

CITY OF GENEVA, HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

April 20, 2021

Applicant:

Nick Smith – Old Republic
Kitchen + Bar, Owner

Nicholas Manheim – Manheim
Architecture, Architects

Request:

Permit Review for Exterior
Rehabilitation including
Storefront Renovations

HPC Case Number:

2020-003

Staff Liaison:

Michael Lambert
Preservation Planner
630/938.4541
preservation@geneva.il.us



AGENDA ITEM 4A

**101 West State Street
Proposed Exterior Rehabilitation**

BACKGROUND

The Wrate Block property is identified as a Significant property within the local historic district and contributing in the Central Geneva Historic District, listed in the National Register of Historic Places.



HISTORIC EVOLUTION OF THE PROPERTY

Around 1837, a wood-framed structure was built by Richard Adsit and John Dearmint on this site; the 30 X 50 building served as the Isaac Claypool store until 1843.

Charles Patten and Scotto Clark were among a group of Massachusetts pioneers who arrived at Geneva in 1836. Returning to Massachusetts, they arrived in the newly-established community of Geneva with wares to open a store. Patten and Clark established their general store in the existing, wooden building until 1853, when they replaced the wooden structure with the present limestone building. George Welch was the mason; he also worked on the third Kane County Courthouse and the Dunham Castle at Wayne, Illinois. The prominently-sited building served as the center of commerce in the growing community and was known as the “Old Corner.”

Many businesses located in the “Old Corner” building, including the Post Office and a barber shop that were located in the basement with entrances off east side. Second floor offices and fraternal organizations included William Ferslew, Kane Co. Gazetteer & Directory publisher; Attorney J. H. Mayborn (after 1848); Attorney Augustus M. Herrington, who also served several terms as District Attorney; a newspaper publisher; Masonic Lodge (1857); Attorney H.E Abbott; Dr. C. C. Harris; Benjamin Wilson (printer); and Brown & West (1867).

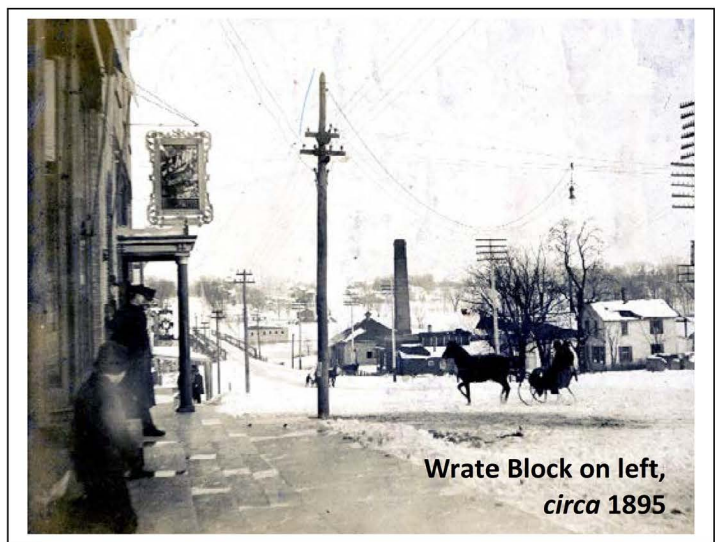
In May 1890, the building was acquired at public auction by a group of local businessmen, including Dr. Gulley, Samuel Lance, Francis S. Wrate of Geneva and W. R. S. Hunter of Elburn. The new owners remodeled the building, which included the lowering of the floor approximately 2’-0” on the west side of the building in 1891. In February 1892, a fire in the building resulted in the collapse of the façade. The following year (1893), an entirely new façade of distinctive, cream-colored brick was erected along State Street. The facade was finished with an ornate, sheet metal cornice and pediment at the roofline that identified the remodeled building as the “Wrate Block.”

F. S. Wrate and his wife, Jane, came to the United States in 1853: first to Vermont, and—in 1857—to Kewanee, Illinois and, later, to Mendota, Illinois. In 1865, The Wrate family moved to Geneva (1908 died).

