---ORIGINAL AD USED IN PLACE OF ABOVE TEXT---

This was an exceptionally high price for ice, considering the fact that another ice dealer listed ice for two cents per pound just five years earlier. Ice was a very fashionable commodity at the time, however, so Gadsby may have received his asking price. Ice could be used to chill beverages, preserve perishable foods, and even make ice cream.

### Subtext 4:

By the 1790s, chilled beverages and ice desserts were becoming fashionable. Early cookbooks illustrate the placement of bowls of ice for table settings. This silver monteith, inscribed with Gadsby's name, is part of the museum's collections today. The monteith was filled with ice and used to chill beverage glasses.

### Subtext 5:

With the development of the railroad, it became easier to ship ice from New England and deliver it to Southern locations. As technology became available for the manufacture of ice, the natural ice industry gradually disappeared. Similarly, with the development of iceboxes and refrigerators, ice wells became obsolete. Many were filled and covered, or destroyed in excavations for new construction. As a result, the well at Gadsby's Tavern is one of the few extant examples of an urban ice well. Today, you can view this historic ice well through a reinforced cutout that was created in 1976. The size, survival, and accessibility of this ice well make it a unique architectural feature and a wonderful visual reminder of Alexandria's once thriving ice industry.

Lower Level Graphics (HPL Graphics: Interpretive Graphics) – Full Scale Type Samples

**Title**

*Adobe Caslon Pro, Italic, 144pt*

*Gadsby's Ice*

**Subtitle**

*Adobe Caslon Pro, Semibold, 48pt*

Gadsby's Ice Well

**Caption Title**

*Adobe Caslon Pro, Semibold, 24pt*

Permission to build the ice well was granted...

Lower Level Graphics (HPL Graphics: Interpretive Graphics) – Full Scale Type Samples

**Main Text:**

*ITC Stone Serif, Medium, 36pt/46.8pt*

In the late 18th century, ice was harvested...

**Sub-Text Text:**

*ITC Stone Serif, Medium, 28pt/36.4pt*

In 1793, the Alexandria Common Council granted permission...

**Caption:**

*ITC Stone Serif, Medium, 18pt/23.4pt*

During the winter men would cut...

**Credits/Provenance**

*ITC Stone Serif, Medium, 13pt*

Gadsby's Tavern Museum Archives

Office of Historic Alexandria

Gadsby's Tavern Museum - Ice Well

Preliminary Exhibition Design Concept - January 7, 2010

Lower Level Graphics (HPL Graphics: Donor Plaque)

Graphic 4: Site Specific Captions:

**Location:**  
Horizontally centered on tunnel wall, 6 inches below capping stone.

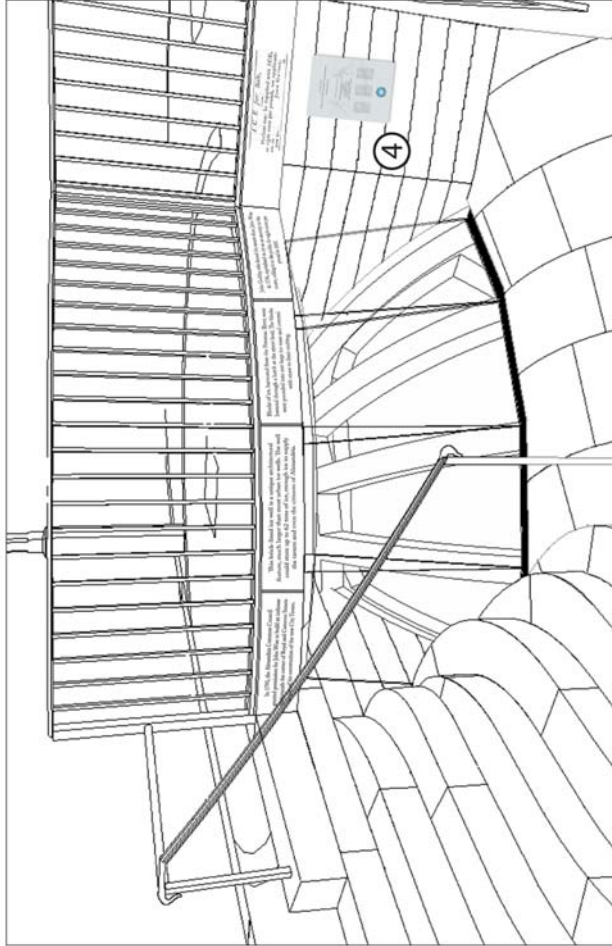
**Dimensions:**  
12" w x 18" h - 18" w x 24" h  
Final size will be dictated by quantity of names.  
Diagram shows larger size.

