

BACK BAY ARCHITECTURAL COMMISSION
13 MAY, 2026

THE AYER MANSION
395 COMMONWEALTH AVE

Hacin

HACIN
500 HARRISON AVE. STUDIO 4F
BOSTON MA 02118
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2014 Photo from backbayhouses.org

Constructed in 1899-1900 on a vacant lot by architect Alfred J. Manning with designer Louis Comfort Tiffany for Frederick Ayer and his wife Ellen Barrows (Banning) Ayer. They Ayers lived in the mansion until their deaths in 1918.

1923 Acquired by the the E. A. Abbott Company and converted to offices.

1939 foreclosure by Brookline Savings Bank after continued use as medical offices by several owners.

1958 acquired along with 397 Commonwealth by Hearthstone Insurance, buildings operated as single building with various offices.

1964 acquired by the Association for Cultural Interchange for use as a dormitory in conjunction with 397 Commonwealth.

1966 added to the State Register for Historic Places

1988 300 square foot addition to the chapel created extending onto the 397 Commonwealth lot

2005 designated a National Historic Landmark as one of three surviving examples of residential interiors designed by Louis Comfort Tiffany.

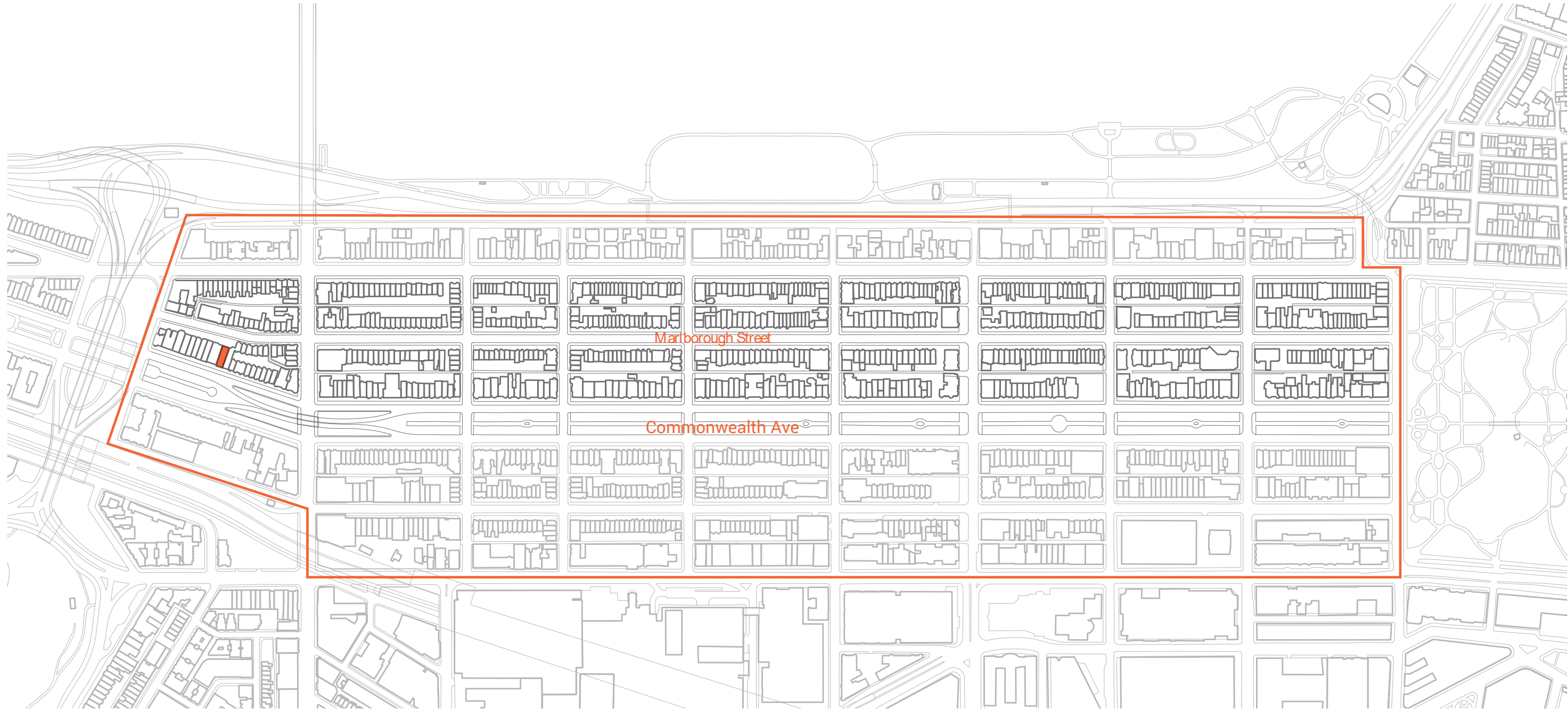
One of only twelve Back Bay addresses to have frontage on both Commonwealth Avenue and Marlborough Street.

Building History

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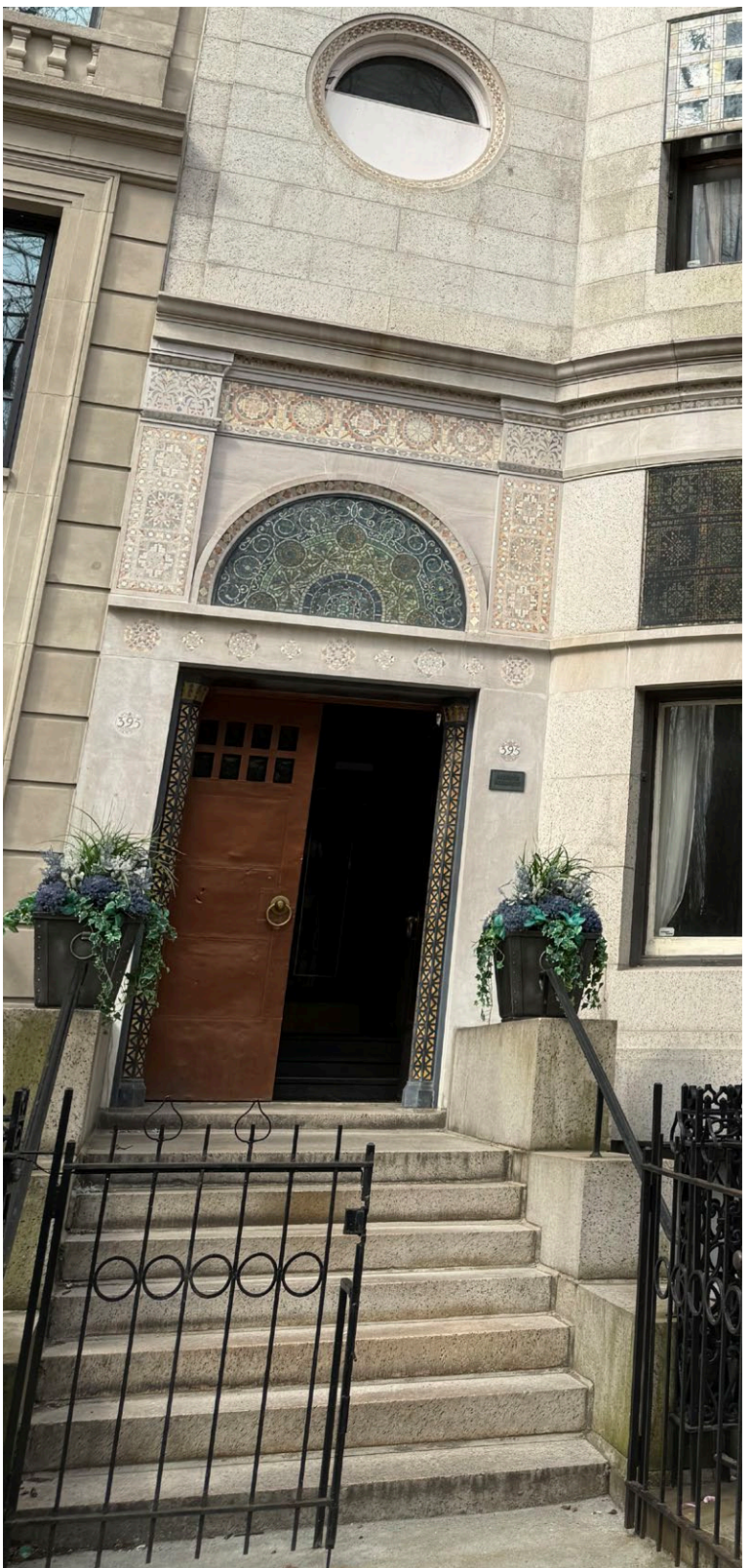
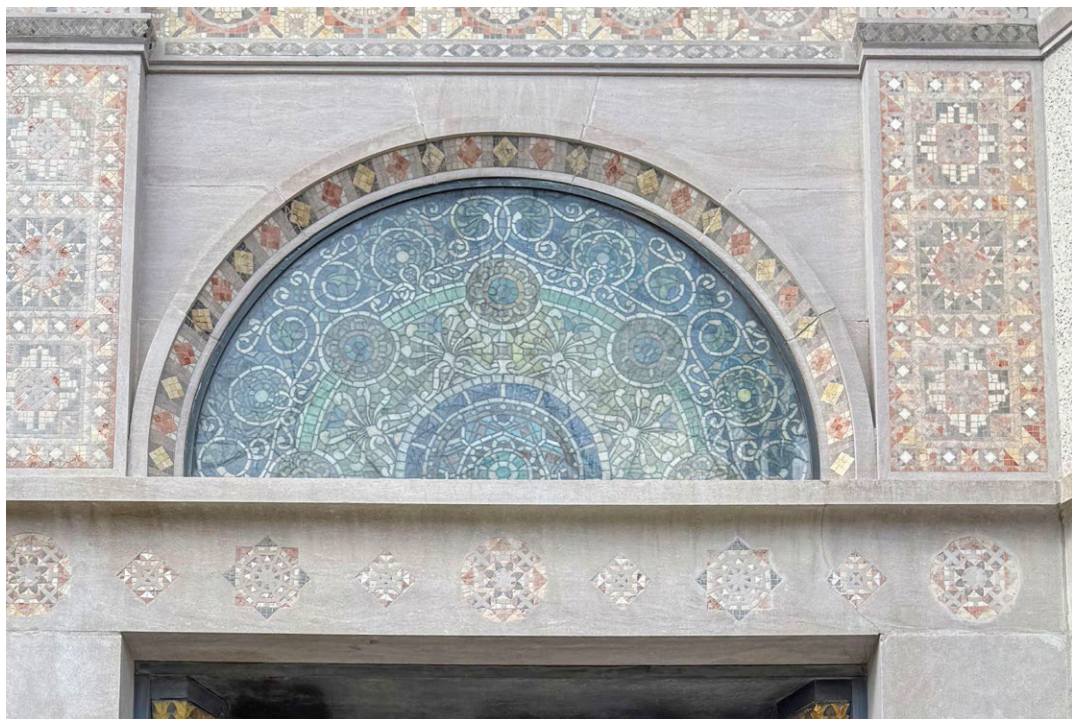