The October 3, 1891 edition of the *Geneva Republican* included an advertisement for the Geneva Cash Grocery announcing:

Just Completed! Just Occupied! The New Wrate Store Building, corner of First and State Streets, Geneva, Ill. A. A. Belden is opening out the largest stock of PURE FRESH GROCERIES in this building that Geneva has seen in so many a day.”

In 1898, F. S. Wrate converted the second floor for use as Geneva’s first “moving picture house.” About that same time, the east side of the ground floor was operating as a tavern while the west side was a dry goods store operated by Morris Katzman.



Wrate Block on left,
circa 1895

By 1906, the west commercial space was occupied by Emil Simon (a Lithuanian immigrant, arriving in 1891), who operated Simon's Dry Goods for nearly 50 years, beginning a long tradition of business ventures established by the Simon family in the Geneva community.

In 1908, the theater was abandoned, and the second floor was converted to a dance hall along with a Ladies' Room,

Men's Smoking Room, and a 4-room apartment along the east wall. The hall was used for community musical and drama recitals; served as a meeting hall for many, local, fraternal organizations (including the Masonic Lodge, the Knights of Pythias, and the Modern Woodmen of America) ; and—for a time—operated as a billiards hall.

The west storefront of the Wrate Block was remodeled in 1946, when the original cast iron columns were replaced with round columns and the central, recessed entry was installed. The east storefront of the Wrate Block continued as a saloon but, later, operated as an electric shop until 1935, when The Little Owl saloon and restaurant was opened by Egisto (Tony) Lencioni.

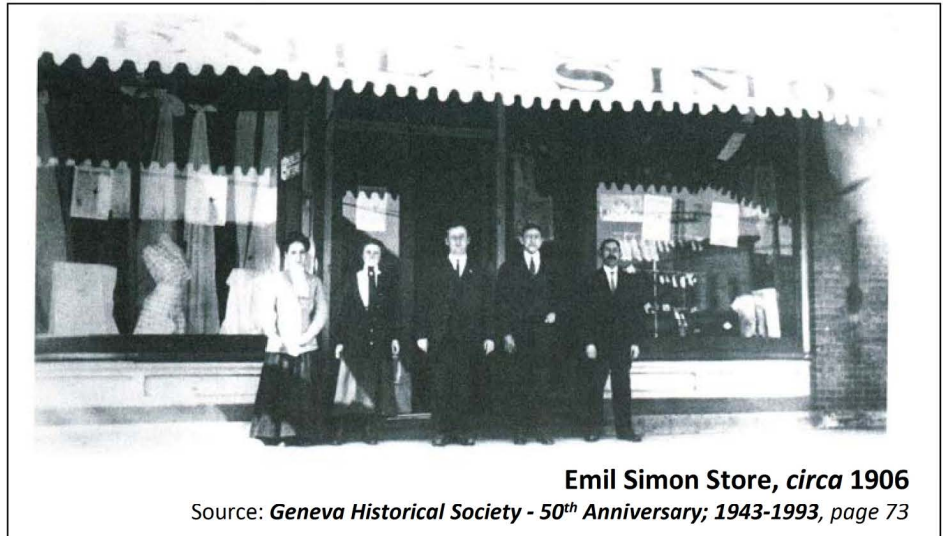
The Abrizanni and Van Thournout families were the second owners of The Little Owl when Henry Van Thournout acquired the prominent building from Wrate descendants in 1972. The east storefront was remodeled in the mid-to late 1970s. The landmark Little Owl restaurant was sold to the Abrizanni family, who operated the restaurant and bar until it was closed in October 2019, and the building was sold to its present owners.

ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE AND INTEGRITY

The Wrate Building is significant as a commercial corner with a history that begins nearly concurrent with the settlement of Geneva. The 1853 limestone building is significant for its association with architecture of the Early Settlement Era of Geneva (1837-1857) as well as for its 1893 façade of distinctive, cream-colored brick, which is an excellent example of Late Victorian Era commercial building design. Additionally, the building is significant for its association with numerous notable individuals, businesses, and organizations important to Geneva's development over time.

