Cass Gilbert's
Westchester Avenue Station

Vacant structure of the Former New York New Haven and Hartford Railroad

Pre-schematic Conditions Assessment

January 15, 2025
Revised February 19, 2025

This report was prepared for Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice, Inc. and the New York State Department of State with funds provided under the Brownfield Opportunity Areas Program

Prepared by:
SLO Architecture
TYLin
Jablonski Building Conservation

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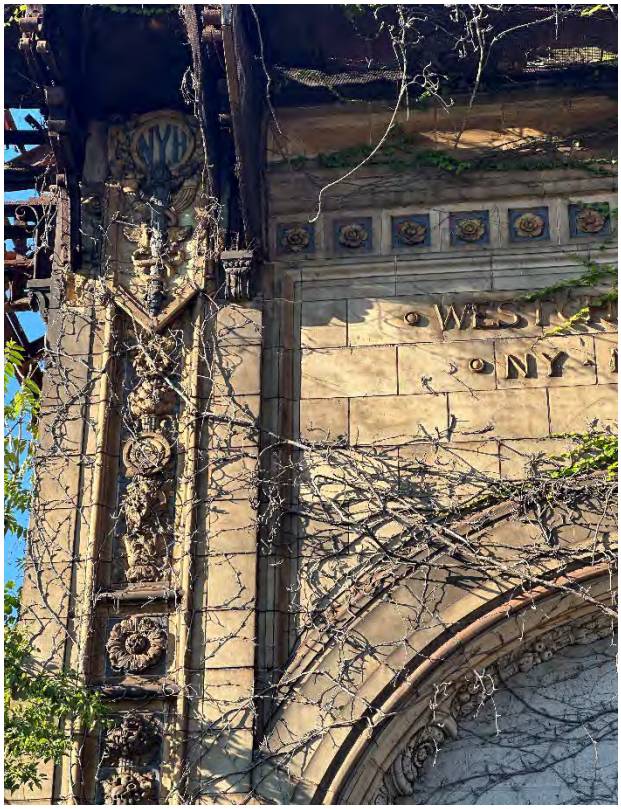


Exterior terra cotta detail on the front façade

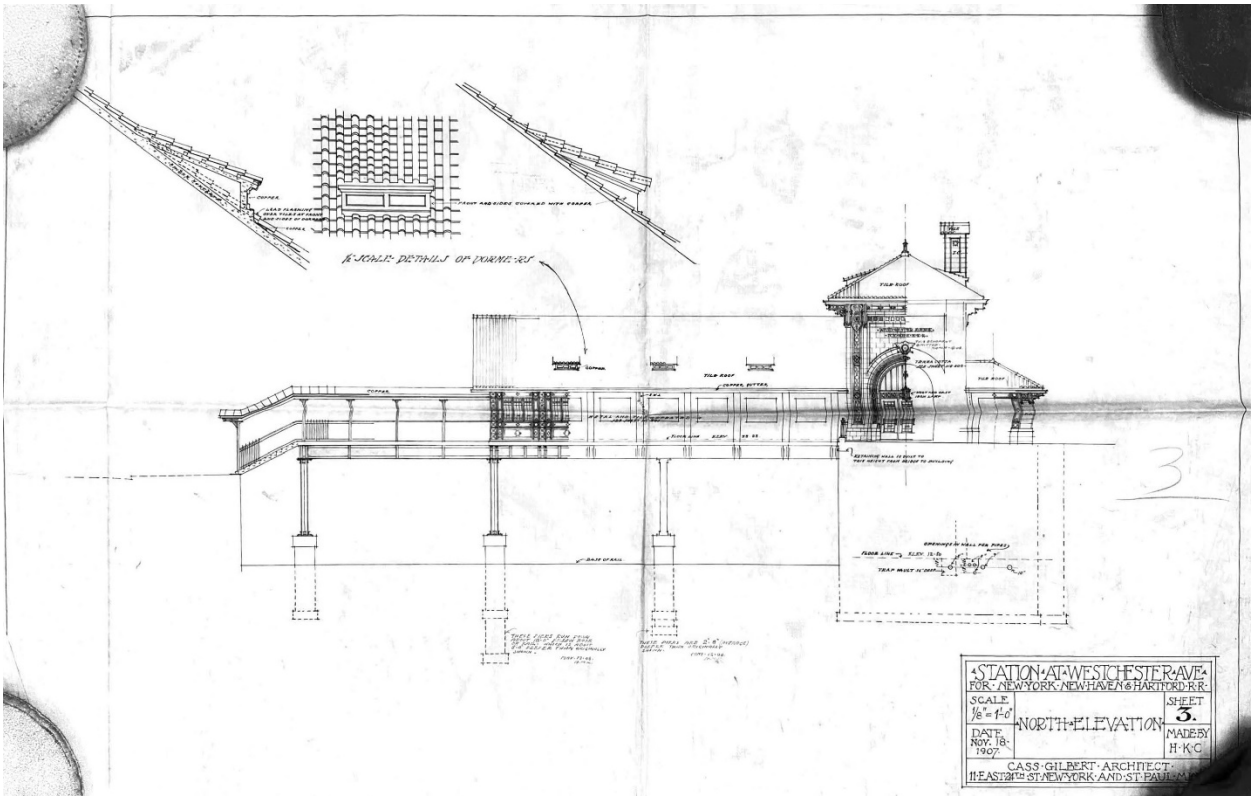

The Interior of the Head House

Introduction

The rehabilitation of the Westchester Avenue Station, designed by Cass Gilbert for the New York, New Haven, & Hartford Railroad and completed in 1912, is an opportunity to save a remnant of the Turn-of-the-20th Century in the Bronx. Without many architectural structures of this significance from the City Beautiful movement in this area, restoring the station and making it accessible to the public will allow the neighborhood communities to use the foundation of the grand architecture of the past to grow the future.

The purpose of this Pre-schematic Conditions assessment is to provide a preliminary conditions report of the building in its current state in order to understand how it may be rehabilitated for future use. It is important to note that these observations were made using naked-eye examinations only and that no probes, analyses, or testing of any sort were completed as part of this survey. It is also critical to understand that hazardous conditions exist throughout the interior and exterior of the building. These conditions may present hazards to those in, near, or underneath the building. This report and the accompanying documents should not be considered a close-up survey of each area of the building (interior or exterior). Access and other constraints, including hazardous debris, structural instability, and inadequate lighting, did not permit direct observation of walls, ceilings, and hidden structural elements.

Following on the road map for the rehabilitation and future maintenance of the station, completed in February 2022 thanks to EPA Technical Assistance funding provided to Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice, Inc. (YMPJ), this Pre-schematic Conditions assessment sets up the structural and material conservation considerations at the center of this effort, providing a first determination of the architectural, material, and structural condition of the building at this date. This report was made possible thanks to the NYS Department of State with funds provided under the Brownfield Opportunity Areas (BOA) Program as part of the YMPJ-led Southern Boulevard BOA Nomination Study.



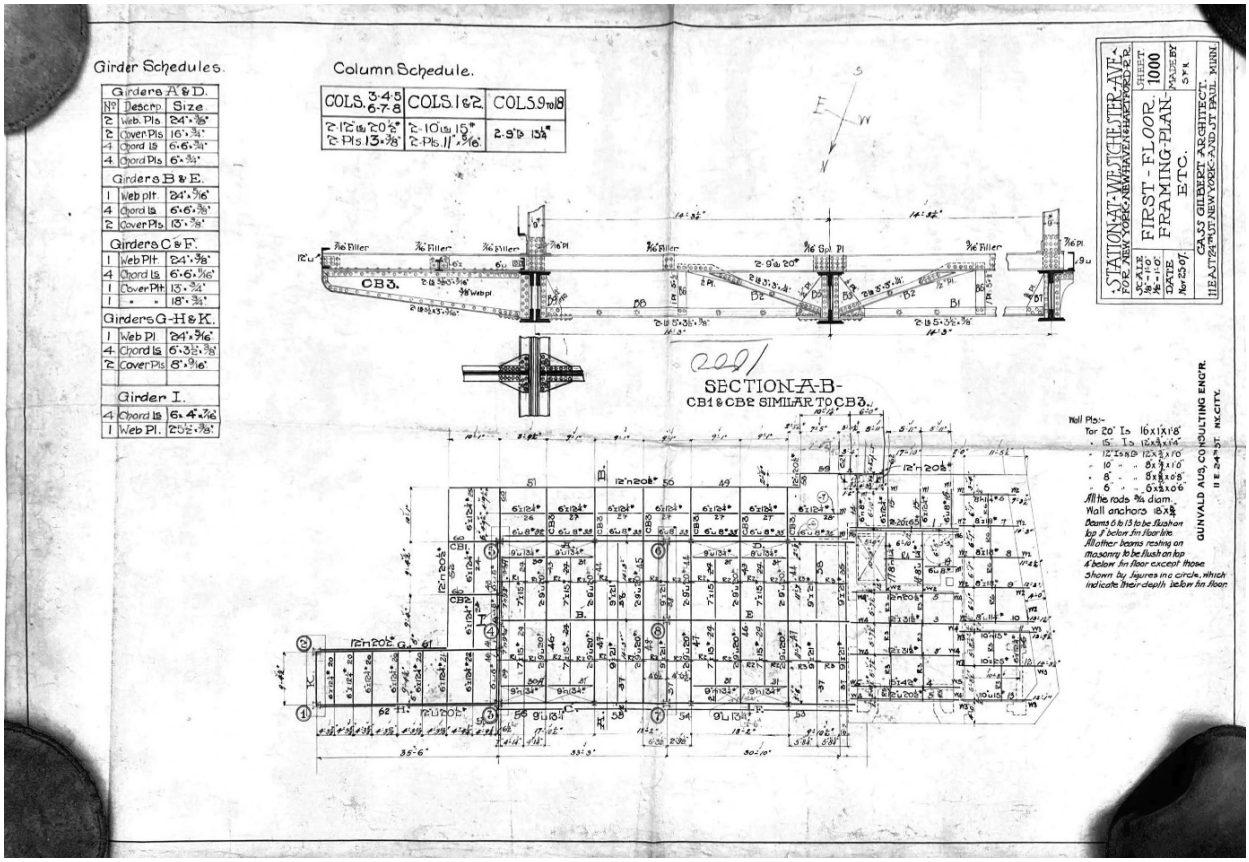
Original Linen Structural Elevation Drawing of Westchester Avenue Station, 1907, New York Historical Society

The Building

The 1908 Cass Gilbert Westchester Avenue Station House sits at the corner of Westchester Avenue and what is currently the off-ramp to the Sheridan Expressway along Whitlock Avenue. The structure can be understood to have two parts: the "Head House" and the "Waiting Room." The Head House is a masonry structure at the western end of the site which meets the street with its grand arched entrance, leading to a double height entry hall, and with its foundations on the ground at track level (where the storage, boiler and luggage room were once located). The 'Waiting Room", at the eastern end of the site, is a long rectangular one story shed that sits on a steel bridge over Amtrak's Northeast Corridor (NEC) right-of way.

Because of their distinct structural characteristics, the Head House and the Waiting Room currently present different levels of decay, with the Head House in somewhat better condition than the Waiting Room. How to restore the building and retain structural and decorative elements where deterioration is overwhelming and partial demolition necessary, will be outlined in the subsequent Concept Design Phase.

Connectivity of the building to the existing urban fabric will be of particular importance in considering the building's restoration. In the design of the 1908 building, stairs descended from the waiting room to track level and connected to the former Edgewater Road to the east, now the route of the Bronx River Greenway in Concrete Plant Park. All of these stairs have since been removed. One significant goal of the rehabilitation of the station includes the restoration of the connection from the building to the Bronx River Greenway and Concrete Plant Park.



Original Linen Structural Framing Drawing of Westchester Avenue Station, 1907, New York Historical Society

Pre-schematic Process

The first step in creating the pre-schematic report was to create a comprehensive digital collection of the original drawings and documents of the station archived at the New York Historical Society. These drawings, which include an almost complete set of architectural as well as structural framing and detail drawings, were then used by the Design team, including the Structural team at TYlin, as well as the Conservation team at JBC, to evaluate the visibly exposed elements of the building to understand their original composition and their subsequent deterioration.

YMPJ organized two site visits (5/20/24 and 8/13/24) with Amtrak, the property owner, to observe both the interior and exterior of the station followed by a meeting with YMPJ directly following the second visit to determine next steps. While the original intent of the site visits was to determine locations for structural probes, after observing the significant precarity and deterioration of parts of the structure and their proximity to the Northeast Corridor, it was determined that the current analysis would be realized based on conditions visible to the eye with probes realized at a later phase (not as part of this contracted phase). The attached drawing set of this report summarizes the team's field survey notes.

Images from our visit to the New York Historical Society Library

May 3, 2024 Site Visit to New York Historical Society

In Attendance:
Amanda Schachter, AIA, Alexander Levi, AIA, SLO Architecture; Reece Brosco, YMPJ; Members of NYHS library staff

August 9, 2024 Site Visit to New York Historical Society

In Attendance:
Amanda Schachter, AIA, Keren Stulbach, SLO Architecture; Reece Brosco, YMPJ; Members of NYHS library staff

SLO Architecture, the Design Team leader, and YMPJ performed two visits to the New York Historical Society (NYHS) library to review and document the historical archives of Westchester Avenue Station. Over the course of these two visits, we were able to phone-scan over one hundred sheets, including the original linen architectural, structural, and mechanical ink drawings of Cass Gilbert's design for the station, in addition to sketches, illustrations, 1:1 scale shop drawings, as well as written reports performed during construction. Following the visits, SLO Architecture compiled the scans into their respective drawing series to be used by the Structural and Conservation team to assess the existing conditions. In addition, at the NYHS, we put aside a number of drawings that may be of particular importance for potential professional scanning should a further level of precision be needed.