**Material:**  
Carved stone/photo etching as appropriate to image

**Typofaces:** Adobe Caslon Pro, Semibold, 48pt  
**Title:** Adobe Caslon Pro, Semibold, 48pt  
**Subtitle:** Adobe Caslon Pro, Semibold, 36pt  
**Donor:** Adobe Caslon Pro, Semibold, 36pt  
**Individual:** Adobe Caslon Pro, Semibold, 24pt

**Transcript**  
Restoration of the Historic Ice Well of Gadsby's Tavern Museum  
Completed XXX, 2011

With generous support from the following:  
Gadsby's Tavern Museum Society  
1772 Foundation  
Save America's Treasures  
Alexandria Association  
Historic Alexandria Foundation  
Individual Contributors...



Note: Exact positioning, sizes and content area are subject to change pending final architectural design. This sketch is for concept presentation only.

Lower Level Graphics (HPL Graphics: Donor Plaque)



Note: All content is place holder and design layout is a sketch only. Final design is subject to change and will be dictated by content.

Lower Level Graphics (HPL Graphics: Donor Plaque) – Full Scale Type Samples

**Title**  
*Adobe Caslon Pro, Semibold, 48pt*

**Historic Ice Well of Gadsby's Tavern Museum**

**Subtitle/Donor**  
*Adobe Caslon Pro, Semibold, 36pt*

**Gadsby's Tavern Museum Society**

**Individual**  
*Adobe Caslon Pro, Semibold, 24pt*

**Individual Contributors**

**VI. APPROVED DESIGN:** July 8, 2009

Ice Well Viewing Windows

Frameless, operable, lockable clear, low iron glass with an anti-reflective coating 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.

Lighting

The site will be lit utilizing low level LED lights. The lighting levels will not exceed 0.5 footcandles at curb edge. The fixtures approved for inside the ice well will highlight the unique features identified by the museum curators as well as creating an overall illumination program for the resource. The interior lighting is designed to be slightly brighter than its surroundings, as it is the focal point of the exhibit. The approved fixtures also include new, marker lights on the top of each stair, on each tread, and an array on the lower level wall for its nighttime patrons.

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 approved 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.

Sidewalk

The brick pavers at the sidewalk level will follow the curves of the ice well. A 12" wide stone band will frame the limits of the ice well at the sidewalk level. This band will be engraved with text, as part of the interpretive programming of the site.

Sidewalk Level Railings

The metal railing at the sidewalk level is being replaced with black iron supports with bronze/brass handrails of similar design as the existing.

Ice Well Steps

The amphitheatre steps descending into the viewing area will be fabricated out of bluestone. The walls will be brick. Black iron supports with bronze/brass handrails will flank the staircase.