Back Bay Historic District

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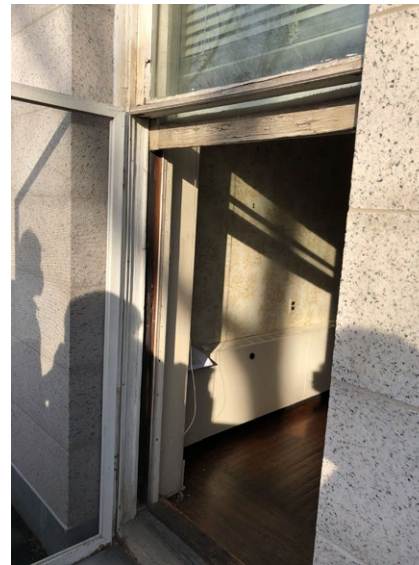
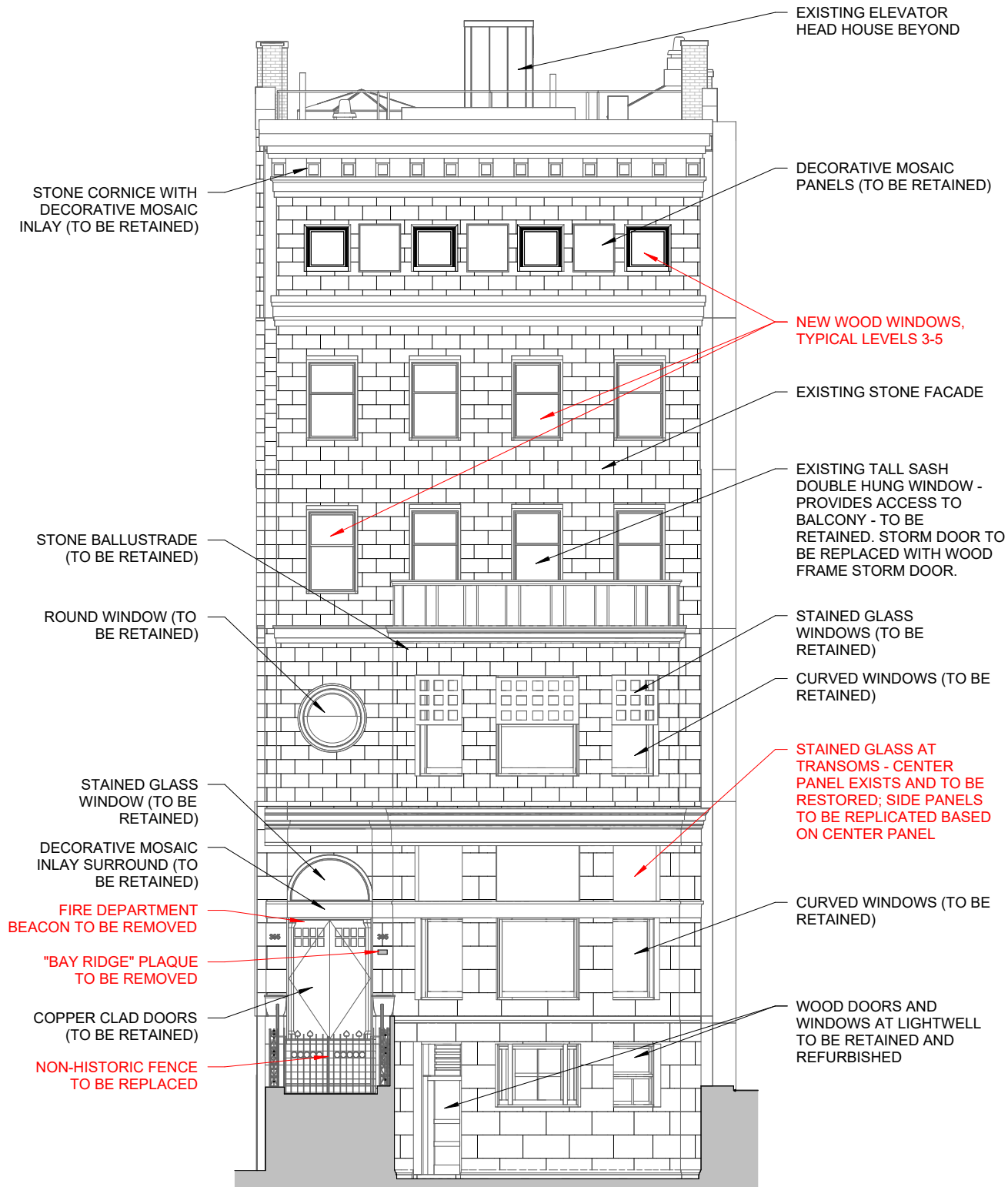