North façade of Head house from track level as seen during site visit with Amtrak

May 20, 2024. Site Visit to Westchester Avenue Station

In Attendance:
Edmund Meade, Andre Georges, TYLin;
David Shuffler, Reece Brosco, Emendya Diaz, YMPJ; Amtrak personnel

On Monday, May 20th, YMPJ and the Structural team met on the site to conduct a preliminary examination of field conditions. The specific goal of this visit was to examine the building and see where future architectural, conservation, and structural probes could be made. The team visited both the sidewalk/ street level and the track level of the building. Access to the basement of the Head House was not provided during this visit

South façade of Head house from track level

Looking to North Façade of Waiting Room from track level

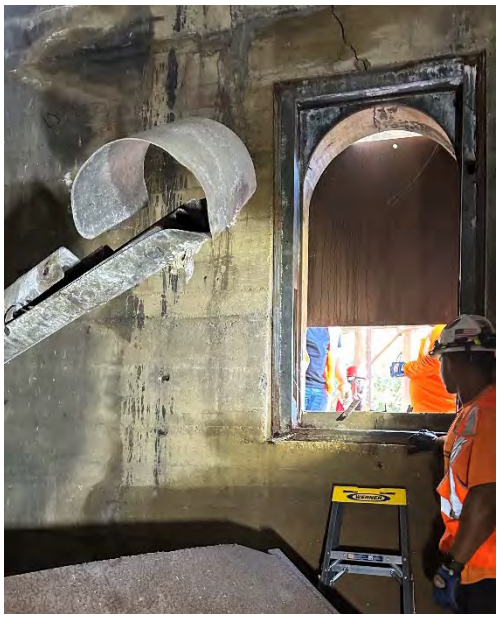
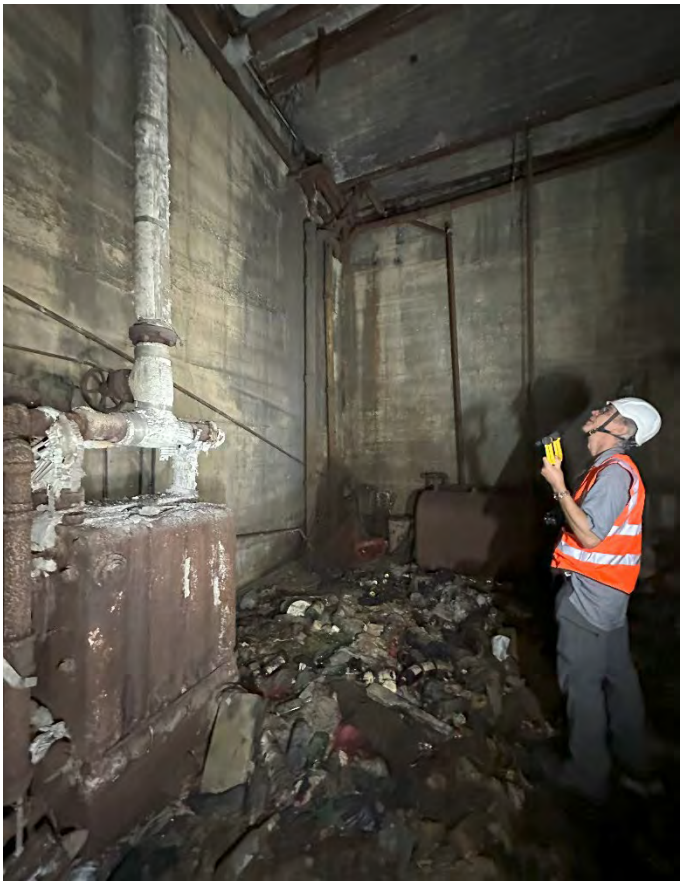
August 13, 2024. Site Visit to Westchester Avenue Station

In Attendance:
Amanda Schachter, SLO Architecture; Edmund Meade Andre Georges, Silman; Mary Jablonski JBC; David Shuffler, Reece Brosco, Emendya Diaz, YMPJ; Virginia Hart, Senior Manager - Real Estate Services, Steven Smith, Senior Architect/Project Manager - Stations - Structures Group, and additional Amtrak.

On Tuesday morning of August 13th, the Design team, along with YMPJ, were met by Amtrak to view the inside of Westchester Avenue Station at street and track levels as well as the underside of the structure at track level. We began by driving to the lower level of the building, where Amtrak personnel opened up a window to the building's lower floor to what was once the station's luggage, storage, and boiler rooms, and we climbed in via a ladder. (The existing door was sealed, and it was determined that the interior iron spiral staircase from street level was too dangerous to descend.)

We observed conditions inside the basement level and then, from the exterior/ track level, of portions of the underside of the Waiting Room, which sits as a bridge of the Northeast Corridor. From track level, we were also able to observe the North façade and the South facade of the waiting room which from the street is occluded from view by a metal fence. We concluded the

visit by returning to Westchester Avenue and entering the building from the main entrance to observe both the Headhouse and Waiting Room interiors. Virginia Hart from Amtrak described Amtrak's procedure to evaluate any proposed partial demolition and rehabilitation of the building, which would require a review of a 30% concept design. During field conversations with Amtrak personnel, it was noted that portions of the façades had fallen onto the track, that portions of the building had collapsed (especially exterior walls and ceilings/ roofs), that portions of the building could collapse (unpredictably), and that these conditions were potentially hazardous. Following the August 13th, 2024, site visit, the Design team recommended to YMPJ and its legal team at Kramer and Levin that a letter be sent to Amtrak reiterating the deteriorating conditions at the station and recommending the urgent development of a track protection plan. YMPJ shared such a letter to Amtrak on October 7th, 2024.


Entering through a window from track level into the lower of the head house, August 13, 2024

Structural Conditions Assessment

TYLin | Silman Structural Solutions

PRE-SCHEMATIC STRUCTURAL CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT

Date:	December 23, 2024 Revised February 19, 2025	Project Name:	Westchester Avenue Station, Bronx, NY
Attention:	Amanda Schachter, AIA	Silman Project #:	31326
Company:	SLO Architecture 10-10 44th Avenue, Studio 320, Long Island City, NY 11101	RE:	Preliminary Structural Conditions Assessment and Structural Recommendations
From:	Edmund P. Meade, PE, Principal	cc:	N/A.

This Report is intended to provide a Pre-schematic Structural Conditions Assessment of the Westchester Avenue Station in The Bronx, NY. There are a number of potentially hazardous conditions on the interior and exterior of the building. These conditions represent potential hazards to those inside, outside, and beneath the building (including, but not limited to those traveling on trains on the tracks beneath the building).

Due to site access limitations, potentially hazardous field conditions, and the scope of work defined in our proposal, this Report does not represent a comprehensive identification, survey, or reporting of each of the structurally related conditions that may exist on this building. Therefore, there are likely to be other such conditions that have not be noted in this document. We note that our access to the exterior of the building consisted of street-level observations on the north, sidewalk side of the Head House and the ground level at the base (track level) of the Head House. Close-up access to any other portions of the building (exterior or interior) was not available to the team. We were not able to see the condition of any structural elements (exterior or interior) that were hidden by architectural finishes or other, related fabric. No probes were performed and the personnel lift access to examine the exterior was cancelled.

This Report, prepared after two site visits by Edmund Meade and Andre Georges (from TYLin/ Silman Structural Solutions (Silman)), supplements the written and verbal communications that preceded and followed the preparation of this text. The site conditions represented in this Report were the result of visits on May 20, 2024, & August 13, 2024.

After we made these site visits, Silman met with representatives of YMPJ (client to SLO Architecture), SLO Architecture, and JBC to discuss the next steps to respond to field conditions. These responses included meetings to make certain that Amtrak was notified of the potentially hazardous conditions that were observed by SLO Architecture and its consultants. These conditions were shown directly to multiple representatives of the Owner of the structure (Amtrak) during our visit and meeting with Amtrak staff on August 13, 2024.

We discussed these conditions with SLO and representatives of YMPJ during our August 13th follow up meeting (at YMPJ headquarters) and with subsequent meetings (via Teams meetings). During each of these conversations, we reiterated that these potentially hazardous conditions were present on the building and that they should be removed, stabilized, and/ or ameliorated as soon as possible. We understand that correspondence with Amtrak (by others from the YMPJ Team) has communicated that there may be some immediately hazardous conditions associated with the Westchester Avenue Station.

This Report summarizes various field conditions, provides preliminary (pre-schematic level) structural recommendations based on those field conditions, and identifies some of the potential structural hazards associated with the existing deterioration of the building.

I. EXTERIOR

A. South Elevation.

The South Elevation of the station building is principally comprised of a steel frame supporting reinforced concrete floor slabs. The eastern portion of the building (the former waiting room) has been altered many times as part of interim periods of infilling of exterior wall penetrations. The structural deterioration of the exterior walls of this portion of the building is significant and portions of it could fail and fall at any time. As noted in subsequent sections of this report, portions of the roof immediately behind the south exterior wall have collapsed. (See Figure 01, below).

Figure 01 - Photograph of the eastern end of the South Elevation.

B. North Elevation.

At the east end of the North Elevation the exterior wall is in extremely poor condition and could potentially result in failure of the façade.

The exterior terra cotta and the masonry backup materials are embedded within the rusting steel frame of the building. The terra cotta cladding is held in place in part by these corroding iron elements, by mortar, and by friction. Given these conditions, a failure of the façade (locally or globally) could occur at any time. It is important to note that such a failure is unpredictable. We recommend that this hazardous condition be addressed immediately.

Figure 02 - Photograph of the underside of the eastern portion of the station showing part of the North Elevation above the train tracks.

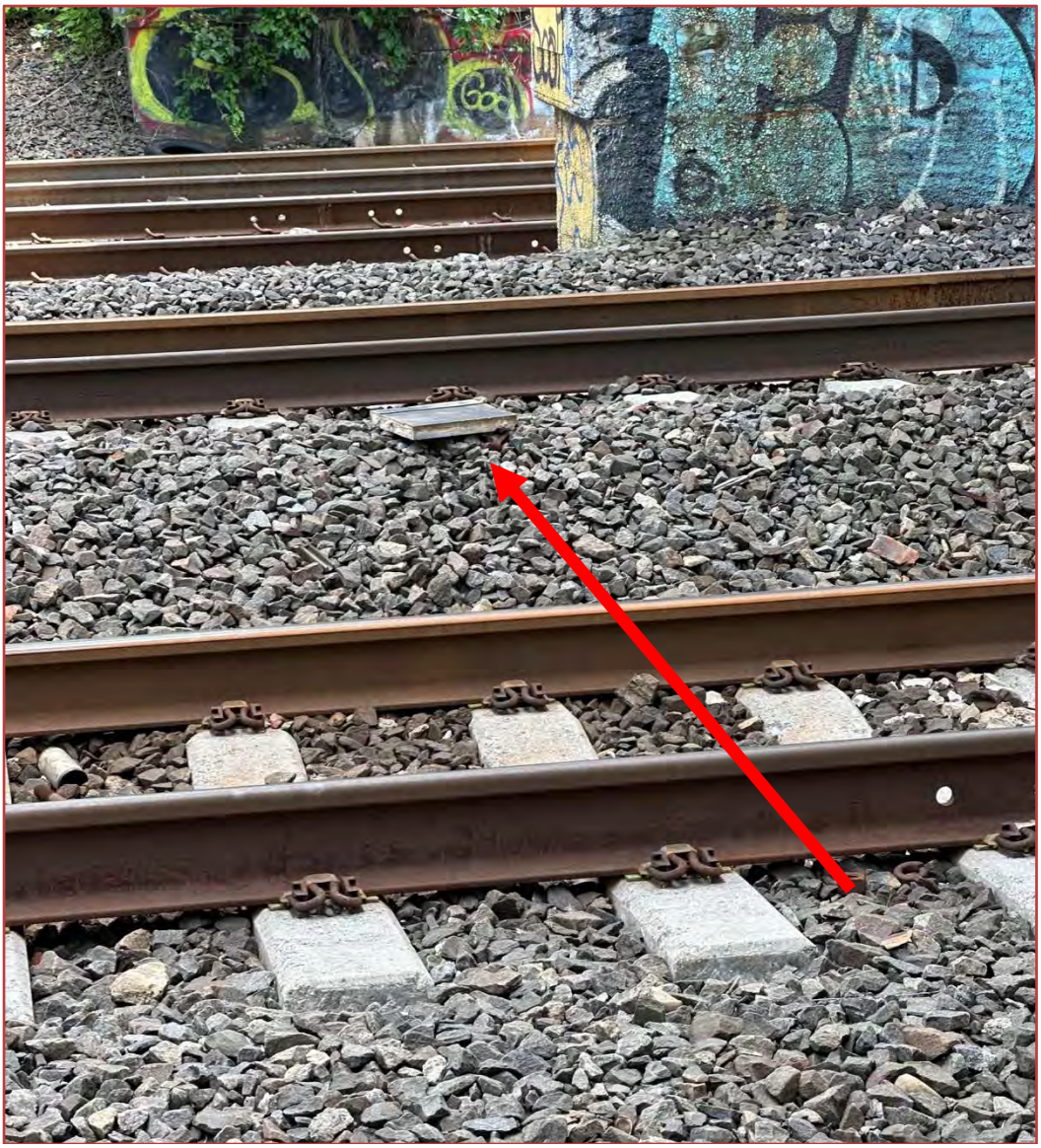


Figure 03 - Close-up image of one of the pieces of terra cotta that had fallen onto the ballast (below the North Elevation of the station). Note the red arrow points to one of the fallen pieces of terra cotta cladding from the exterior of the Waiting Room portion of the building.