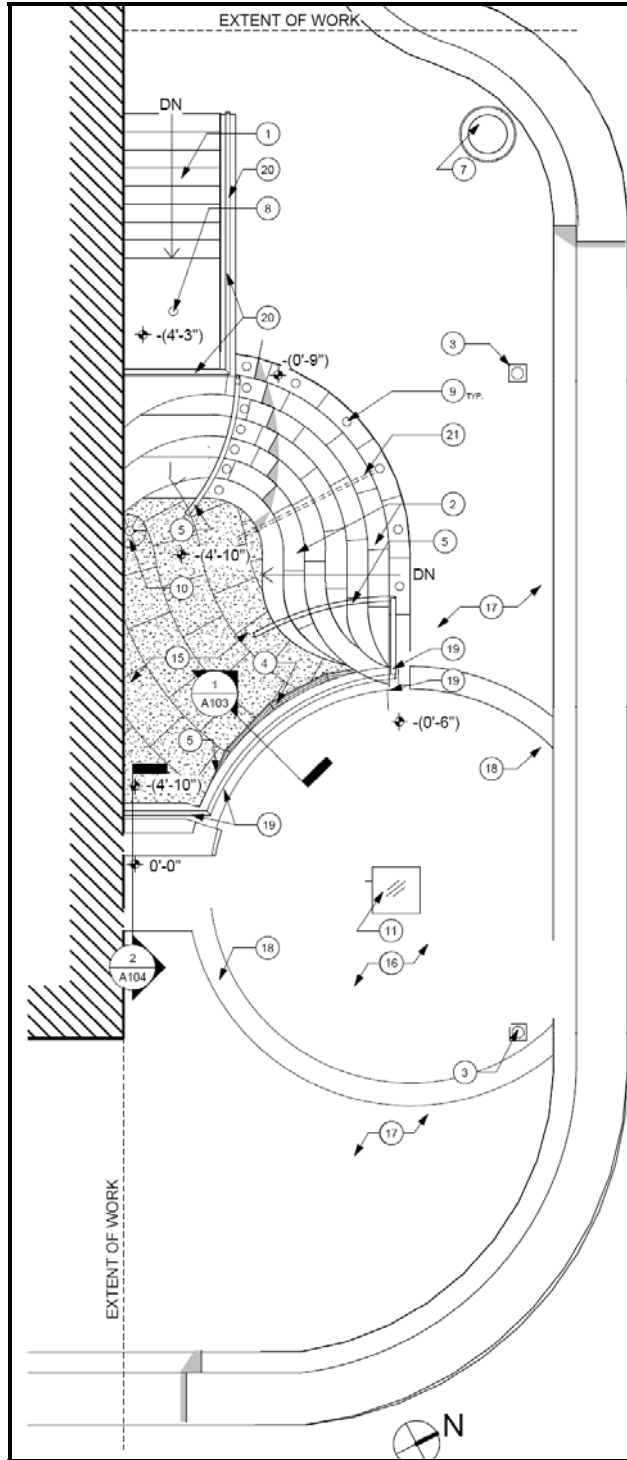
Signage

The proposed language to be installed in the [street level] stone band and any additional interpretive signage was to return to the BAR for review and approval.