Existing Conditions – Commonwealth Facade

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Window balcony access



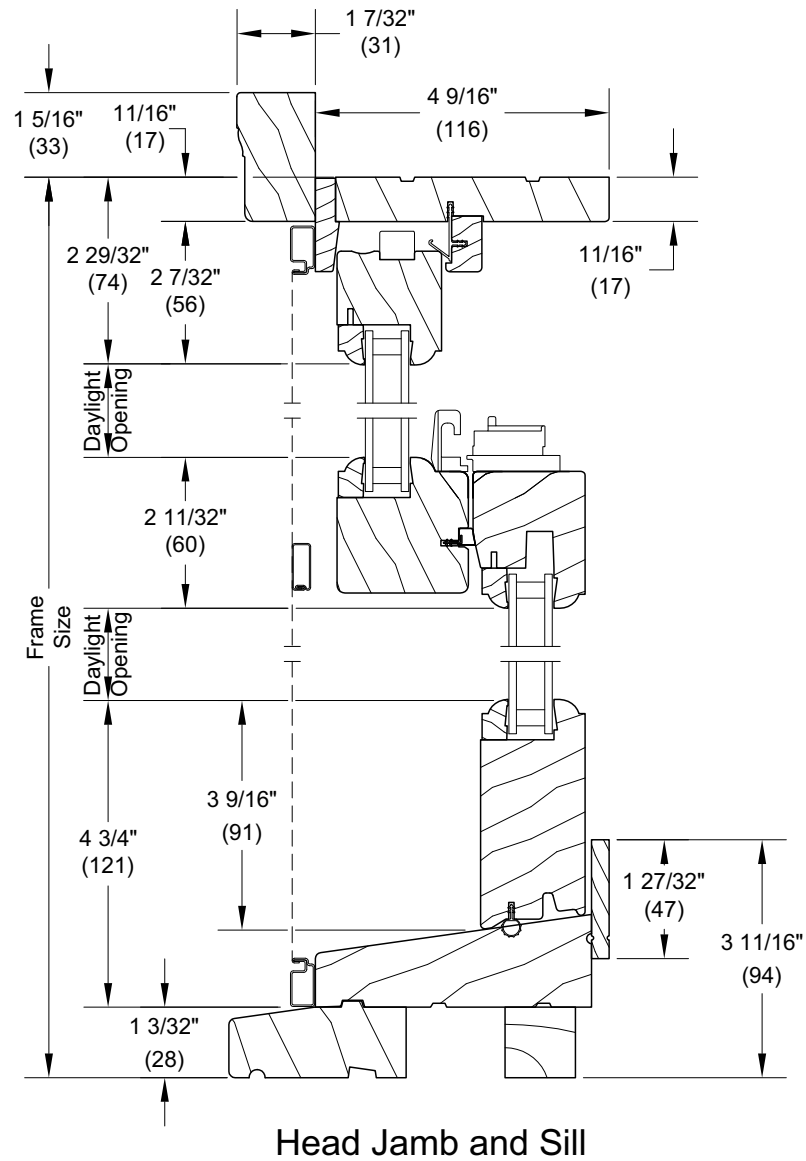
Photo April 2026

Commonwealth Elevation

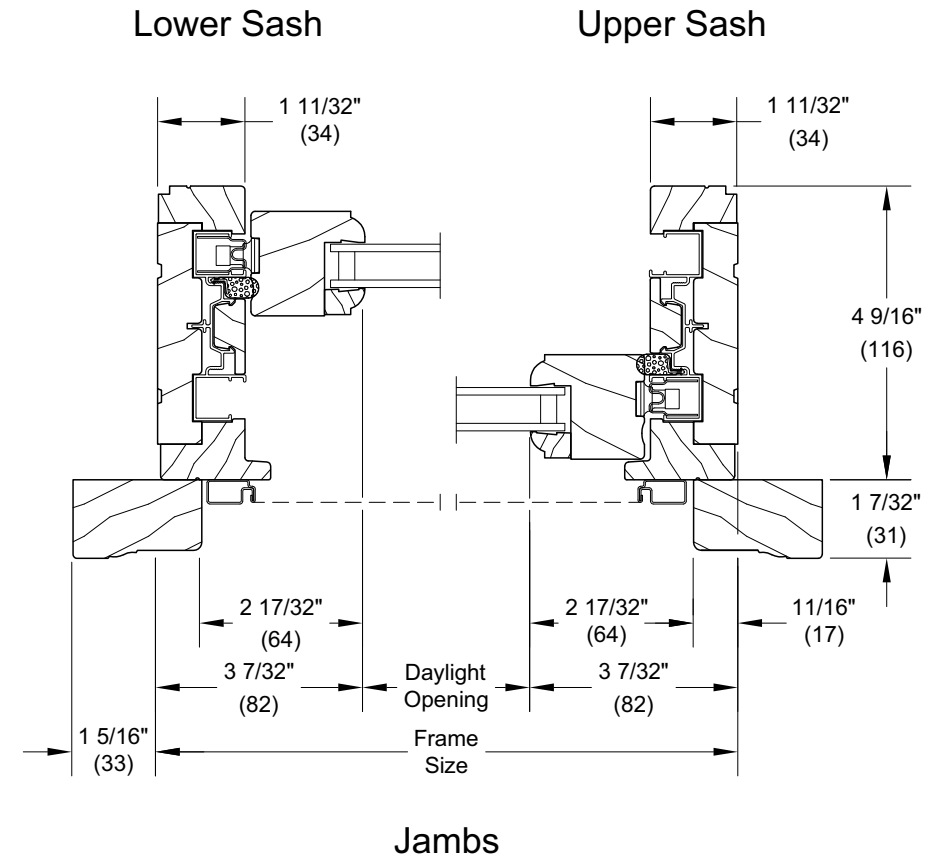
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Double Hung



Proposed Replacement Window Details

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Copper clad entry door, dents cannot be repaired, copper is not punctured



Fire department beacon to be removed



Basement wood door and windows, to be retained and refurbished.

Keep Existing Handrails at Main Entrance



Replace Existing Fence with Low Ornamental Fence



Remove Existing Gate at Main Entrance



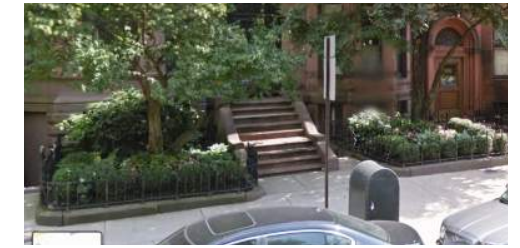
12-18" Ornamental Metal Fence on Existing Granite Wall



280 Commonwealth Avenue



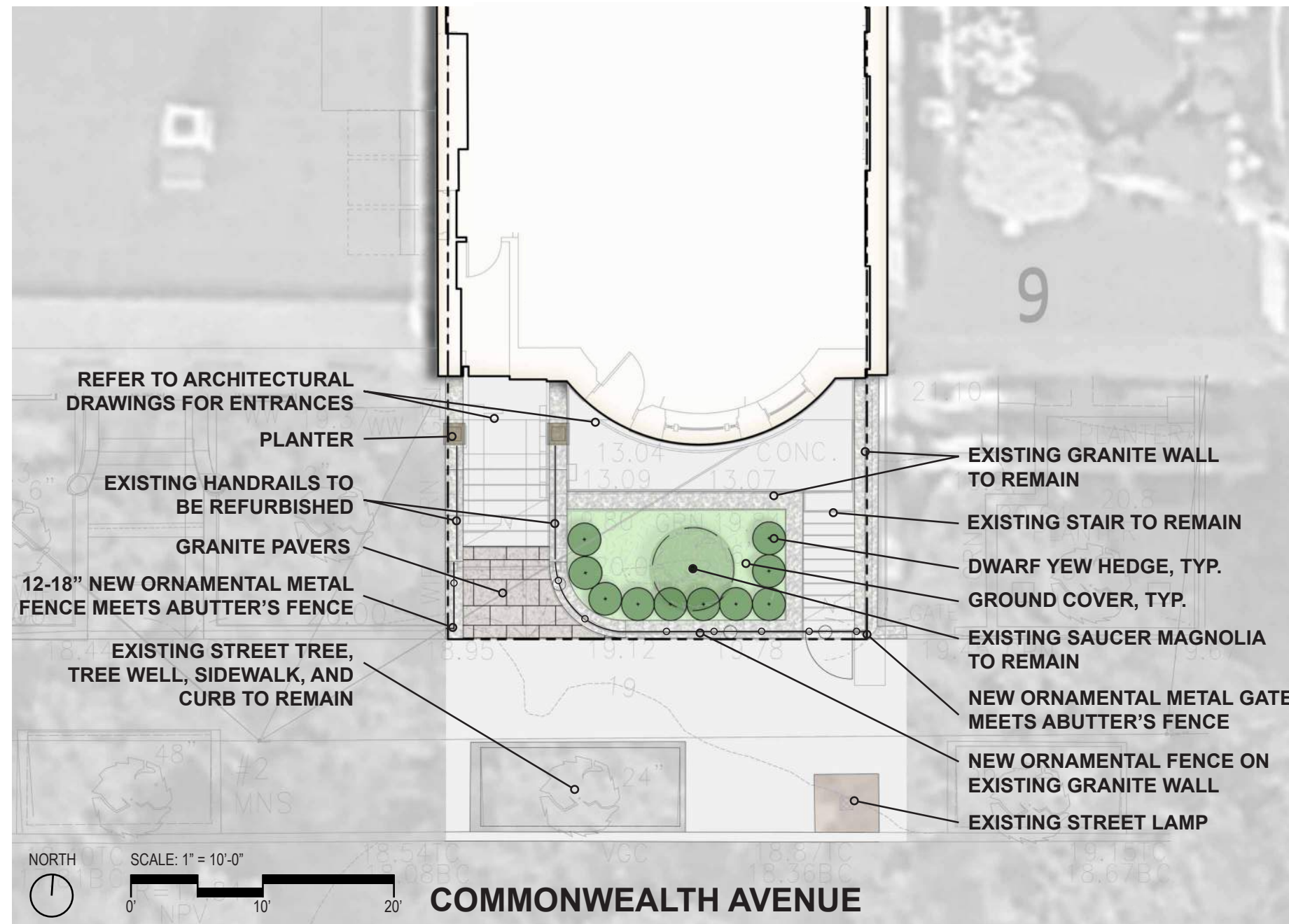
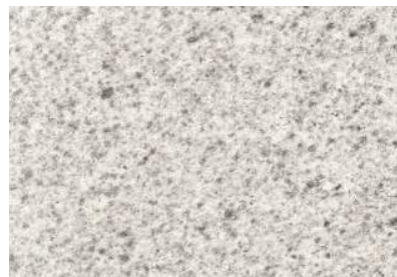
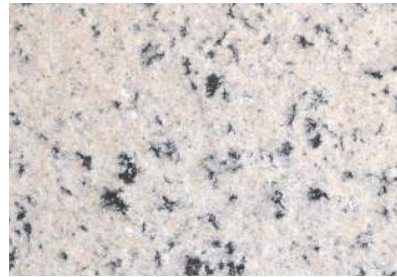
280 Commonwealth Avenue