Figure 04 - Close-up image of one of the iron brackets that had fallen onto the ballast (below the North Elevation of the station).

C. Underside of Former Waiting Room.

The visibly exposed steel was in fair to good condition and may be a candidate for re-use. The reinforced concrete slabs, however, have significant spalling on their undersides and they represent a potentially hazardous condition. It's worth noting that portions of the concrete slab shown below (in Figure 05) may be a double concrete slab (with a plenum or

interstitial space between the soffit slab (above the tracks) and the concrete slab that forms the floor of the former waiting room.

Figure 05 - View of a portion of the underside of the eastern end of the station (above the tracks). This view is looking to the northeast. Note that the exterior surfaces of this soffit appear to consist of a combination of poured in place concrete and a cementitious coating (perhaps a stucco). According to the original drawings, there are two discrete layers of concrete slab forming the main floor system of the waiting room portion of the building.

D. Head House.

At the West Elevation of the Head House (as with other sides of the building) we noted that significant portions of the roof framing were deteriorated and that portions of the roof had fallen down. This elevation of the building is adjacent to the next door elevated highway and it represents a potentially hazardous condition to those beneath or nearby to the building. See Figure 06 (below) for a view of the underside of this portion of the roof/ eave condition. The roof framing on the south, north, and eastern sides of the Head House all

exhibit similar signs of deterioration. The roofing and subroofing are largely missing throughout the building (or have substantial holes in these elements). While site access didn't allow for viewing any portions of the roof up close (on either the Head House or the Waiting Room portions of the building), there appeared to be holes and loss of materials throughout the roof over all portions of the structure.

From a structural standpoint, our observations on the exterior of the Head House were limited to the visible/ exposed portions of the steel roof framing. Those are the main structural elements that are visible to naked eye observations. As noted above, this steel is in bad condition on all four sides of the Head House. The condition of the structural steel that supports the roof of the Head House (within the footprint of the building) is unknown; it was not visible from our interior observations.

We would also like to note that we don't have any structural engineering comments on the rest of the exterior of the Head House namely because there are several types of terra cotta and other related materials covering the exterior walls. These are non-structural in nature. It is our experience that restoration of the building would likely include the careful salvage, replication, and installation of new terra cotta to represent the original construction. Deterioration of the terra cotta anchorage and other support elements is likely and therefore 100% replacement and reinstallation of new exterior terra cotta may be necessary.

The inner portions of the exterior walls appear to be largely built with load-bearing masonry (albeit some of these surfaces are covered by remnants of interior plaster surfaces). These masonry walls are in fair condition and can likely be retained and restored (once stabilization and protection efforts are commenced). We should note that it is possible that there are embedded structural steel members within the load-bearing masonry walls. Any deterioration of those elements would have to be addressed during the course of the renovation of the building. Removal of masonry to access these buried steel elements may be required.

Figure 06 - Close-up image of overhanging roof/ eaves on the West Elevation of the station. This is the west wall of the Head House. Note that the steel framing and roofing elements along the perimeter of the Head House have hazardous conditions along their perimeter. The roofing, roof substrate, and portions of the steel framing (at least at the cantilevered edges of the will require removal and reconstruction.

II. INTERIOR.

A. South Elevation Infill Bays.

The south elevation originally consisted of a passageway leading to the stairs to platforms (since removed). This passageway was infilled at some unknown date. The ceiling/ roof constructed to originally cover this passageway has collapsed in certain areas. See Figures 07 and 08 for depictions of this area of the building (below).

Figure 07 - Image of a portion of the roof and ceiling that has collapsed. This section of collapsed material is adjacent to the south elevation exterior wall. View looking east.

Figure 08 - Image of a portion of the roof and ceiling that has not collapsed. This section of is adjacent to the south elevation exterior wall. View looking west.

B. Interior Elements (Main Waiting Room).

The former main waiting room (which extends eastward from the "head house") consists of a steel framed building with reinforced concrete floor slabs, concrete roof slabs, and masonry infill exterior walls. In general, these structural steel elements appear to be in fair to good condition (especially the north/ south oriented frames that create each bay of the building).

The concrete floor slab was in fair condition (with portions of the concrete having already spalled on the underside of the slab). The concrete slab spalling is visible in Figure 05 (above).

The exterior walls are in poor condition (as noted above). Besides the masonry that is severely deteriorated, there are rusting steel columns, beams, and other framing elements that are located within the exterior walls.

Figure 09 - Image of a portion of the interior of the former waiting room of the station. Note that the ceiling that has almost completely fallen down and the structural steel frame is now partially visible. This view is looking east towards the east exterior wall.

C. Interior Elements (Head House).

The Head House is located at the western end of the former station. Structurally it is composed of poured in place concrete walls (from approximately the track level to the main floor (a.k.a., the passenger concourse). From the first floor level upwards the walls appear to be built of load-bearing masonry with some infill of structural steel framing (including the main roof the Head House, the ceiling of the main room in the Head House, and some of the intermediate floor framing (at the southern end of the Head House where there's a former staircase and what may be the remnants of an elevator shaft.

Figures 10, 11, and 12 show various portions of the interior of the Head House. Figure 06 depicts portions of the roof framing on the exterior (west elevation) of the Head House.

Figure 10 – Image of the ceiling of the main room of the Head House. While the ceiling has localized areas of plaster failure, there is evidence that the steel framing above this ceiling is salvageable.

Figure 11 – Image of some of the walls and the lower north side of the ceiling of the main room of the Head House. Note that much of the interior terra cotta wall surfaces appear to be in good condition indicating there's a good chance that the backup masonry walls could also be in good condition and salvageable as part of a plan of renovation/ re-use of the building.

Figure 12 – Image of one of the brick masonry walls within the Head House. While the intermediate floors/ stair landings above the main floor level are no longer intact, the masonry walls appear to be in good shape and capable of re-use.

III. GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS.

We recommend that the Owner undertake actions as soon as possible to stabilize the building, remove the potential hazards, and/ or construct platforms/ sheds/ containment nets to protect those in, near, or traveling below the structure.

There are likely significant portions of the building that can be kept in place during the course of this stabilization and containment work. These include the principal steel framing underneath the Main Waiting Room and the exterior walls and interior elements (walls and structural ceiling supports) for the Head House.

Based on our experience on comparable buildings, we think that the stabilization and re-use of the Head House is quite possible given proper resources—enabling it to be a long-term landmark contribution to the neighborhood and to the Bronx.

The outline of this scope of work is shown on the accompanying drawings (including CAD sketches of the exterior elevations, the floor and roof plans, and select vertical sections through the station. Please see those drawings in the Appendix to this Report.

Limited Materials Conditions Assessment

LIMITED MATERIALS CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT

WESTCHESTER AVENUE RAILROAD STATION
THE BRONX, NY

North façade of the entry tower at Westchester Avenue Station in the Bronx, NY. 2024.

Prepared for:
SLO Architecture
10-10 44th Avenue Studio 320
Long Island City, NY 11101

Prepared by:
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40 West 27th Street, Floor 12
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January 2025
(Revised February 2025)

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INTRODUCTION

Jablonski Building Conservation, Inc. (JBC) is part of the SLO Architecture team tasked to undertake a Pre-Schematic Conditions Assessment of Cass Gilbert's Westchester Avenue Railroad Station located in the Bronx, NY. JBC's role was to look at the conditions of the materials on the interior and exterior of the station, identify the historic materials and document their level of deterioration. The condition of the materials was to inform the design development and planning for the adaptive re-use of the building.

METHODOLOGY

Architectural conservators Mary Jablonski and Tania Alam were part of the team that made the second visit to the site on August 13, 2024 to inspect the exterior of the building as well as the interior. The inspection was only visual in nature and conducted from the ground with the aid of binoculars for the exterior and with flashlights for the interior. Amtrak provided access to the track level and to the locked station building. Digital photographs were taken to record conditions and are included in this report.

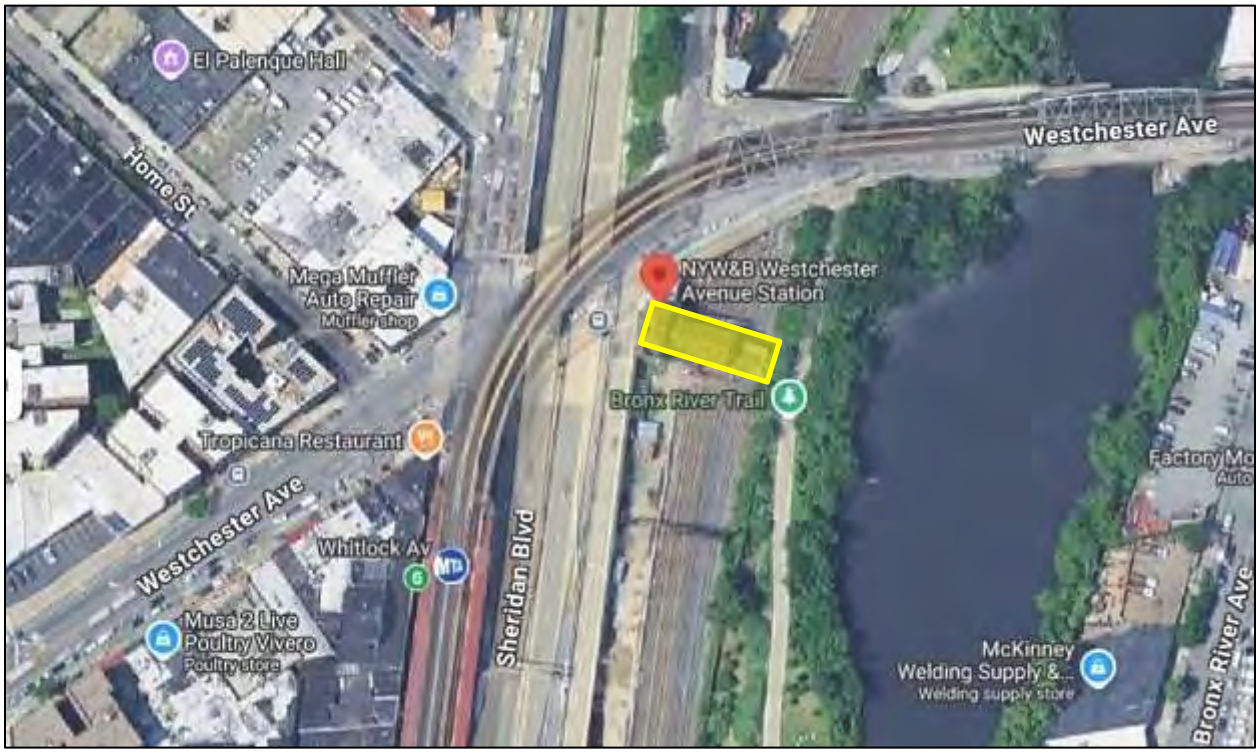


Figure 1: Site map of the Westchester Avenue Railroad Station shown in yellow. ***Image source: Google Earth 2024.***

DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY[1]

General Description

The station is located in the Hunts Point section of the Bronx. It is south of Westchester Avenue, and east of the Interstate-895 Sheridan Expressway, with the Bronx River to its east and the New York City elevated Interborough Rapid Transit (IRT) No. 6 line to the north of the site (Figure 1). The station spans the originally six-track wide railroad right-of-way of the Amtrak Hell Gate Line[2] of which only four tracks remain today. The station rests on a concrete foundation that is integrated into the concrete retaining wall at the edge of Sheridan Expressway.

Westchester Avenue Station is a concrete and steel structure that is composed of a headhouse and a waiting room (Figure 2). The headhouse is a two-story high concrete and steel entry tower. It has a hipped roof with one dormer each on the east and west elevations; semi-arched window openings at the second story level on the east, west and south facades; and a chimney extending from the west roof slope. The waiting room spans over the tracks and consists of a seven-bay section punctuated with tripartite windows. It was originally covered by a gable roof with three dormers on both the north and south elevations, and a semi-arched window on the east gable end. A covered veranda ran along the south and east sides of the waiting room.

The headhouse provided primary access to the station from Westchester Avenue, and originally had a covered porch attached to its west façade (Figure 3). Passengers reached the platforms below the station building via multiple stairs from the south covered veranda. Additionally, a covered pedestrian bridge on the east side of the waiting area originally provided access to the platforms from a discontinued portion of the Edgewater Road that is now a part of the Concrete Plant Park (Figure 4). The station was abandoned in the late 1930s and has been boarded up since.

Figure 2: Looking at the south elevation of Westchester Avenue Station from the track level.
Photographic source: JBC, 2024

[1] Drobbin, L. "New York, New Haven, & Hartford (MYMH&H) railroad Westchester Avenue Station "Historic Resource Inventory Form, State and National Registers Program. October 2013.
[2] The Hell Gate Line is a 6-mile long rail that extends from Gate Interlocking in Hunts Point, the Bronx, to Shell Interlocking in New Rochelle, Westchester County, and connects Amtrak's Northeast Corridor Line to the Metro-North New Haven Line.

Figure 3: Looking southeast at the Westchester Avenue Railroad Station, ca. 1915. A canopied pedestrian bridge was present on the east side of the long waiting room. The arrow shows the covered veranda at the south side which can be seen partially. ***Photographic source: Wikipedia.***

Figure 4: An illustration of the southwest view of Westchester Avenue Station; date unknown. Note the canopied pedestrian bridge to platform stairs across the tracks.
Photographic source: https://archimaps.tumblr.com/post/142028689492/cass-gilberts-design-for-the-westchester-avenue

Brief History

The New York, New Haven & Hartford (NYNH&H) Railroad Westchester Avenue Station was constructed in 1908. It was designed by the architect Cass Gilbert, well known for designing buildings like the Woolworth Building, Broadway Chambers Building, U.S. Federal Courthouse in Foley Square, and the white marble U.S. Supreme Court Building. Gilbert also designed many of the stations in the Bronx of which only Hunts Point, Westchester Avenue, and Morris Park Stations remain although none of them is currently active as rail stations.