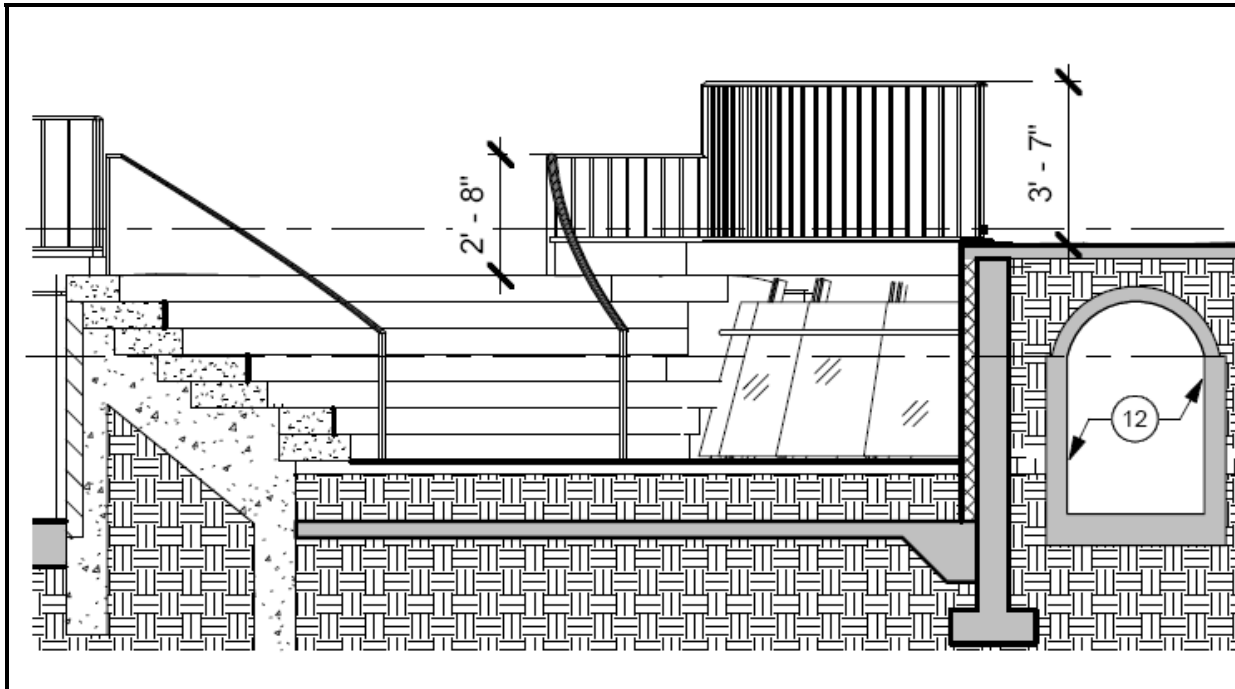
Tradesman Entrance

The railing will be removed and replaced with a new, code compliant railing closely matching the existing in design. The railing will be fabricated with black iron supports with bronze/brass handrails.