Garden Planters (Seasonal Display)



Granite Pavers



Evergreen Groundcover (Vinca Minor)



Dwarf Yew Hedge (419 Comm. Ave)



Existing Saucer Magnolia to Remain



SITE MATERIALS

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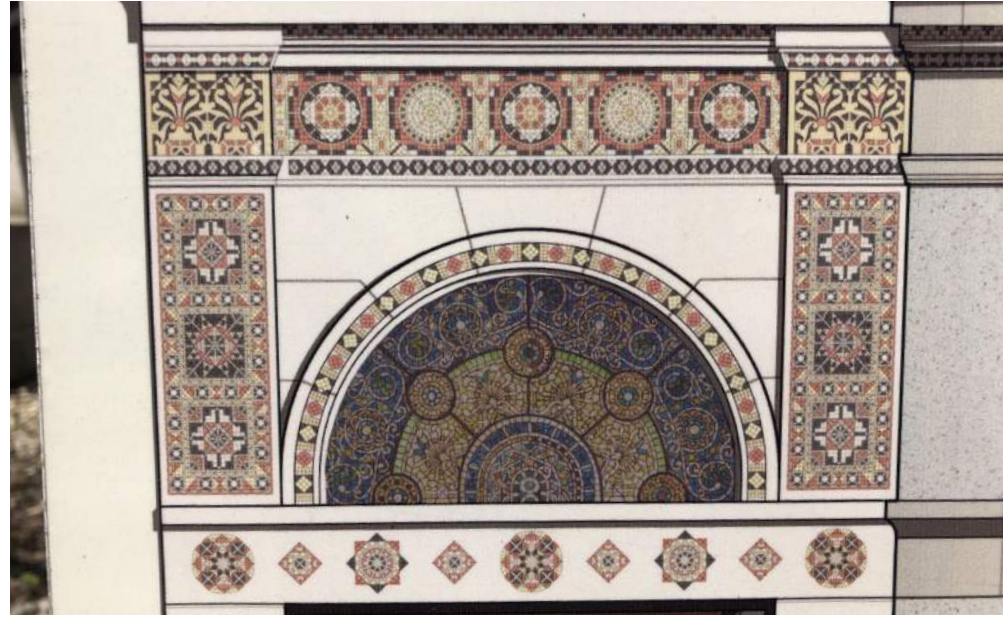
Landscape Design - Commonwealth Frontage

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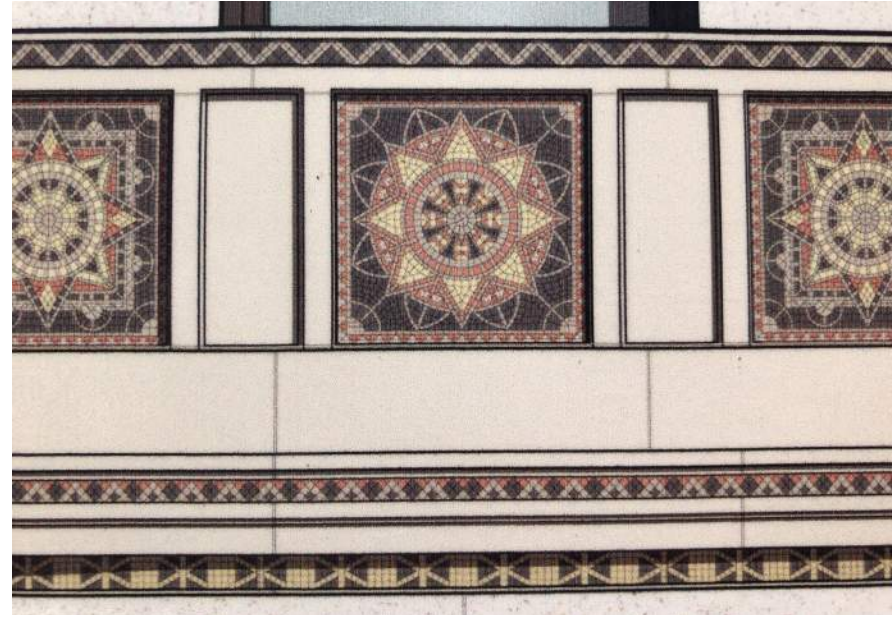
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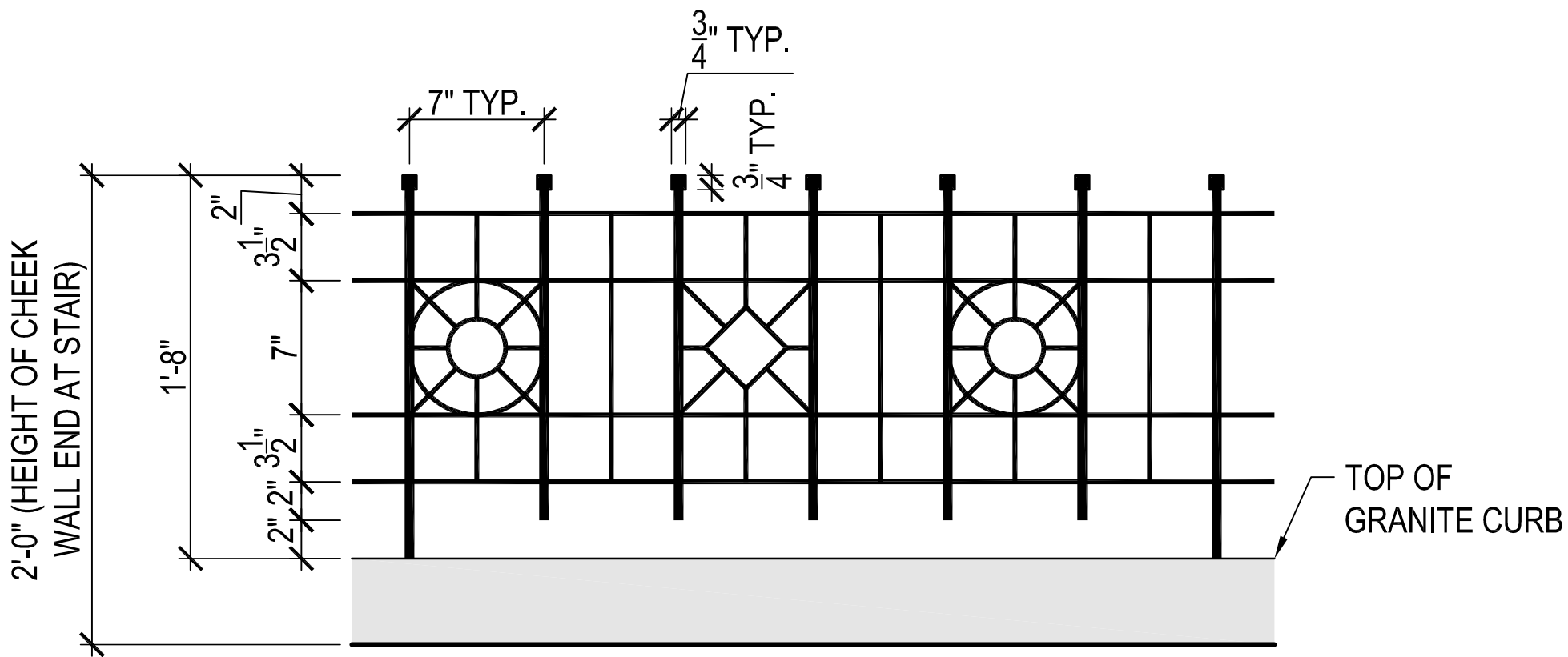
Ayer Mansion Details