The Wrate Block retains a high degree of architectural integrity. The existing storefronts are not original to the building; however, the existing west storefront (in 2020) is more representative of the traditional, first floor, commercial uses than the existing, east storefront (in 2021). Additionally, the building shows signs of deferred maintenance including spalling masonry, unpainted trim, and minor deterioration of the sheet metal cornice and pediment.

In June 2020, distinctive brick molding at the second floor windows was removed and replaced with new brick molding that does not replicate the historic profile. The work was completed without HPC approval.



Emil Simon Store, circa 1906

Source: *Geneva Historical Society - 50th Anniversary; 1943-1993, page 73*

PREVIOUS REQUEST AND APPROVAL

In January 2020, the Applicant appeared before the Historic Preservation Commission, seeking approval to modify the existing storefronts and building entry. The tripartite rhythm of the original storefronts was proposed to be retained; however, the former storefront entrances were to be removed and a single accessible entry proposed at the former, second floor entrance, located at the center of the State Street façade. The storefronts were proposed as fixed glass windows with new bulkheads (sympathetic to the historic 1906 bulkheads); the existing, cast iron lintels were to be retained and re-painted; and the centralized, accessible entry was to have a new, composite door installed within the existing jamb beneath the historic, multi-lite, arched transom. Other work (including masonry re-pointing, second floor window restoration, and cornice repair) were proposed to be completed under a future phase, pending HPC review and approval. New signage and exterior lighting would be reviewed administratively. After lengthy discussion, Commissioner Salomon moved to:

“approve the proposal for 101 W. State Street, as presented, with requested modifications to minimize the mullion widths on the front windows and increase the definition (*of the recessed panels*) on the bulkhead”

contingent upon two stipulations requiring Preservation Planner review and approval:

1. specifications and details for the proposed entry door (to be more compatible with the historic door) and fitted within the existing, historic door jamb; and
2. appropriate masonry repairs to the southeast corner of the building per preservation standards and practices—in conjunction with the Building Commissioner.

The motion to approve (with stipulations) passed unanimously.

CURRENT REQUEST

The Applicant is seeking review and approval to change the approved, fixed storefront to an operable storefront that replicates the divisions of the original 1892 storefronts. The request includes two different options for the configuration of the storefront glass, which includes sliding window units.

The current request identifies masonry rehabilitation; second floor window restoration; and cornice restoration as work to be completed in a future phase. The extent of the future work remains undefined with this request.

The Applicant has not furnished any additional information regarding the proposed entry door at the State Street façade. Additionally, the Applicant completed a masonry patch at the southeast corner of the building without review and approval from the Preservation Planner and Building Commissioner, as directed by the Historic Preservation Commission.

STAFF ANALYSIS

The Applicant proposes to retain 3 divisions at each storefront. Within the 3 bays of each storefront, the Applicant proposes to install a fixed transom with operable windows below. The operable windows will be sliding units (very similar to sliding patio doors) that will have screens at the interior face of the windows. The overall effect of the proposed system is to replicate the historic arrangement of the 1893 storefronts.

The submitted drawings state that the vertical, storefront columns will be re-used as the breakpoints for the storefront divisions. Historically, storefront column locations were integral components of the structural system that permitted the expansive glass storefronts of this era. The structural posts have been relocated: west side in 1946 and east side by the mid-1970s.