VII. APPROVED DESIGN'S ILLUSTRATIONS: July 8, 2009

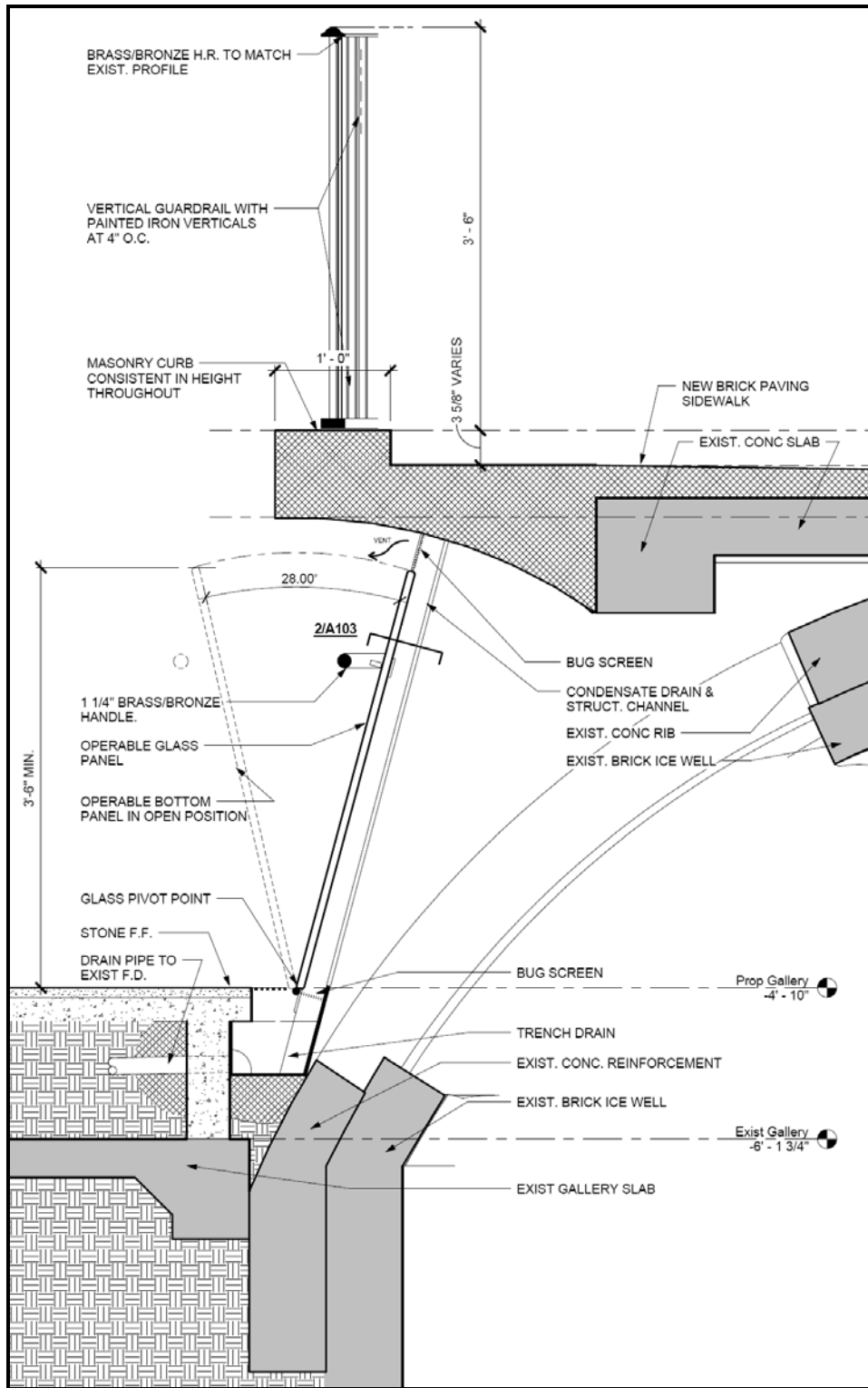


Approved Site Plan

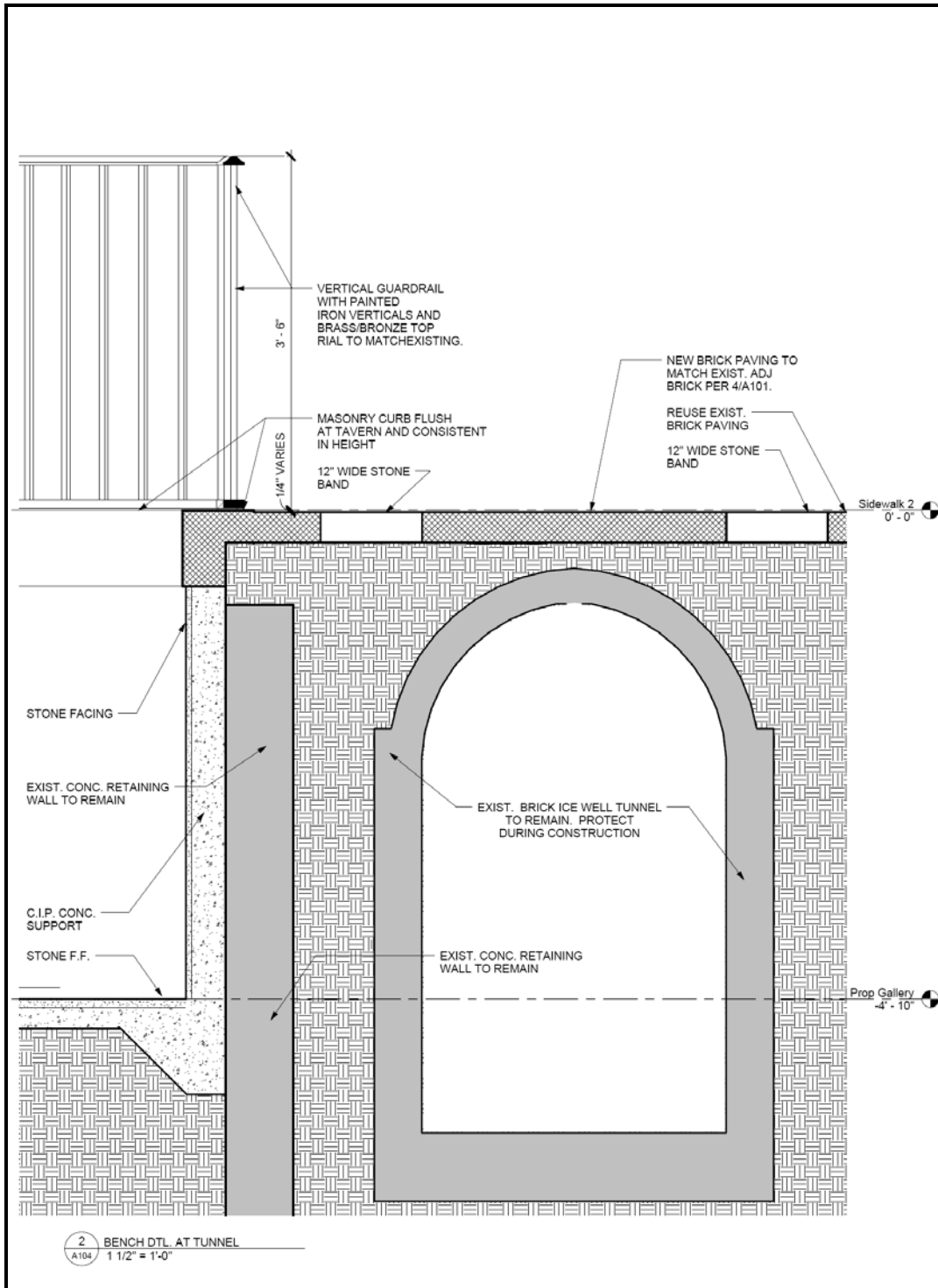