Ayer Mansion Details



Existing Fence and Gate



Existing Fence and Gate



Landscape Design - Commonwealth Frontage

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FENCE CONCEPT

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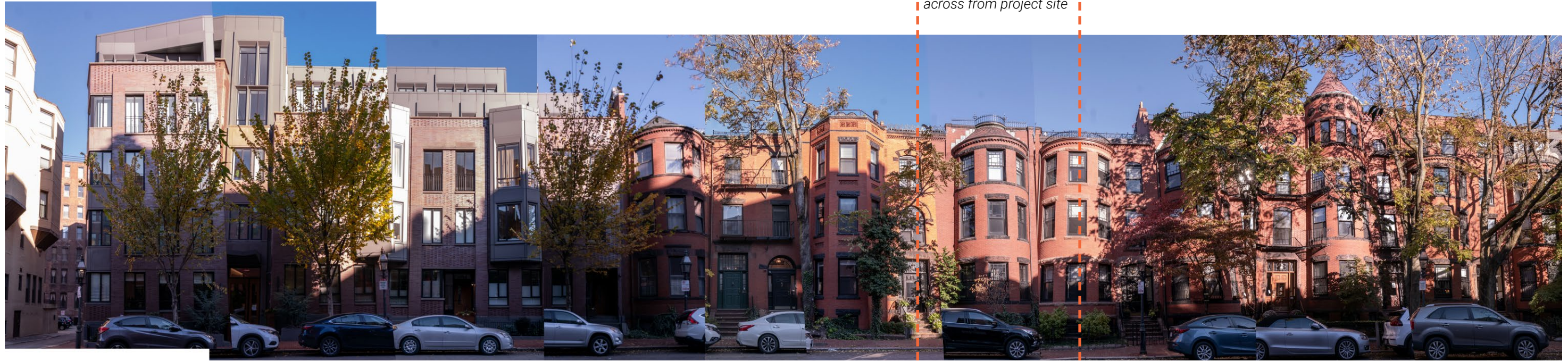


project site



Marlborough Street South Side

across from project site



Marlborough Street North Side

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Existing Conditions – Marlborough Street Facade

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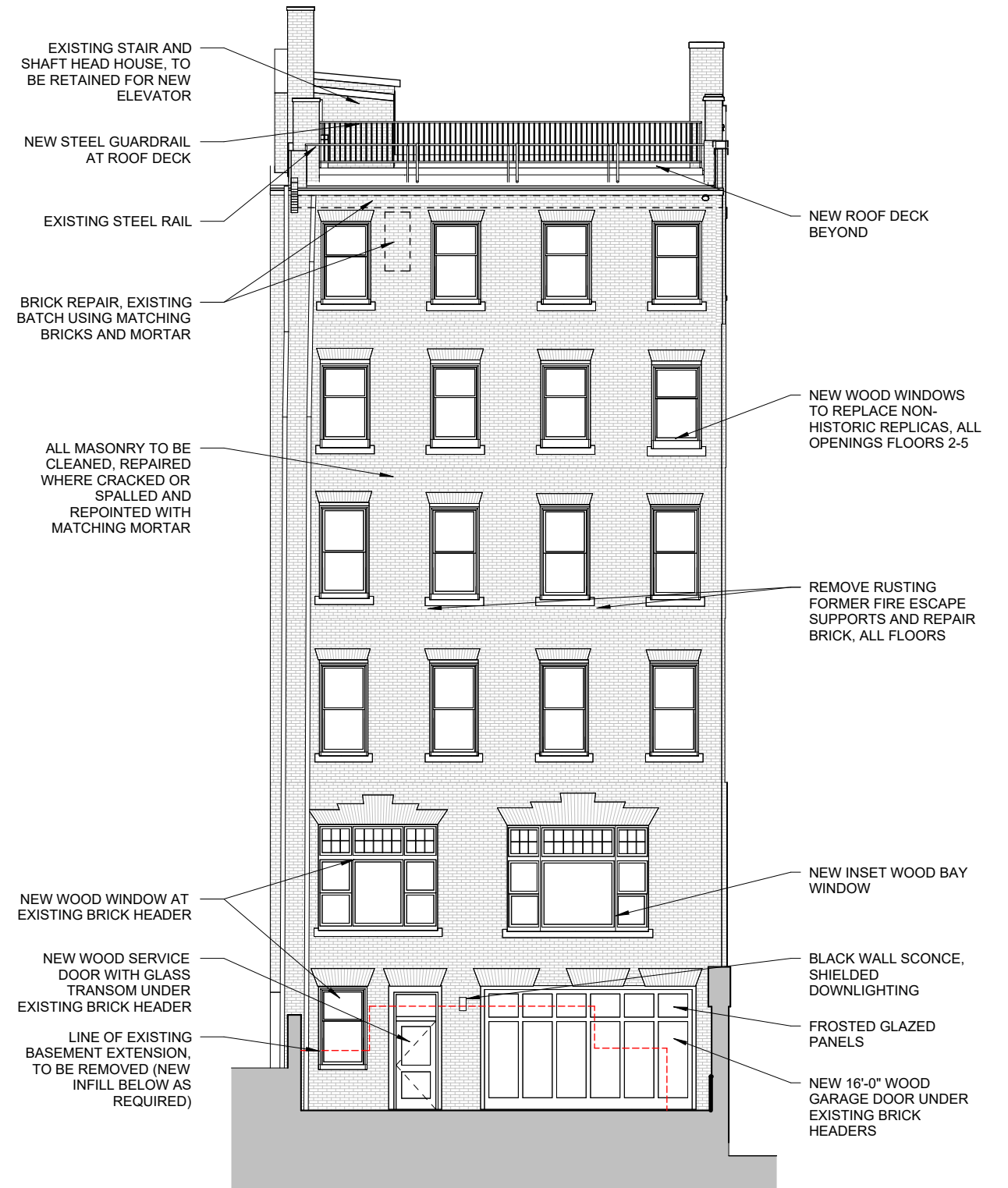
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Photo April 2026