The NYNH&H Harlem River Branch became part of the Hell Gate Line which opened in 1917. Commuter service in the NYNH&H Harlem River Branch never reached expectations, which prompted the gradual shut down of the passenger service that completely ceased in December 1937. Since then, Westchester Avenue Station has remained unused and vacant. Continued financial difficulties caused the NYNH&H to be included in the merged company in the late 1960s when the Pennsylvania and New York Central railroads merged to become Penn Central (PC). The Hell Gate line was ultimately sold to the National Passenger Corporation, Amtrak and is now part of the Northeast Corridor Line.

Between 1958 and 1962, the Sheridan Expressway was constructed directly to the west of Westchester Avenue Station. The expressway had a negative effect on the station site by confining it to a narrow lot and requiring construction of concrete barriers, guardrails, and chain-link fencing. Due to the alignment of the new roadway, the covered porch on the west façade of the station tower was removed. Sometime later, the stairways to the train platforms below, as well as the platforms were removed from the station site. Old images show a covered pedestrian bridge that extended from east of the waiting area and led passengers to the easternmost platform (Figure 3). The pedestrian bridge was removed with all of its decorative guardrails, columns and canopies, and all openings boarded up after the station was abandoned.

Station Exterior

The station roof was framed with steel purlins and beams and covered with dark red Ludowici terra cotta tile. The dormers are clad with tiles and sheathed in sheet metal. The headhouse cornice originally had a pressed metal soffit and wood brackets clad with metal sheeting. The entry tower chimney has terra cotta ornamentation and tiles at the top. An old photograph (Figure 2) shows the now removed west porch with a terra cotta tile roof and terra cotta ornamentation similar to that of the two-story entry tower.

The exterior elevations of the station building are primarily finished with colored terra cotta blocks on the tower and tiles on the main block. Decorative terra cotta encase the original steel columns, spandrel panels and window openings (Figure 5-7) of the tower. Terra cotta rosettes, urns and foliate tiles are present on the ornamented inset piers that flank the main arch entrance to the headhouse on the north façade (Figure 8). The seven bays of the waiting room were covered with colored terra cotta tiles with geometric shape motifs (Figures 9-10). Shades of blue and yellow along with white appear to be the primary color theme of the exterior tiles.

Figure 5: Decorative terra cotta on the north façade of the entry tower. ***Photographic source: JBC, 2024***

Figure 6: A panel of brightly colored terra cotta encasing a column at the east corner of the south façade of the entry tower. ***Photographic source: JBC, 2024***

Figure 7:Brightly colored terra cotta decorating a window opening. This is on the south façade of the entry tower.
Photographic source: JBC, 2024

Figure 8:A decorative panel of terra cotta inset in the piers of the main arched entrance at the north façade.
Photographic source: JBC, 2024

Figure 9: Colored geometric patterned terra cotta tiles used to decorate the exterior of the main block over the tracks. This is the north elevation. Dark red Ludowici terra cotta roof tiles are visible. ***Photographic source: JBC, 2024***

Figure 10: Northeast view of the south façade of the main block and covered south veranda (arrows show original openings now infilled). ***Photographic Source: JBC***

Station Interior[3]

The headhouse originally contained the ticketing lobby, which is no longer extant. The main arched entrance contains decorative terra cotta blocks inset in the arch and the piers supporting the arch in front of the original steel and glass tripartite door (of which only the frames exist) (Figure 11). A decorative terra cotta band with geometric shape motifs separates the transom from the door (Figure 12). The tower interior is accentuated with decorative terra cotta tiles and panels forming bands at different levels; terra cotta with floral motif is found at the door lintel (eave) level while flat/slightly recessed blue and white terra cotta tiles form the band at the spring level where the vaulted ceiling begins (Figure 13). The ceiling was originally painted plaster.

The headhouse is connected to the waiting room via a hallway that has the remains of an elliptical vaulted ceiling supported on brightly colored terra cotta cornice and walls (Figure 14). The base of the wall is painted blue.

The waiting room was located to the east of the connecting hallway and men's and women's restrooms were located on either side of the hallway. The waiting room originally had a painted, plastered ceiling, with two large, exposed roof trusses that rest on decorative metal impost blocks at the cornice level (Figure 15). The walls were painted plaster that was highlighted by a decorative plaster band at the cornice level, and had banks of tripartite windows, and a semi-arched opening near the east gable end (Figure 16). Currently, all window openings have brick or concrete masonry unit (CMU) infill. Originally, a large door opened to a covered pedestrian bridge on the east side of the waiting room, which was removed when the building ceased to be an active station and is now covered with sheet metal. Similarly, the openings that led to the covered veranda on the south side of the waiting room to the platform stairs now have CMU infill. The restroom walls appear to have been originally clad in white marble with grey veining.

[3] "Overhead (Westchester Avenue) Station," Existing Condition Report by John Bowie Associates, May 2010.

Figure 11: The main arched entrance has a tripartite door and a transom. Only the frames exist now. ***Photographic source: JBC, 2024***

Figure 12: Upward view of the decorative terra cotta inset in the pier and arch of the main entrance. The arrow shows the terra cotta band separating the door and transom. ***Photographic source: JBC, 2024***

Figure 13: East elevation of the tower interior with terra cotta details at the eave level and the spring-level near the vaulted ceiling. ***Photographic source: JBC, 2024***

Figure 14: Vaulted passageway connecting the entry tower to the waiting area. It has decorative terra cotta band at the cornice level, and painted plaster on the ceiling. ***Photographic source: JBC, 2024***

Figure 15: Looking east at the waiting room with exposed steel trusses resting on decorative metal impost blocks. ***Photographic source: JBC, 2024***

Figure 16: East wall of the waiting room with a central door and gable end semi-arched window, and tripartite windows on the walls. ***Photographic source: JBC, 2024***

SUMMARY OF EXTERIOR CONDITIONS

The exterior finishes and their conditions at Westchester Avenue Station vary by location.

Entry Tower (Headhouse)

The materials at the tower are in the best condition but range from fair to poor. The exterior of the headhouse is obscured by heavy biological growth and vegetation (Figures 17-19) and has paint and graffiti on almost all of the visible walls. Therefore, much of the exterior facades could only be minimally assessed visually. The facades are decorated with terra cotta which, where visible, are in fair to good condition with general soiling, paint loss, some cracks, spalls and missing elements (Figures 20-21). The main arched entry opening on the north facade is infilled with painted CMUs and has a temporary access door that is kept locked. The painted CMU infill abuts the decorative terra cotta in the inset piers (Figure 22). The original tripartite doors on the north façade as well as the doors on the south façade opening to the veranda have been completely removed. The doors that allowed passengers to enter via the covered porch on the west side were removed and infilled with CMU when the Sheridan Expressway was constructed.

Figure 17:Heavy biological growth and vegetation are present on all the facades of the entry tower. Note the metal soffit is in poor condition. ***Photographic source: JBC, 2024***

Figure 18: Heavy vegetation obscures much of all the facades of the entry tower. ***Photographic source: JBC, 2024***

Figure 19: Paint and graffiti on the entry tower exterior. ***Photographic source: JBC, 2024***

Figure 20: Spalled terra cotta at the top east corner of the north façade. ***Photographic source: JBC, 2024***

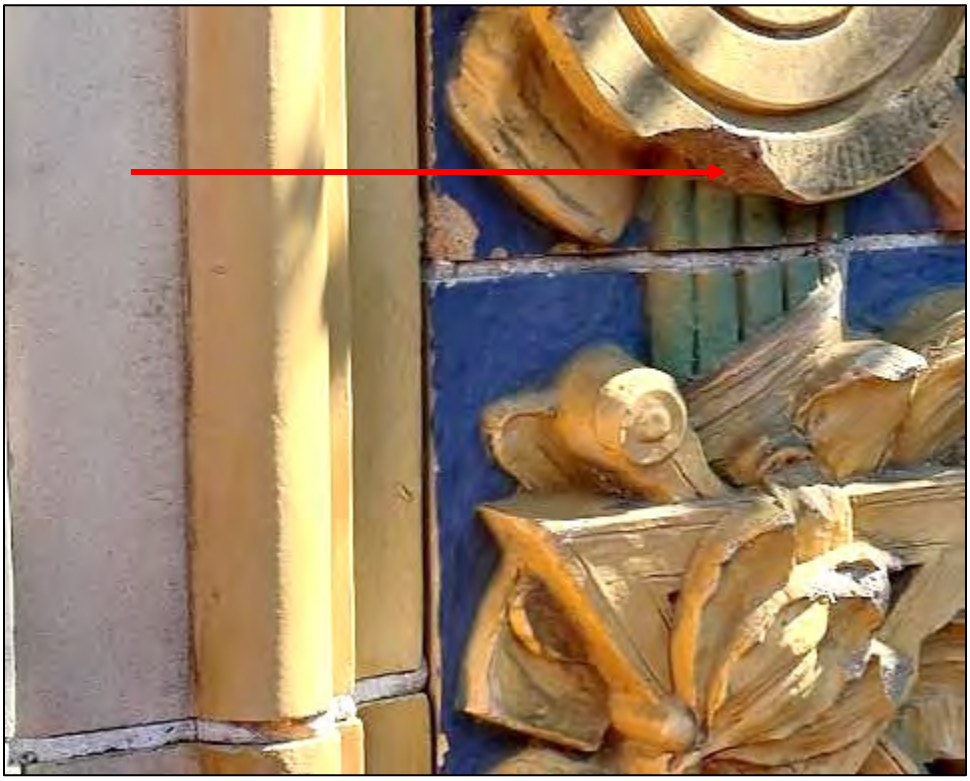


Figure 21: Chipped edges (arrow) and surface spalls of the decorative terra cotta. This is on the south façade.
Photographic source: JBC, 2024

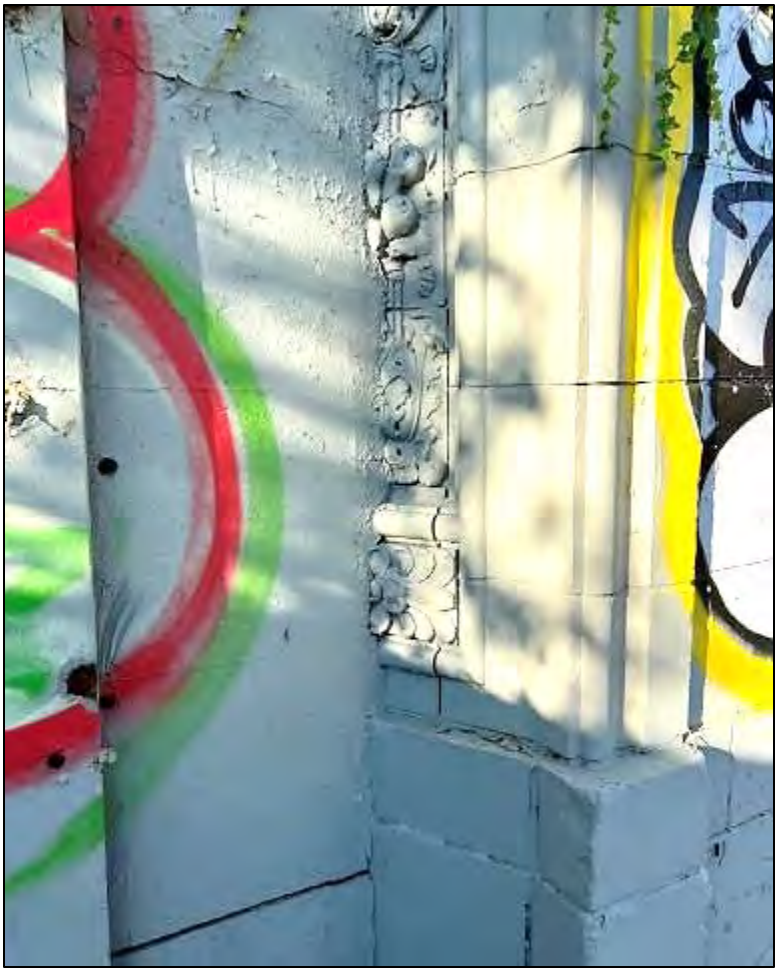


Figure 22: The CMU infill abuts the decorative terra cotta in the main entrance pier. Note the paint and graffiti on the exterior. ***Photographic source: JBC, 2024***

Waiting Room

The exterior materials of the waiting room are in extremely poor condition and are a safety hazard. The roof is in very poor condition and a lot of the dark red terra cotta roof tiles are missing (Figure 23). The roof structure is in the process of collapsing. Where the roof covers the veranda, it has partially collapsed on the west side (Figure 24).

A number of colored terra cotta units on the north façade of the waiting room extending over the tracks are falling off the walls as the metal holding them in place has corroded. Several of these heavy terra cotta tiles have fallen down onto the tracks below (Figure 25). The terra cotta on the south façade are in slightly better condition with minor chips, spalls, paint loss and general soiling (Figure 26).

All the window openings in the waiting area have CMU infill. No original window frames and sashes are present. The semi-arched window opening at the gable end on the east façade is partially infilled with brick and covered with sheet metal. The covered south veranda, which originally led passengers to the stairs to the platforms, has been blocked with CMU wall sections that have paint and graffiti, and some vegetation on the outside (refer to Figure 2).