Approved Section

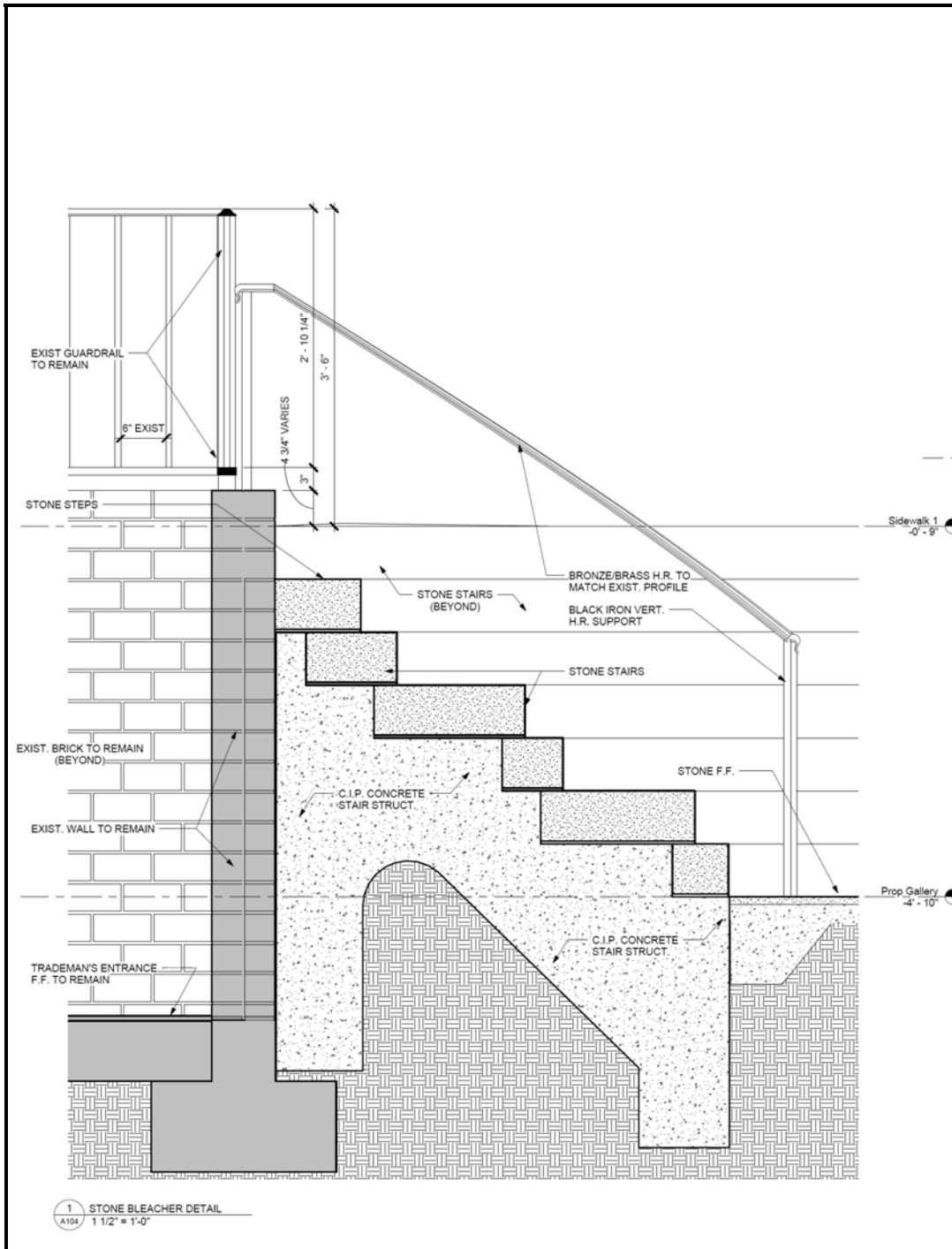




Approved Viewing Window Detail



Approved Bench Detail



Approved Stair Detail



**Approved Street View**