Back Bay Precedents



Marlborough Elevation

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Marlborough Views

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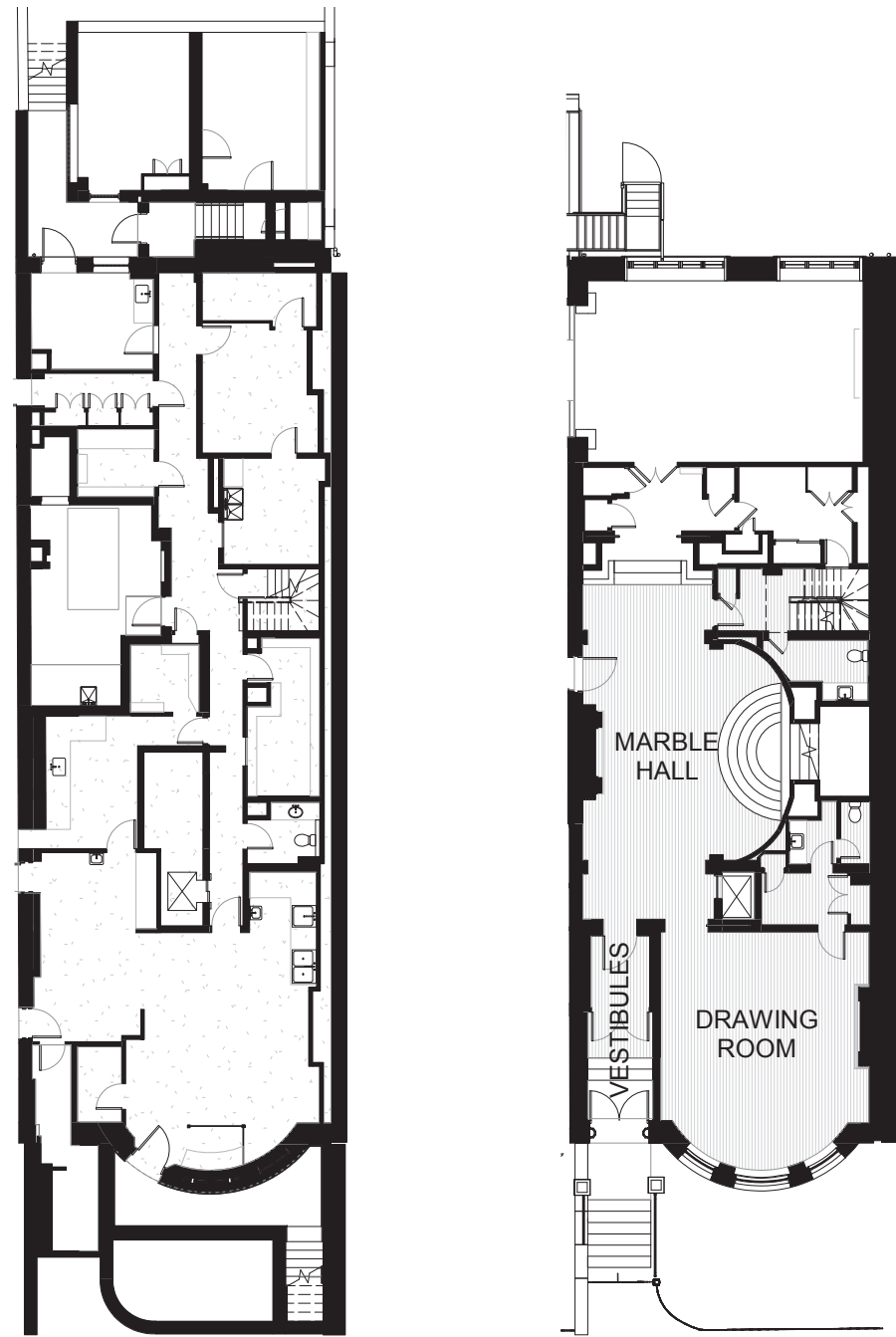


Marlborough Views

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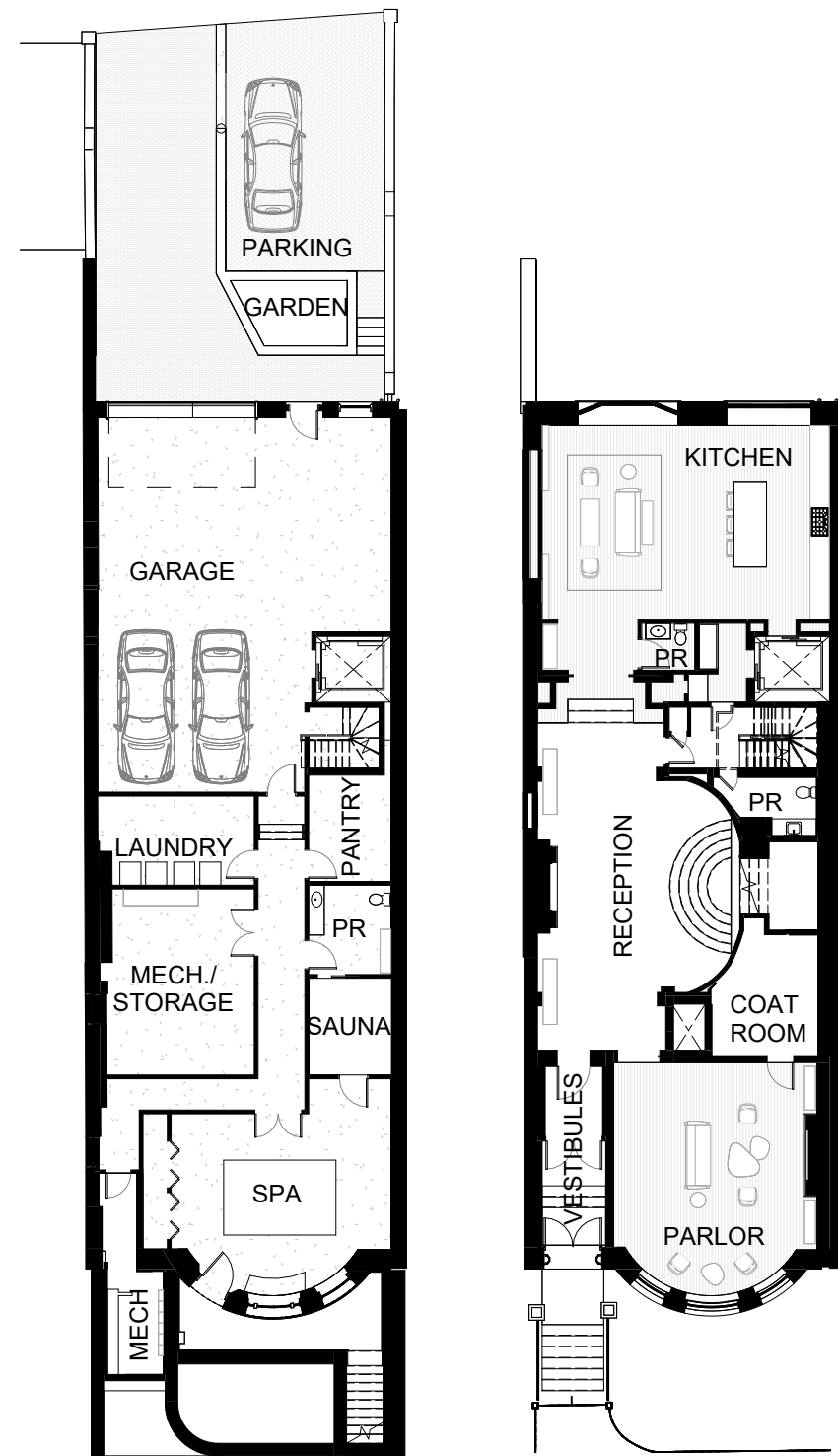
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B | Basement

1 | Level 1

Existing Floor Plans

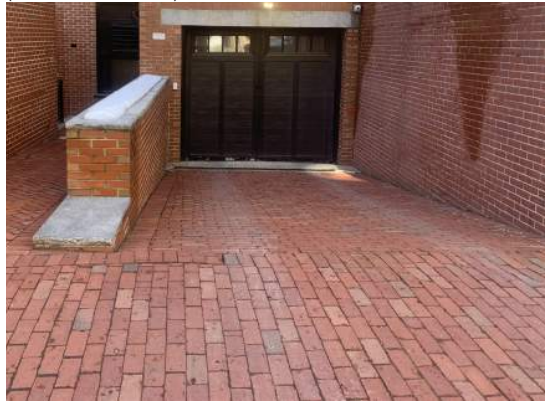


B | Basement

1 | First Floor

Proposed Floor Plans

Running Bond Brick Pattern at Garage Entrance
(Pavers laid on side)