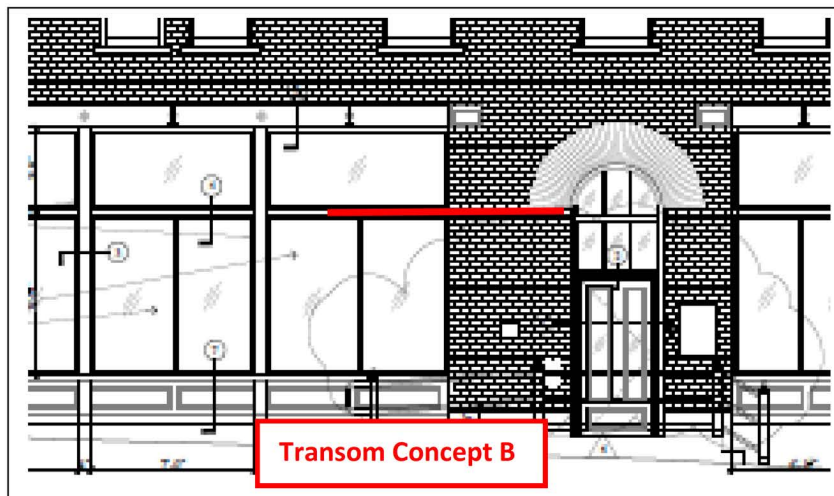
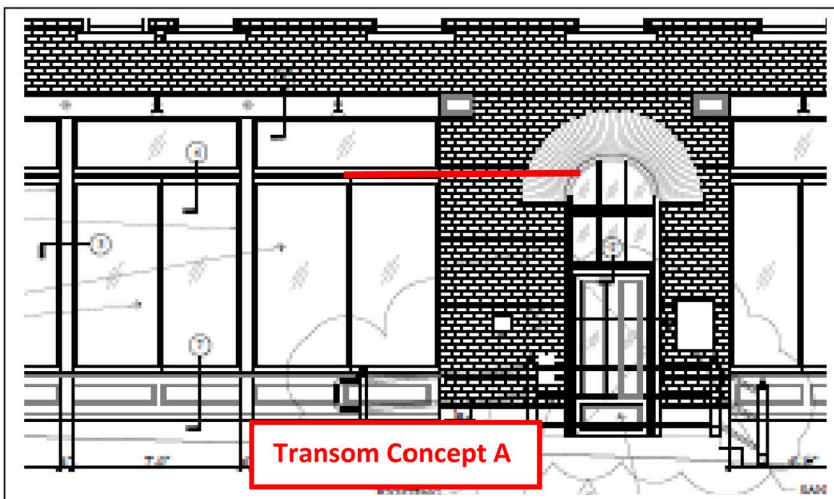
Per the submitted architectural documents, the west storefront divisions are proposed to be symmetrical about the central bay (former entry portal); the architectural drawings indicate the flanking bays to measure 7'-8" across. The locations appear to align with the historic rondels at the exposed, cast iron, storefront lintel. The west storefront lintel exhibits little sign of deflection (indicated by white line).



The east storefront, however, proposes to utilize the mid-1970s column locations that do not align with the historic rondels at the exposed, cast iron, storefront lintel. In fact, the cast iron storefront lintel has deflected because the current column locations do not align with the historic column locations of the storefront (indicated by white line). The irregular and non-historic placement of the columns results in a non-symmetrical arrangement of the storefront windows about the former, central entry portal; the west bay of the east storefront measures 6'-

1½" while the east bay of the east storefront measures 7'-0½". Traditionally, storefronts were symmetrical about a central entry bay.

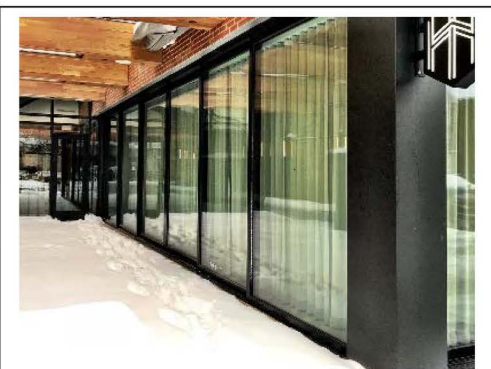
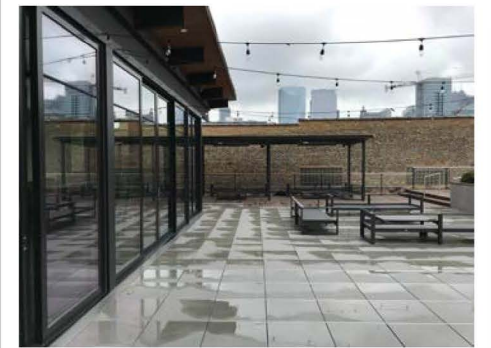
Within the divisions of each storefront, the Applicant proposes to install a system that combines sliding window units (very similar to sliding patio doors) with fixed transoms. The Applicant has submitted two different concepts for the storefront window arrangement. The first concept (Concept A) utilizes standard height (8'-0" tall), sliding window units that results in a narrower transom window than existed historically. The second concept (Concept B) utilizes custom height, sliding window units that align with the springline of the brick arch over the central door and replicates the depth of the historic transom. Historically, the transoms extended below the cast iron storefront lintel to the springline of the brick arch of the central doorway (see images that follow where the red line indicates the historic bottom of the transom aligning with the springline of the brick arch, indicated by the purple arc).