Figure 23: The metal soffit of the entry tower cornice is severely deteriorated and completely missing at multiple locations (arrow). A lot of the dark red Ludowici terra cotta roof tiles are missing. ***Photographic source: JBC, 2024***

Figure 24: Partially collapsed roof on the west side of the south veranda. ***Photographic source: JBC, 2024***

Figure 25: Exterior terra cotta on the north façade of the Station Main Block are loose and falling down onto the tracks because the metal holding them in place has corroded. ***Photographic source: JBC, 2024***

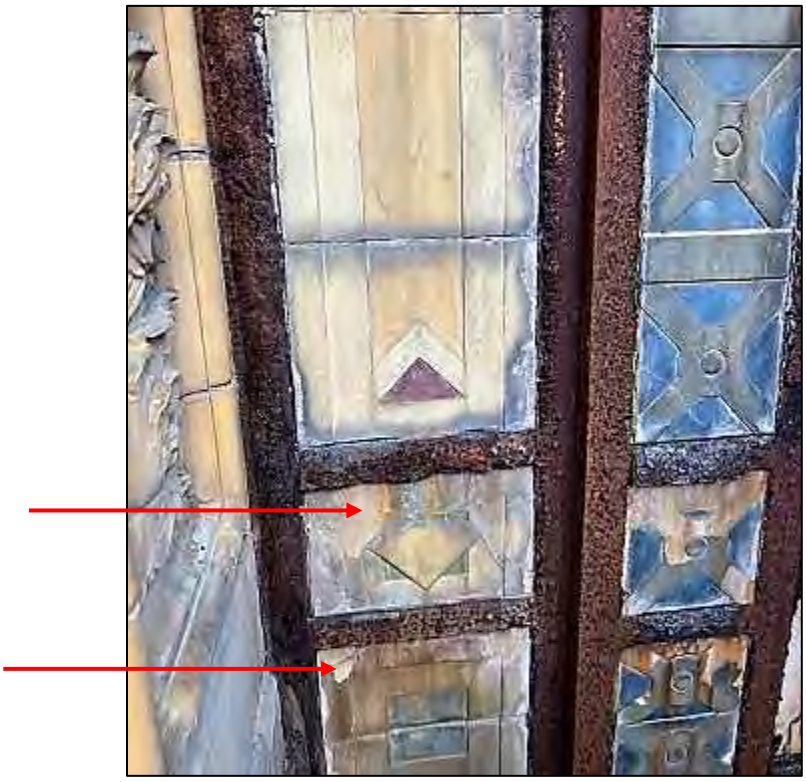


Figure 26: Surface spalls and chips along the edges of the exterior terra cotta on the south façade of the Station Main Block. Note the heavily corroding metal frame holding the terra cotta. ***Photographic source: JBC, 2024***

The concrete stucco on the underside of the station waiting area is failing and has large amounts of loss. Where the stucco remains, there are multiple cracks and large spalls. This stucco failure poses a falling hazard to people and trains below (Figure 27).

Figure 27: Severely deteriorated and failing concrete stucco on the underside of the Station Main Block. Large amounts of concrete stucco is lost. ***Photographic source: JBC, 2024***

SUMMARY OF INTERIOR CONDITIONS

The interior finishes range from fair to poor condition.

Entry Tower (Headhouse)

The colored/painted decorative terra cotta on the interior of the headhouse and those ornamenting the inset piers and arched opening are in fair to good condition with heavy soiling and some surface spalls and paint loss. Some units are missing (Figure 28).

Much of the plaster from underside of the roof deck has collapsed in both the headhouse and waiting room, exposing the steel frame structure overhead which appears to be in fair condition. (Figures 29-30). The floors (and much of the walls) could not be assessed because of the extensive debris in the headhouse and the waiting area (Figure 31). Graffiti is present on the walls.

Figure 28: Missing terra cotta unit from the door surround. Note the Graffiti on the adjacent wall.
Photographic source: JBC, 2024

Figure 29: Loss of some roof deck in the headhouse has exposed structural steel frame. Much of the painted plaster has fallen off. ***Photographic source: JBC, 2024***

Figure 30: Underside of roof deck in the waiting room. Much of the painted plaster has fallen off.
Photographic source: JBC, 2024

Figure 31: Extensive debris on the floor of the station interior presents safety and accessibility issues.
Photographic source: JBC, 2024

Waiting Room

While much of the ceiling and wall plaster in the waiting room have collapsed and created extensive debris on the floor, the two exposed steel trusses holding the roof appear to be in fair condition. The damaged plaster found on the wall had a local manufacturing company name "H. W. Bell, Third Avenue & 136 St. N.Y." stamped on the base coat (Figure 32). The waiting room has decorative painted plaster paneling and continuous band composed of geometric shapes (similar to the decorative colored terra cotta tiles on the exterior) at the cornice level that remains in few locations (Figure 33).

Figure 32: Manufacturing company name "H. W. Bell" stamped onto the plaster base block. This is on the east wall of the waiting room. ***Photographic source: JBC, 2024***

Figure 33: Decorative painted plaster paneling on the waiting room walls. ***Photographic source: JBC, 2024***

Hallway and Restrooms

The hallway connecting the waiting area and the headhouse is a vaulted space decorated with colored terra cotta at the cornice level and scrolls around the openings; all appear to be in fair condition with spalls and some missing units. The painted plaster in the ceiling is in poor condition with much of it lost and the remaining exhibiting cracks and paint loss (Figure 34).

Broken pieces of white marble with grey veining were found among the debris near the restrooms. These are likely part of the bathroom stalls and may even be marble wall cladding (Figures 35-36). However, because of the debris on the floor, access was difficult and assessing conditions was not possible.

Figure 34: Failing plaster ceiling in the hallway. The arrow shows missing plaster and roof deck. The decorative terra cotta are in fair condition. ***Photographic source: JBC, 2024***

Figure 35: Interior of the restroom with marble slabs. ***Photographic source: JBC, 2024***

Figure 36: Exposed structural steel frame of the restroom ceiling. ***Photographic source: JBC, 2024***

REPAIR RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE EXISTING MATERIALS AT THE STATION

The following repair recommendations are based on the findings of the survey. The recommendations are prioritized in order of severity, with the recommendations for the most severe conditions listed first and progressing to aesthetic concerns.

Priority 1: Mitigation of Life Safety Hazards

1. Install protection under the Waiting Room to protect the tracks and any workers in the vicinity of the station.

Priority 2: Demolish the Waiting Room

1. Salvage all exterior terra cotta and other remaining historic elements.
2. Salvage the steel trusses in the waiting room.

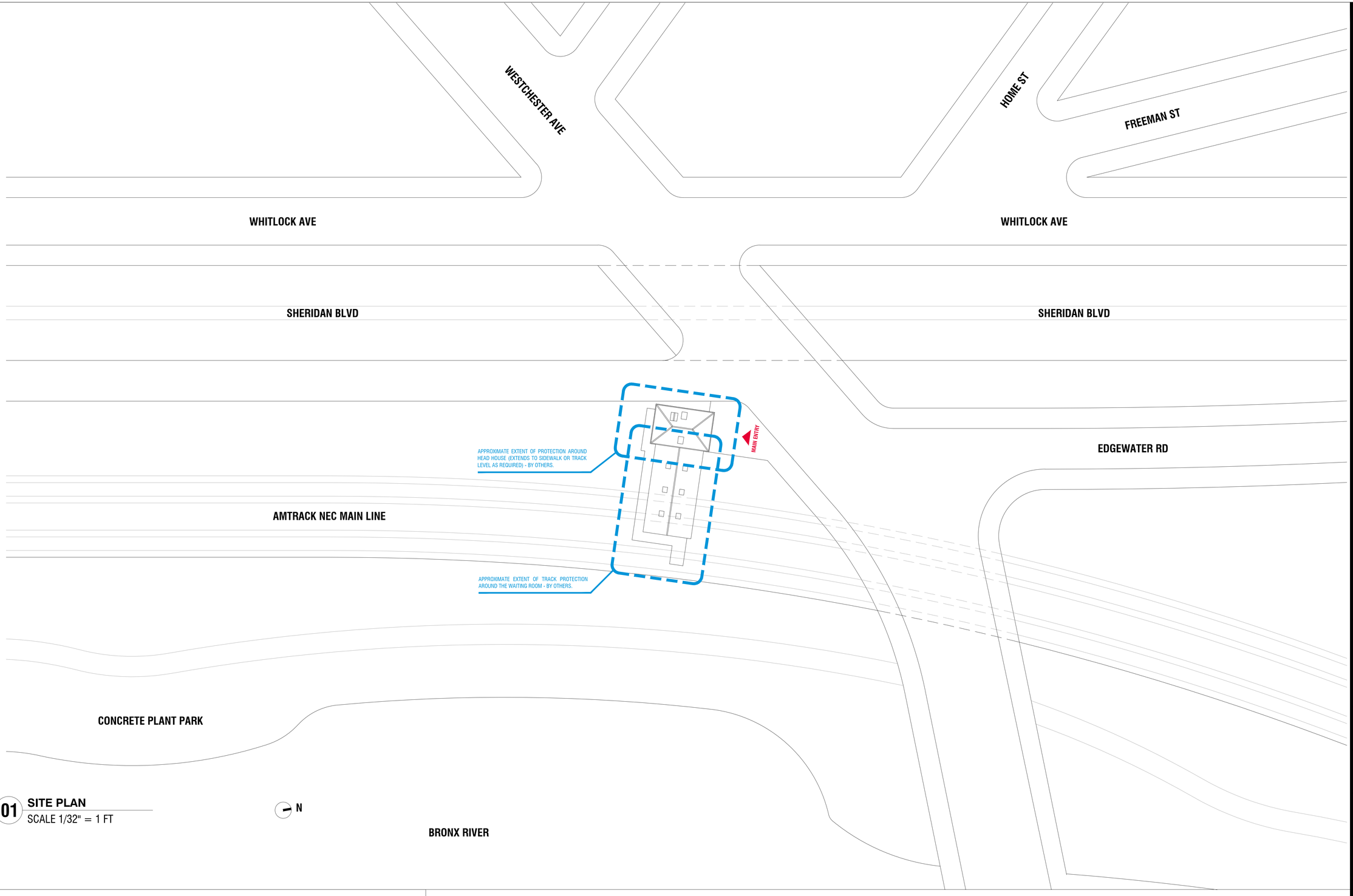
Priority 3:

1. Repair and Restoration of the Headhouse

Priority 4:

1. Repair and Restoration of the Vaulted Hallway.
2. Rehabilitation/ Recreation of Waiting Room

Drawings



01 **SITE PLAN**
SCALE 1/32" = 1 FT

DRAWING LIST

NO	DWG NO	NAME	SCALE
01	PS00	SITE PLAN AND DRAWING LIST	1/32" = 1 FT
02	PS02	PLAN AND RCP AT TRACK LEVEL	3/16" = 1 FT
03	PS03	PLAN AND RCP AT STREET LEVEL	3/16" = 1 FT
04	PS04	ROOF PLAN	3/16" = 1 FT
05	PS05	NORTH ELEVATION	3/16" = 1 FT
06	PS06	EAST WEST ELEVATIONS	3/16" = 1 FT
07	PS07	SOUTH ELEVATION	3/16" = 1 FT
08	PS08	TRANSVERSE SECTION	3/16" = 1 FT
09	PS09	LONGITUDINAL SECTION	3/16" = 1 FT

CASS GILBERT'S
WESTCHESTER AVENUE STATION
PRE-SCHEMATIC CONDITIONS ASSESMENT
58 WESTCHESTER AVENUE BRONX NY 10459

ANNOTATION LEGEND:
- GENERAL
- ARCHITECTURAL
- STRUCTURAL
- CONSERVATION

NOTES:

1. THE EXTENT OF PROTECTION AROUND THE WAITING ROOM PORTION OF THE STATION AND THE HEAD HOUSE ARE SHOWN SCHEMATICALLY. THE FINAL DESIGN OF THIS PROTECTION SHALL BE DESIGNED BY THE CONTRACTOR'S PE AND SHALL BE REVIEWED AND ACCEPTED BY AMTRAK. ALL OTHER RIGHT OF WAY PROTECTION SHALL BE AS SPECIFIED/ REQUIRED BY AMTRAK. THIS SHALL NOT BE CONSIDERED A DESIGN FOR FABRICATION OR PLACEMENT OF PROTECTION, TEMPORARY SHORING/ BRACING, OR OTHER ELEMENTS NECESSARY TO CONDUCT THE PROPOSED DEMOLITION AND SELECTIVE SALVAGE OF EXISTING MATERIALS THAT COMPRISE THIS BUILDING.

2. CONTRACTOR'S PE SHALL REVIEW THE CONDITION OF THE BUILDING PRIOR TO THE START OF ANALYSIS, DESIGN, AND FABRICATION OF ALL TEMPORARY SHORING AND BRACING ELEMENTS. THE ORDER OF SUCH WORK SHALL BE AS SPECIFIED BY THE CONTRACTOR'S PE AND ALL SUCH WORK SHALL BE AS SPECIFIED, REVIEWED, AND APPROVED BY AMTRAK.

3. THESE DRAWINGS DON'T REPRESENT A CONDITIONS SURVEY OF THE INTERIOR OR EXTERIOR OF THE BUILDING. I'D ALSO NOTE THAT THERE ARE HAZARDOUS/ POTENTIALLY HAZARDOUS CONDITIONS BOTH INSIDE AND OUTSIDE OF THE BUILDING AND THESE SURVEY DRAWINGS DON'T IDENTIFY WHERE THESE CONDITIONS EXIST.