Plant Materials - Hicks Yew



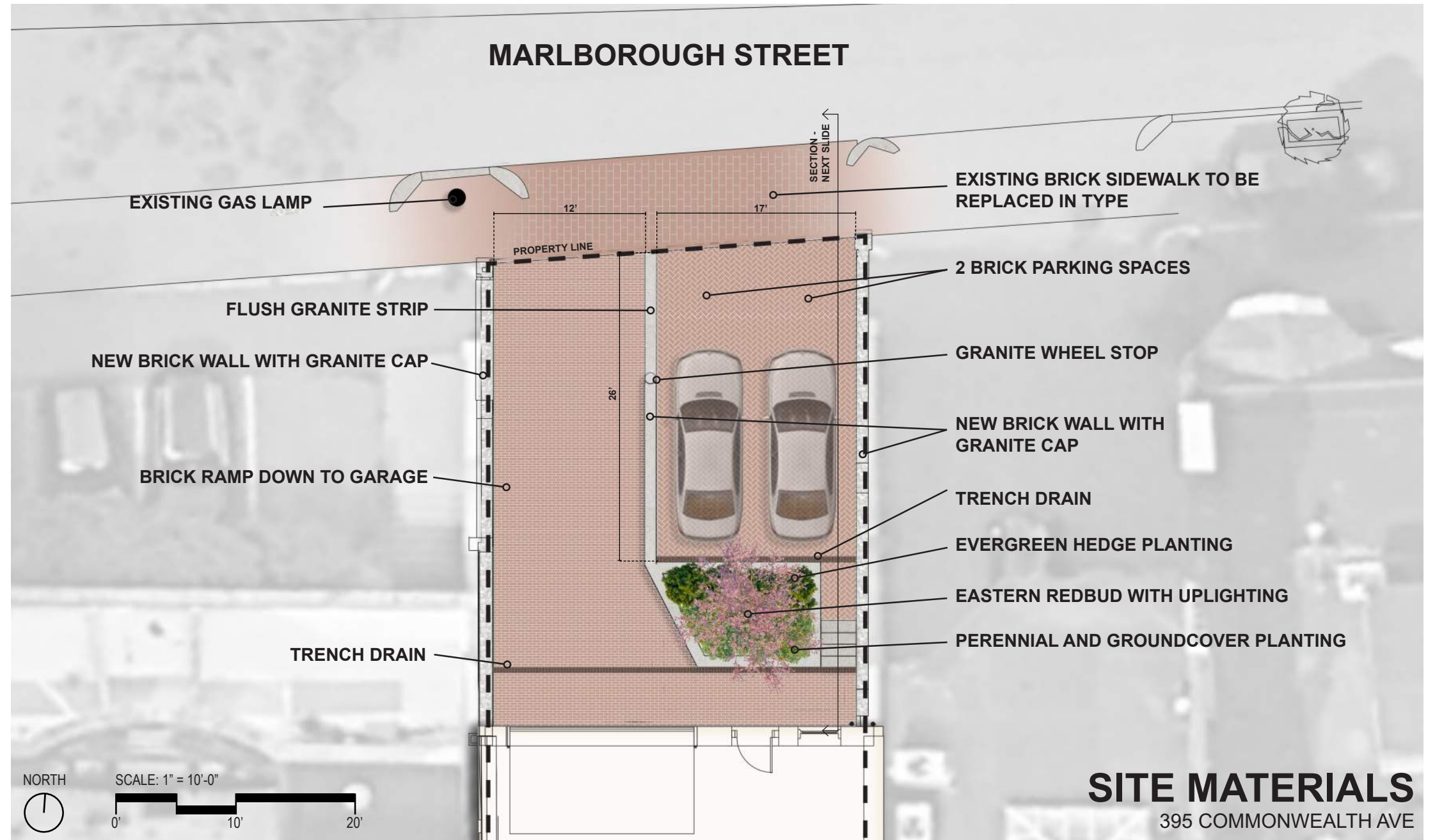
Plant Materials - Groundcover



Parking Brick Herringbone Pattern (Brick)



Granite Wheel Stop

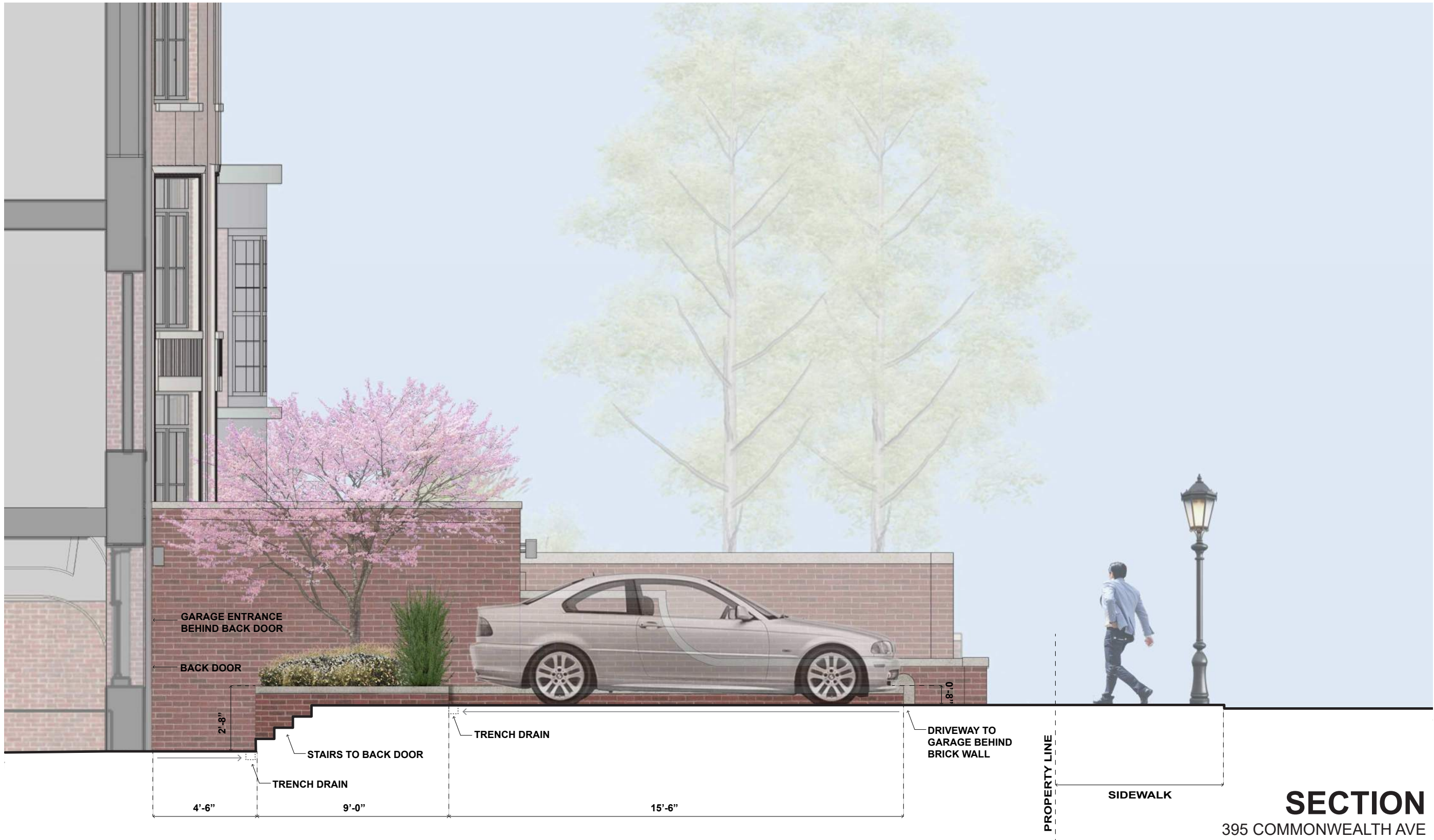


Landscape Design - Marlborough Frontage

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Landscape Design - Marlborough Frontage (Section)

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SECTION
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View from door