Above Top, Middle, and Bottom: Storefront Relationships of transom to Display Window area and breakpoints related to springline of entry arch.

Right Top, Middle, and Bottom: Examples of offset planes at sliding windows.

Additionally, the sliding window units—when closed—will not be in the same plane; each unit will be offset from its paired unit by approximately 2" so that one window can pass by the other (see example images that follow below).

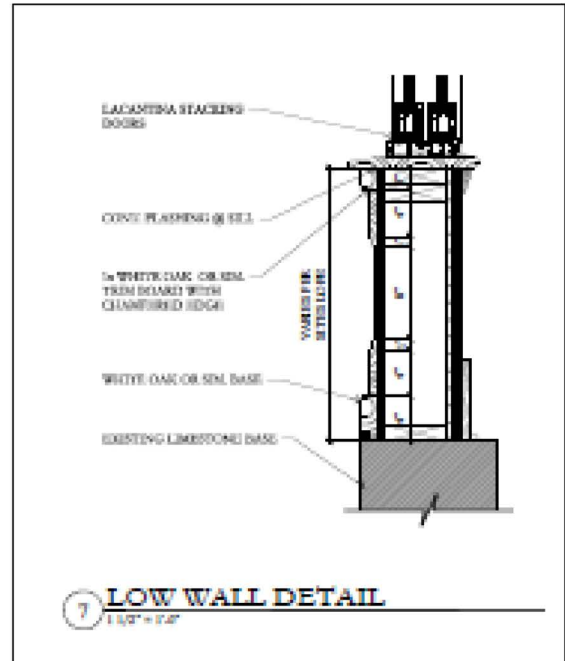


Based on the submitted architectural documents, storefront columns appear to be faced with cladding material to match the sliding window units. The storefront columns will not be ornamented or utilize recycled cast iron columns of the period of construction.