DRAWING ISSUE RECORD

DATE	DESCRIPTION
JAN 03 2025	ISSUED

SLO ARCHITECTURE
10-10 44TH AVENUE STUDIO 320 LONG ISLAND CITY NEW YORK 11101
646.824.5786 | WWW.SLOARCHITECTURE.COM | INFO@SLOARCHITECTURE.COM

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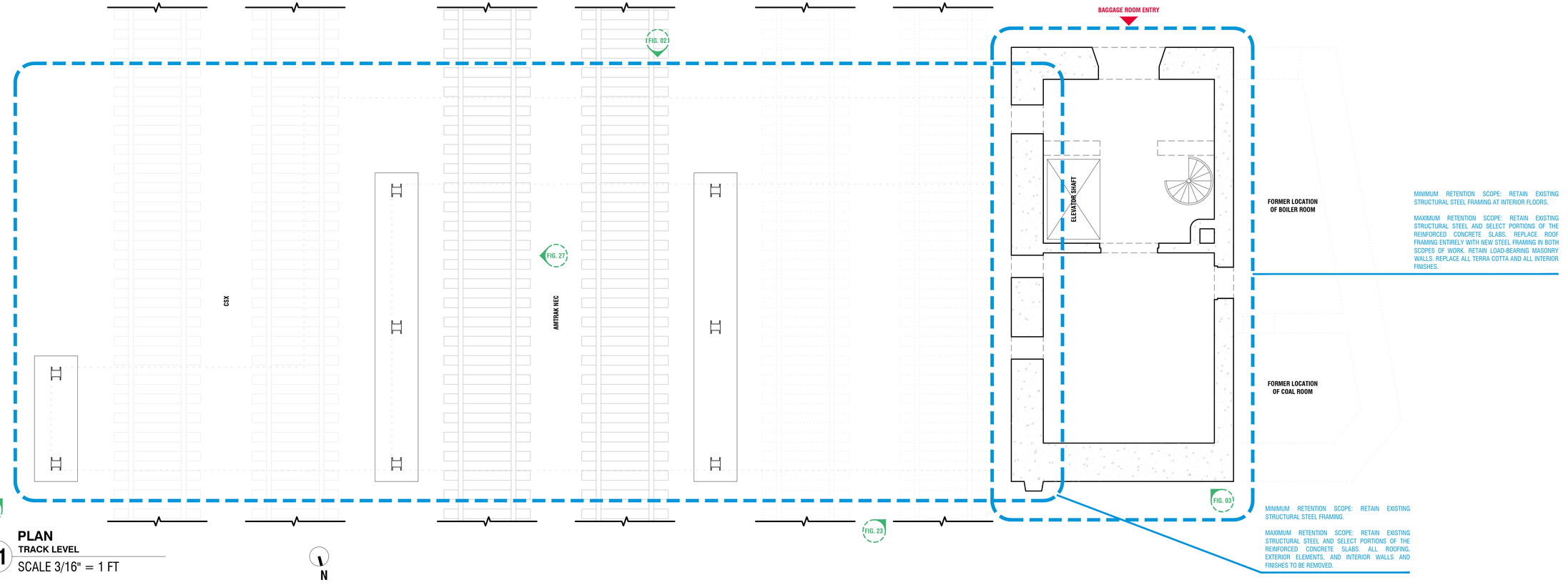
SITE PLAN AND DRAWING LIST

SEAL / SIGNATURE

DATE	JAN 03 2025
PROJECT NO	2024_04
DRWNG BY	DL
CHCK BY	AS
DRWNG NO	

PS00.00



01 **PLAN**
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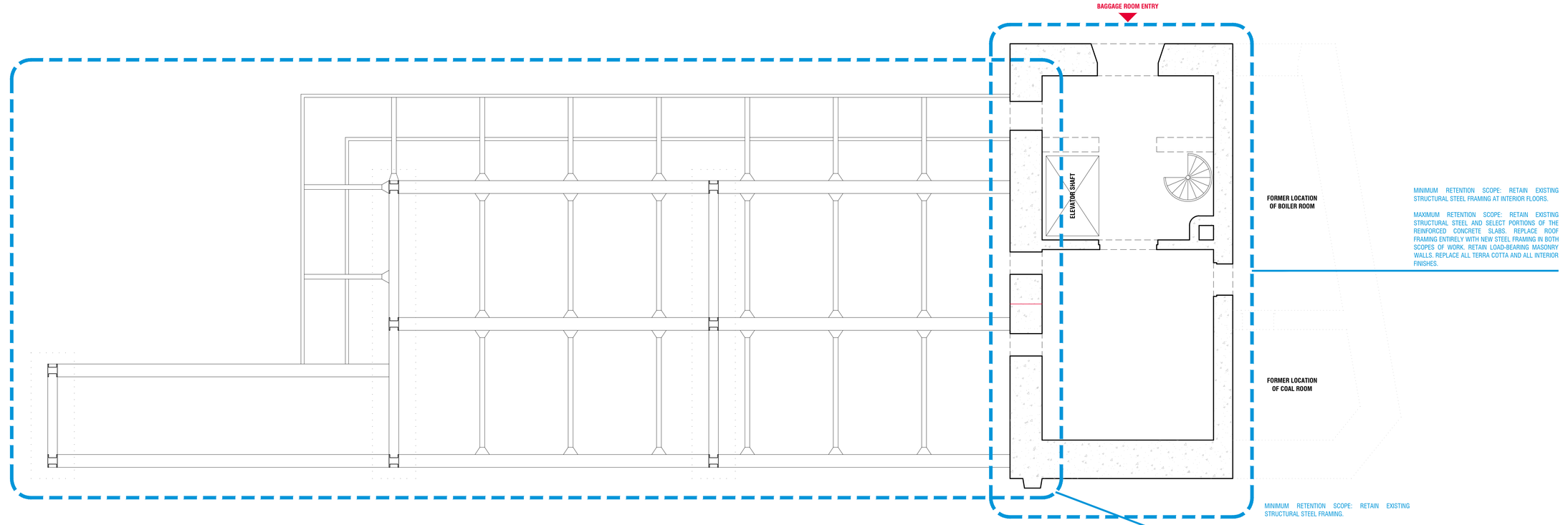

02 **RCP**
TRACK LEVEL
SCALE 3/16" = 1 FT

CASS GILBERT'S
WESTCHESTER AVENUE STATION
PRE-SCHEMATIC CONDITIONS ASSESMENT
58 WESTCHESTER AVENUE BRONX NY 10459

ANNOTATION LEGEND:
- GENERAL
- ARCHITECTURAL
- STRUCTURAL
- CONSERVATION

DRAWING ISSUE RECORD

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CONDITIONS

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PLAN AND RCP AT TRACK LEVEL

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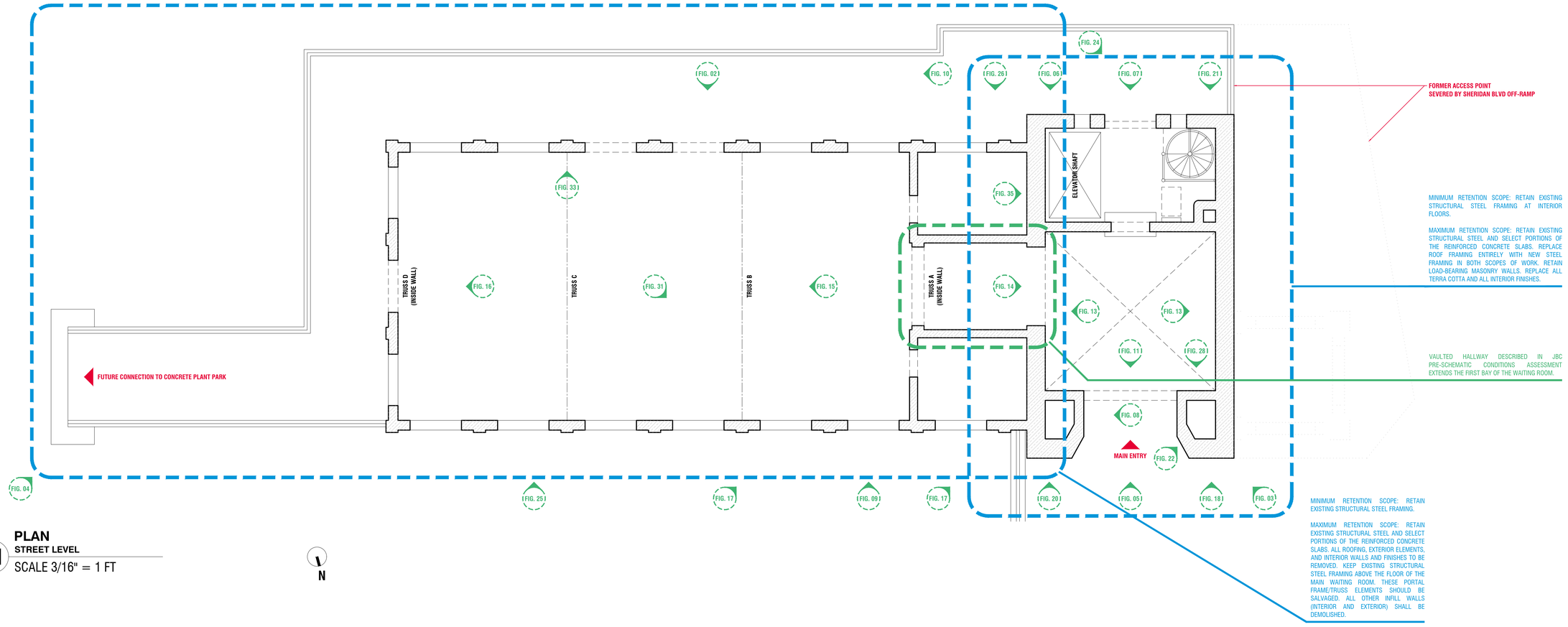

01 **PLAN**
STREET LEVEL
SCALE 3/16" = 1 FT

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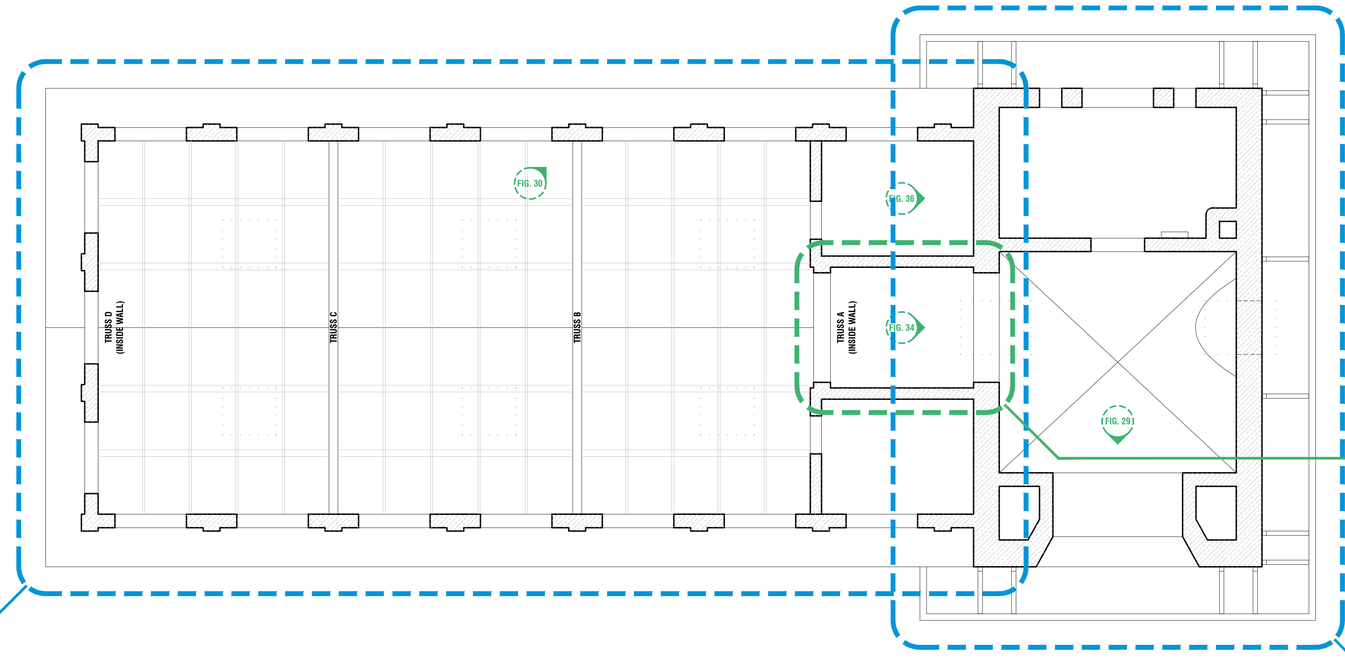

02 **RCP**
STREET LEVEL
SCALE 3/16" = 1 FT

N

CASS GILBERT'S
WESTCHESTER AVENUE STATION
PRE-SCHEMATIC CONDITIONS ASSESMENT
58 WESTCHESTER AVENUE BRONX NY 10459

ANNOTATION LEGEND:
- GENERAL
- ARCHITECTURAL
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- CONSERVATION

DRAWING ISSUE RECORD

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JAN 03 2025	ISSUED

CONDITIONS

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PLAN AND RCP AT STREET LEVEL