View from bay upstairs



View from along street



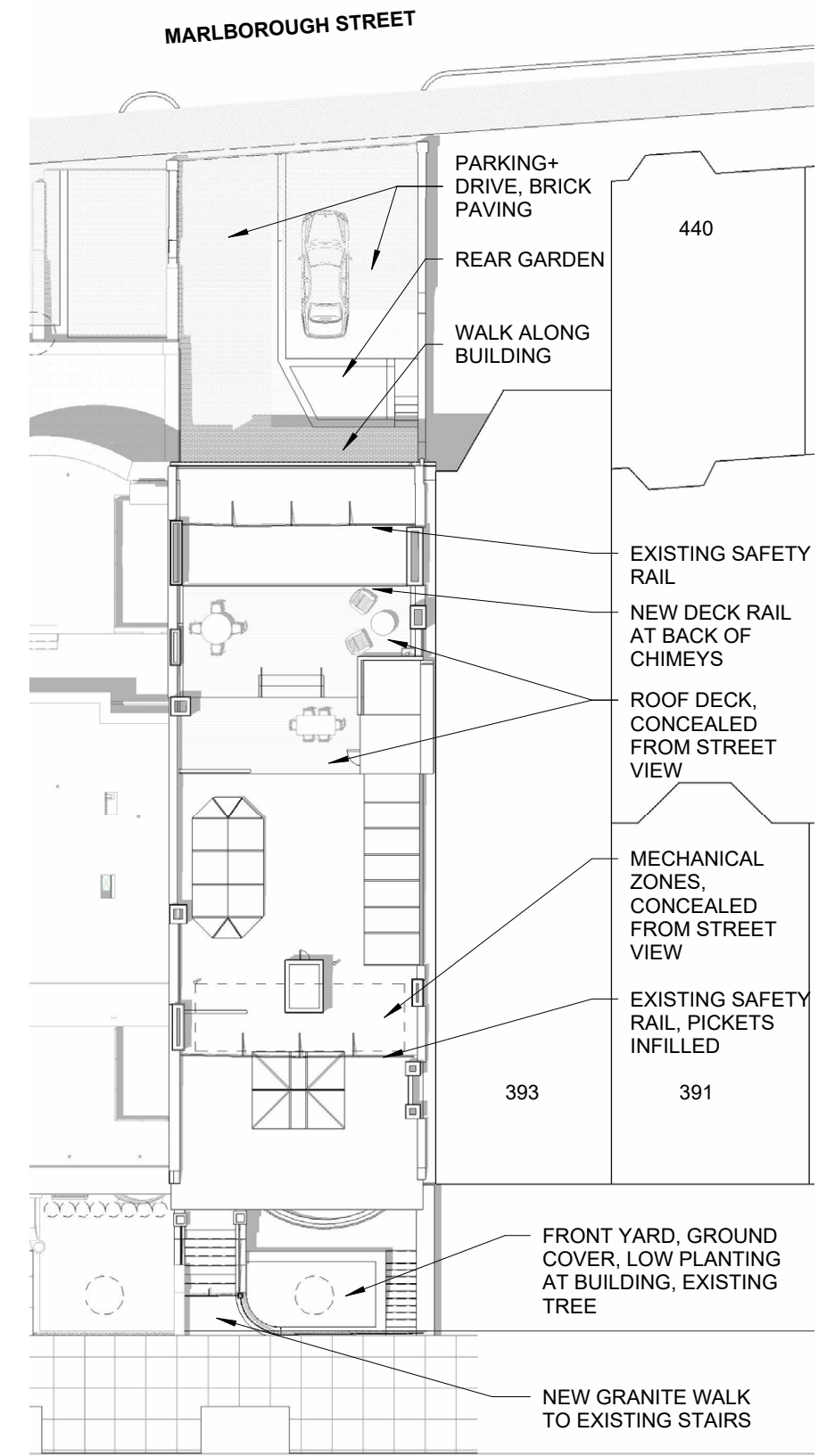
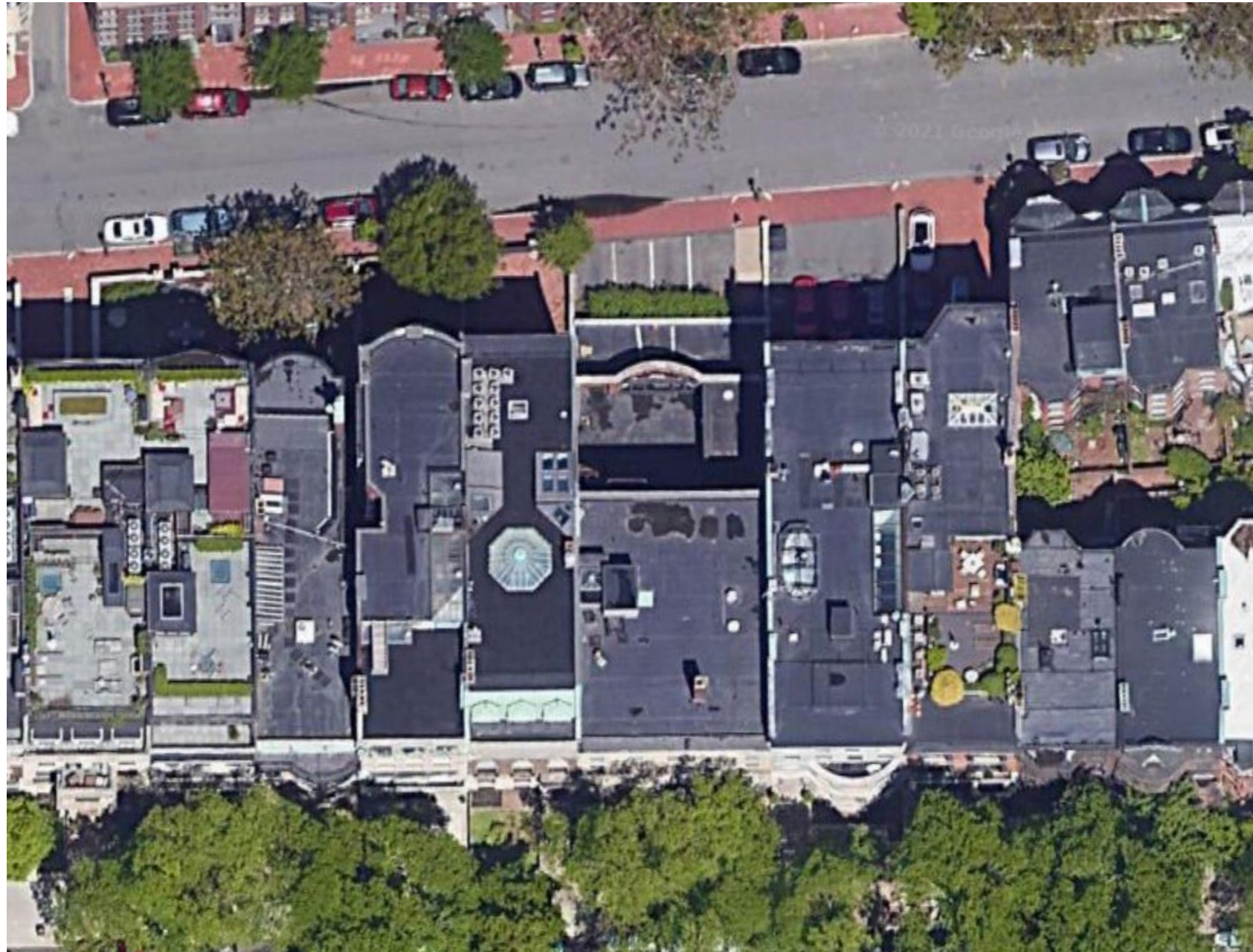
View from parking

Landscape Design - Marlborough Perspective Views

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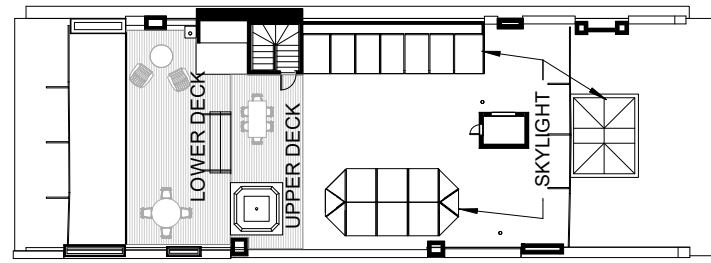


Site + Roof Plan

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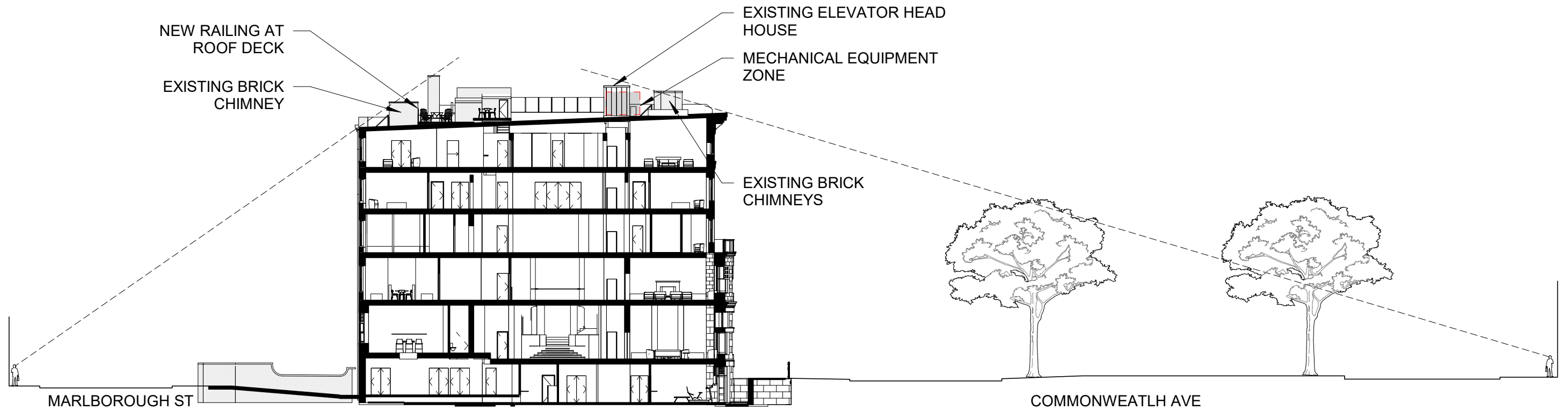
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ROOF PLAN



Roof photo and approximate rail location, back edge of chimneys.



Sightlines From the Street

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THANK YOU

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