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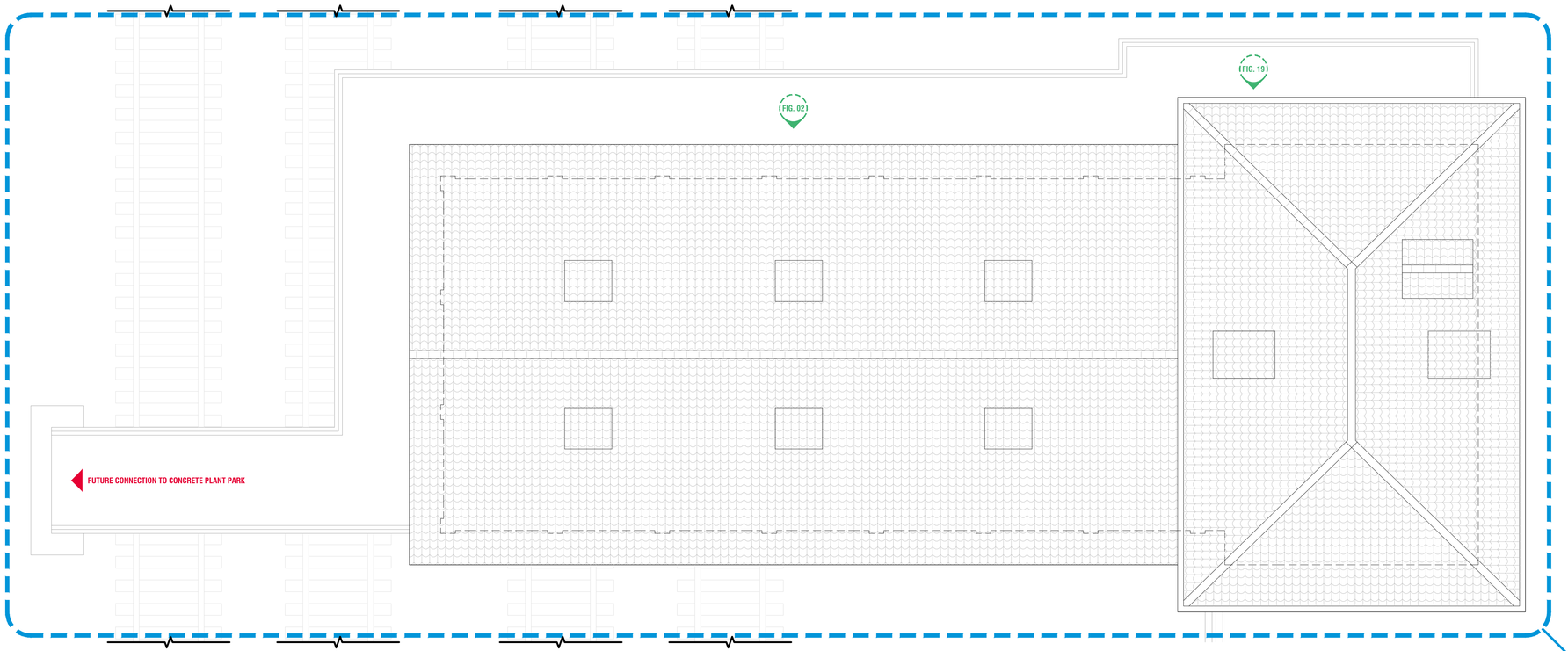
PS02.00



MAXIMUM RETENTION: ALL ROOF FRAMING STRUCTURAL STEEL AND ALL ROOF SLAB MATERIAL RESTING ON THE STRUCTURAL STEEL FRAMING OF THE ROOF.

MINIMUM RETENTION: KEEP SELECT PORTIONS OF THE STRUCTURAL STEEL FRAMING AND THE ROOF SLAB. AREAS TO BE CONFIRMED IN SUBSEQUENT PHASES OF FIELD SURVEYING AND MATERIAL TESTING.

01 **PLAN**
ROOF
SCALE 3/16" = 1 FT

N

CASS GILBERT'S
WESTCHESTER AVENUE STATION
PRE-SCHEMATIC CONDITIONS ASSESMENT
58 WESTCHESTER AVENUE BRONX NY 10459

ANNOTATION LEGEND:

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ROOF PLAN

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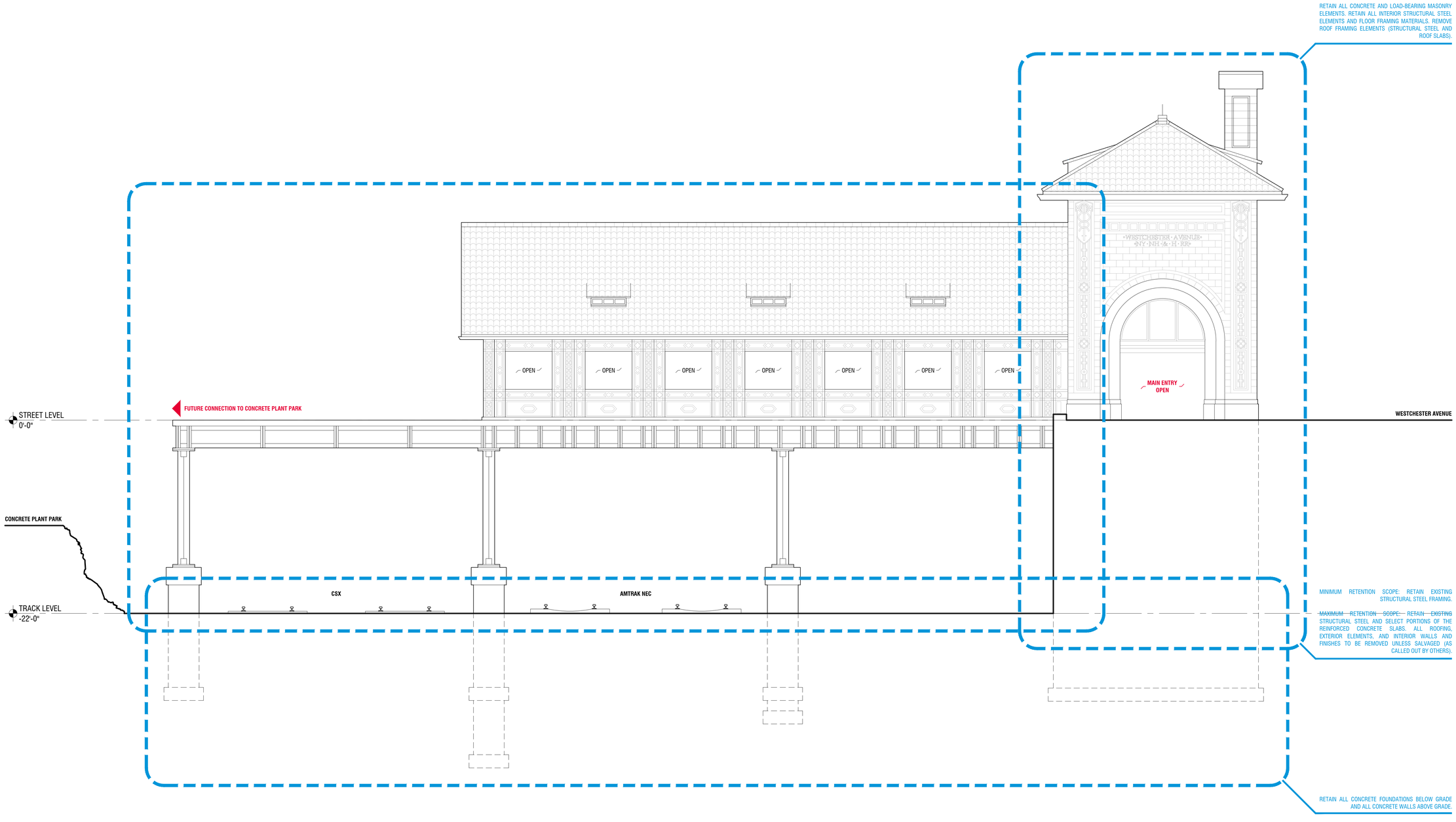

01 **ELEVATION**
NORTH
SCALE 3/16" = 1 FT

CASS GILBERT'S
WESTCHESTER AVENUE STATION
PRE-SCHEMATIC CONDITIONS ASSESMENT
58 WESTCHESTER AVENUE BRONX NY 10459

ANNOTATION LEGEND:
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- STRUCTURAL
- CONSERVATION

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NORTH ELEVATION

SEAL / SIGNATURE

DATE	JAN 03 2025
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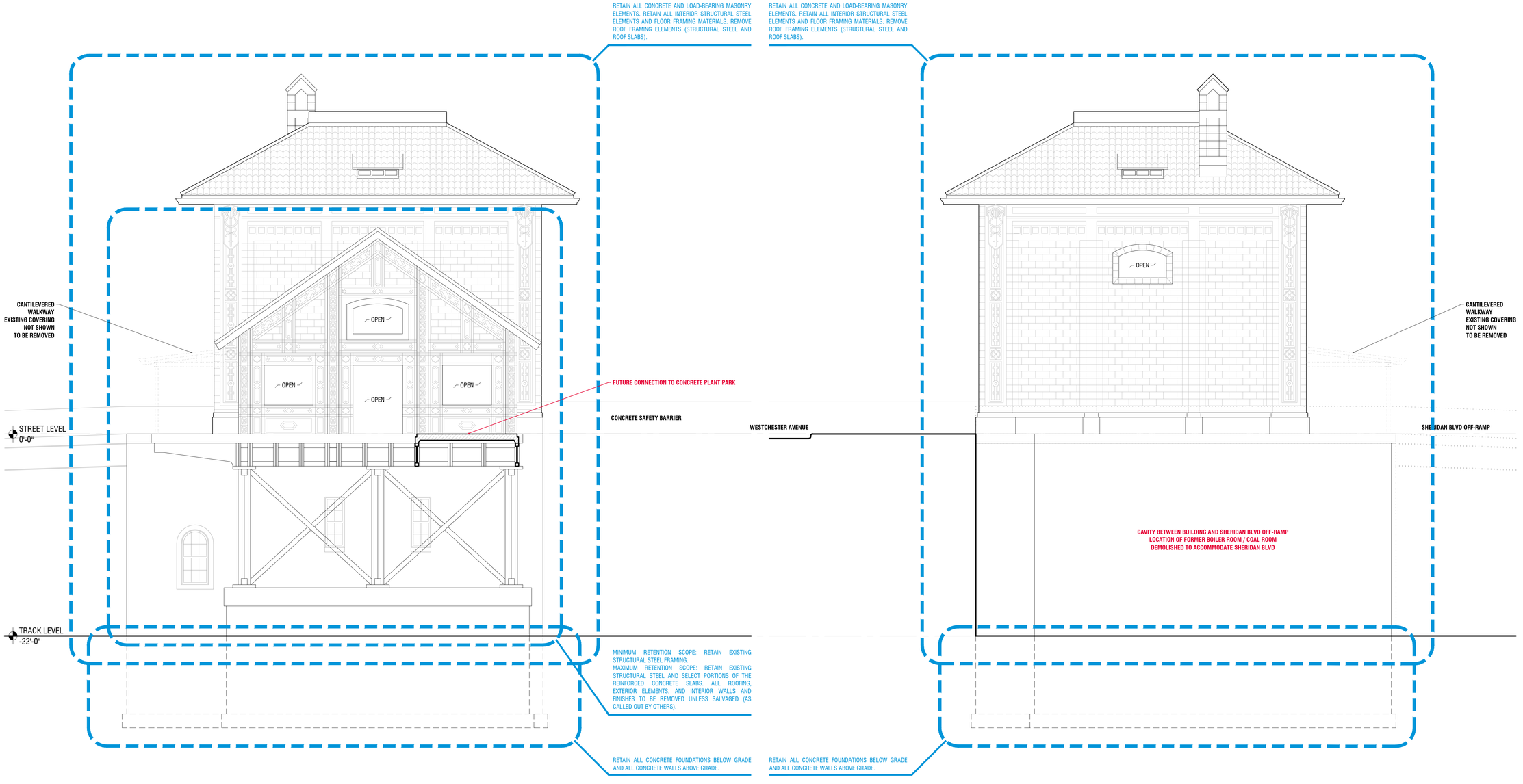

01 **ELEVATION**
EAST
SCALE 3/16" = 1 FT

02 **ELEVATION**
WEST
SCALE 3/16" = 1 FT

CASS GILBERT'S
WESTCHESTER AVENUE STATION
PRE-SCHEMATIC CONDITIONS ASSESMENT
58 WESTCHESTER AVENUE BRONX NY 10459

ANNOTATION LEGEND:
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- ARCHITECTURAL
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EAST / WEST ELEVATIONS

SEAL / SIGNATURE

DATE	JAN 03 2025
PROJECT NO	2024_04
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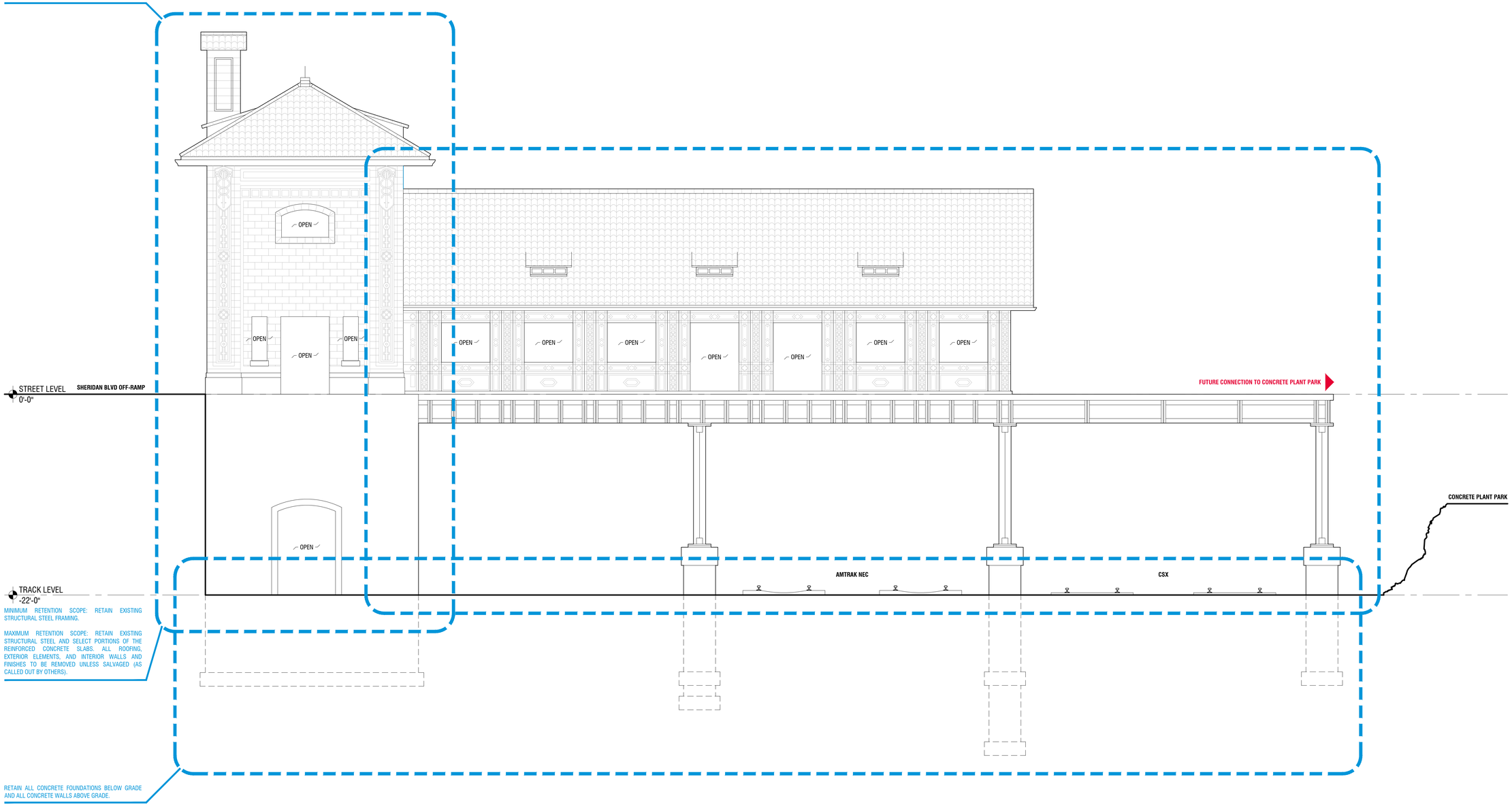
CHCK BY	AS
DRWNG NO	

PS05.00

RETAIN ALL CONCRETE AND LOAD-BEARING MASONRY ELEMENTS. RETAIN ALL INTERIOR STRUCTURAL STEEL ELEMENTS AND FLOOR FRAMING MATERIALS. REMOVE ROOF FRAMING ELEMENTS (STRUCTURAL STEEL AND ROOF SLABS).



MINIMUM RETENTION SCOPE: RETAIN EXISTING STRUCTURAL STEEL FRAMING.

MAXIMUM RETENTION SCOPE: RETAIN EXISTING STRUCTURAL STEEL AND SELECT PORTIONS OF THE REINFORCED CONCRETE SLABS. ALL ROOFING, EXTERIOR ELEMENTS, AND INTERIOR WALLS AND FINISHES TO BE REMOVED UNLESS SALVAGED (AS CALLED OUT BY OTHERS).

RETAIN ALL CONCRETE FOUNDATIONS BELOW GRADE AND ALL CONCRETE WALLS ABOVE GRADE.

01 ELEVATION
SOUTH

SCALE 3/16" = 1 FT

CASS GILBERT'S
WESTCHESTER AVENUE STATION
PRE-SCHEMATIC CONDITIONS ASSESMENT
58 WESTCHESTER AVENUE BRONX NY 10459

ANNOTATION LEGEND:

- GENERAL
- ARCHITECTURAL
- STRUCTURAL
- CONSERVATION

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SOUTH ELEVATION

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DATE	JAN 03 2025
PROJECT NO	2024_04
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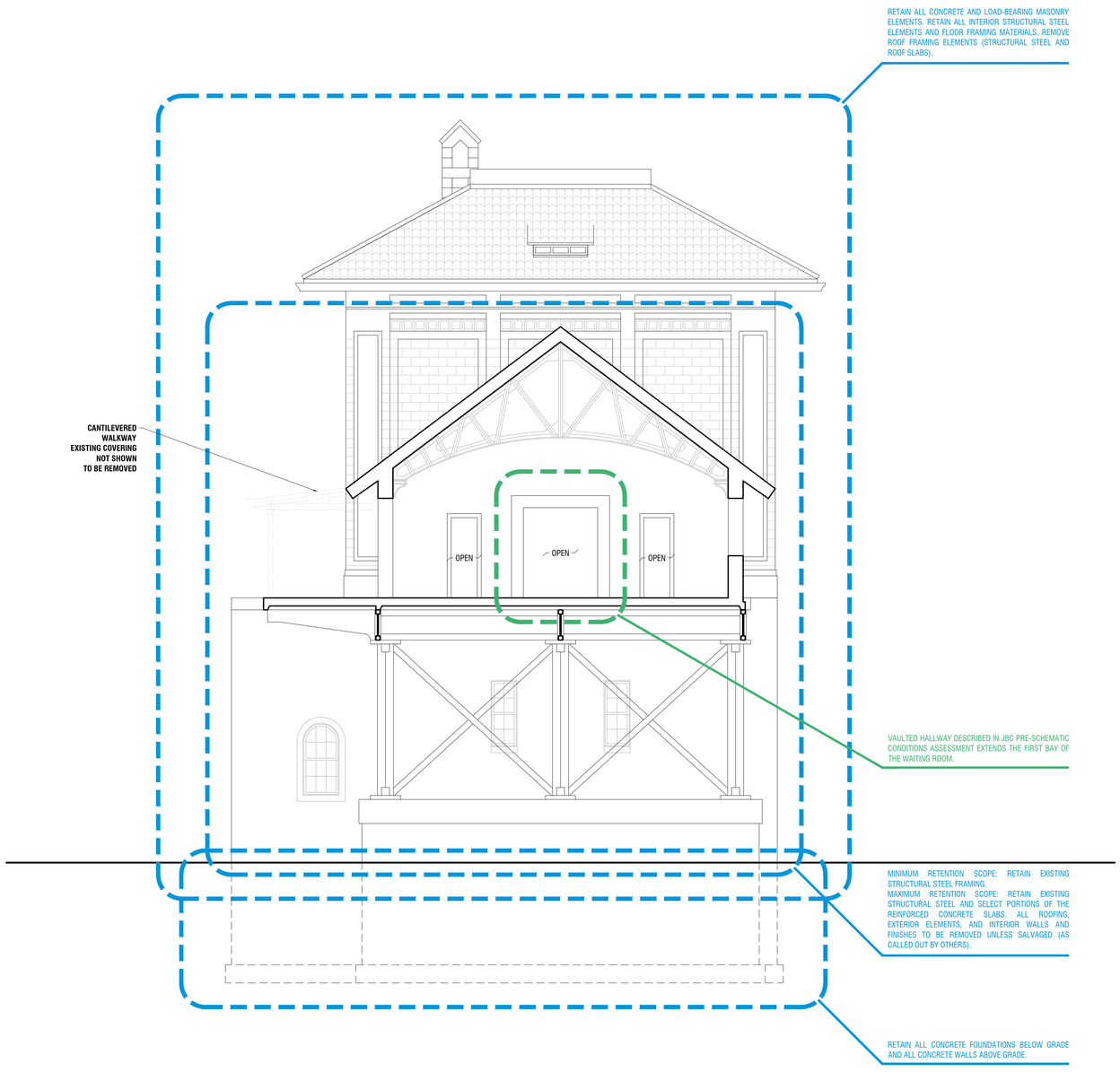
CHCK BY	AS
DRWNG NO	

PS06.00



01 **SECTION**
TRANSVERSE
SCALE 3/16" = 1 FT

CASS GILBERT'S
WESTCHESTER AVENUE STATION
PRE-SCHEMATIC CONDITIONS ASSESMENT
58 WESTCHESTER AVENUE BRONX NY 10459

ANNOTATION LEGEND:
- GENERAL
- ARCHITECTURAL
- STRUCTURAL
- CONSERVATION

DRAWING ISSUE RECORD

DATE	DESCRIPTION
JAN 03 2025	ISSUED

SLO ARCHITECTURE
10-10 44TH AVENUE STUDIO 320 LONG ISLAND CITY NEW YORK 11101
646.824.5786 | WWW.SLOARCHITECTURE.COM | INFO@SLOARCHITECTURE.COM

TYLin
32 OLD SLIP, 10TH FLOOR, NEW YORK, NY 10005
212.620.7974 | HTTPS://WWW.TYLIN.COM/SILMAN

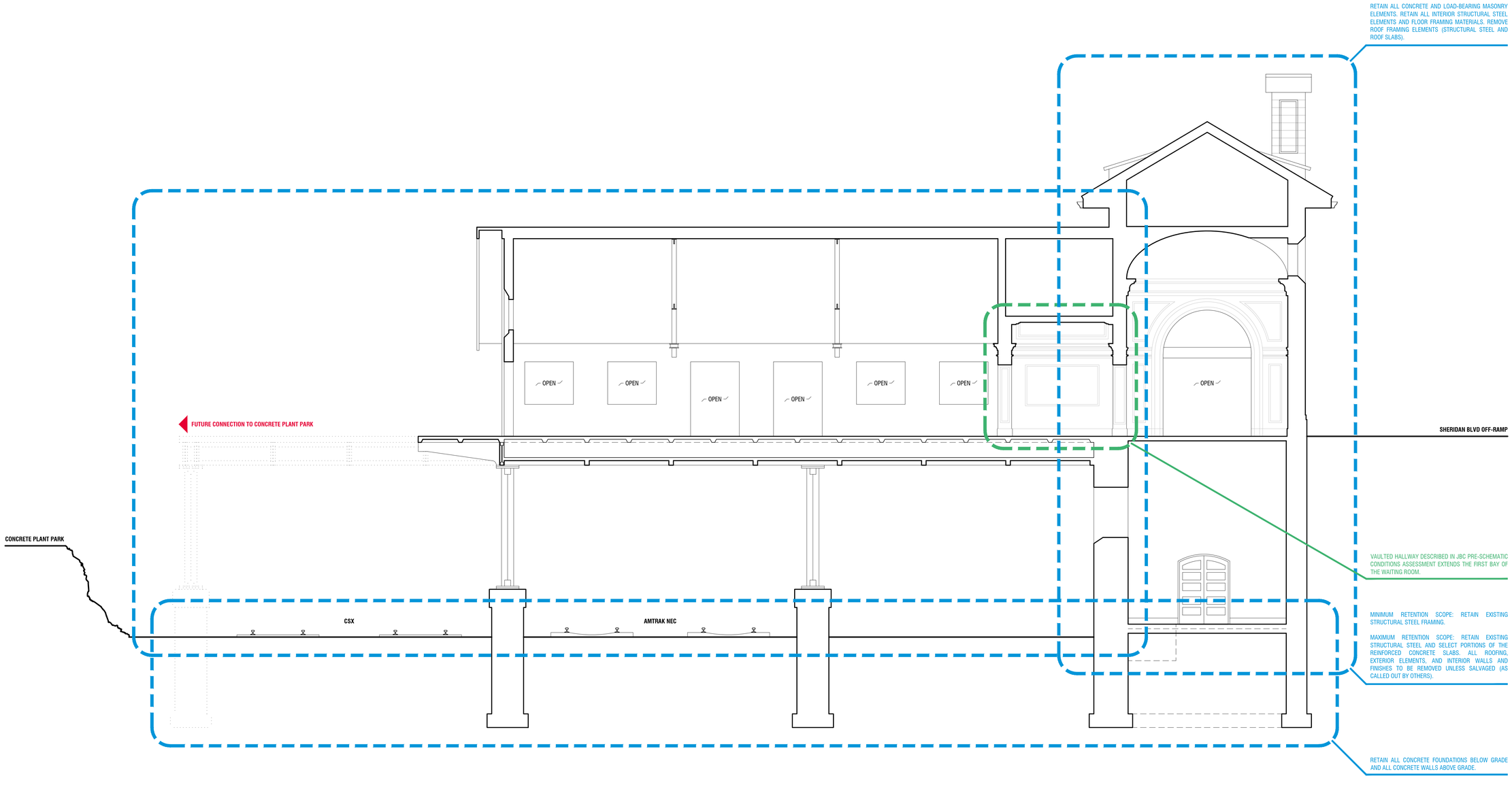
Jablonski Building Conservation
40 WEST 27TH STREET, 12TH FLOOR NEW YORK, NY 10001
212.532.7775 | WWW.JBCONSERVATION.COM

TRANSVERSE SECTION

SEAL / SIGNATURE

DATE	JAN 03 2025
PROJECT NO	2024_04
DRWNG BY	DL
CHCK BY	AS
DRWNG NO	

PS07.00



01 **SECTION**
LONGITUDINAL
SCALE 3/16" = 1 FT

CASS GILBERT'S
WESTCHESTER AVENUE STATION
PRE-SCHEMATIC CONDITIONS ASSESMENT
58 WESTCHESTER AVENUE BRONX NY 10459

ANNOTATION LEGEND:

- GENERAL
- ARCHITECTURAL
- STRUCTURAL
- CONSERVATION

DRAWING ISSUE RECORD

DATE	DESCRIPTION
JAN 03 2025	ISSUED

SLO ARCHITECTURE
10-10 44TH AVENUE STUDIO 320 LONG ISLAND CITY NEW YORK 11101
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LONGITUDINAL ELEVATION

SEAL / SIGNATURE

DATE	JAN 03 2025
PROJECT NO	2024_04
DRWNG BY	DL
CHCK BY	AS
DRWNG NO	

PS08.00