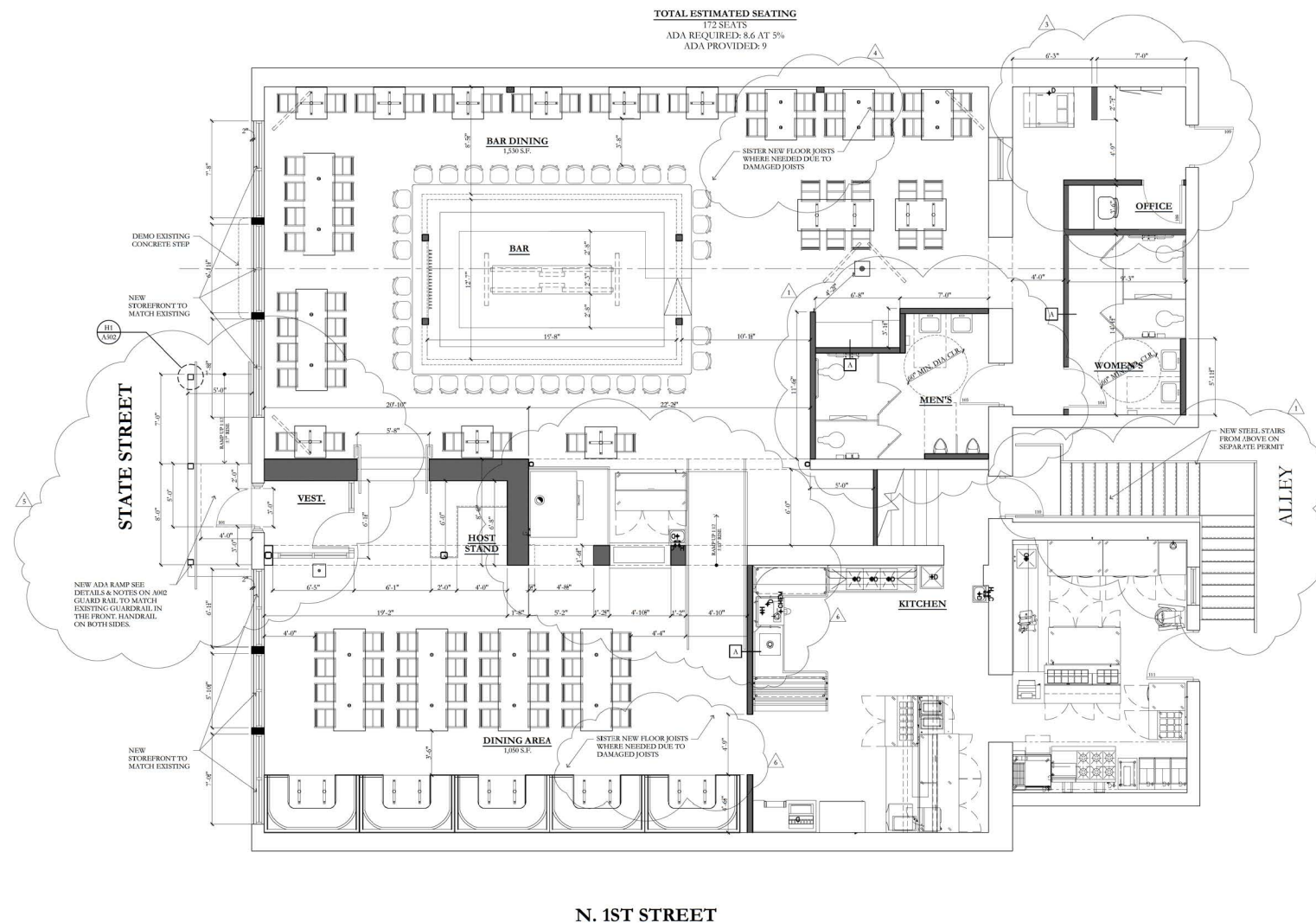
The Applicants have provided a detail for a bulkhead with a recessed panel arrangement that aligns with the storefront divisions and window units. The proposed bulkhead incorporates recessed panels that are more sympathetic to a historic, paneled bulkhead of a Late Victorian Era commercial building.

The Applicant has not provided any details, specifications, or product “cut sheets” for the State Street entry door.

No architectural details, specifications, or scope of work have been provided at this time for the restoration/rehabilitation of the second floor windows and brick molding; the masonry repairs and pointing (including southeast corner or sill repair and/or replacement); or the metal cornice rehabilitation. Masonry repairs and window restoration may be impacted by the correction of the deflected storefront lintel at the eastern commercial bay. These items are identified to be addressed as part of a future phase of work (which has not been scheduled).



Awnings, exterior lighting, and signage have not been submitted, but will be reviewed, administratively, in accordance with local regulations at a later date.



NO.	REVISIONS/SUBMISSIONS	DATE
1	RE-ISSUED FOR PERMIT	01.03.20
3	PLAN MODIFICATIONS	03.05.20
4	RE-ISSUED FOR PERMIT	03.19.20
5	RE-ISSUED FOR PERMIT	04.03.20
6	RE-ISSUED FOR PERMIT	11.18.20



Project Title
OLD REPUBLIC [KITCHEN + BAR] GENEVA
101 W. STATE ST.
GENEVA, IL 60134

Drawing Title
FIRST FLOOR PLAN

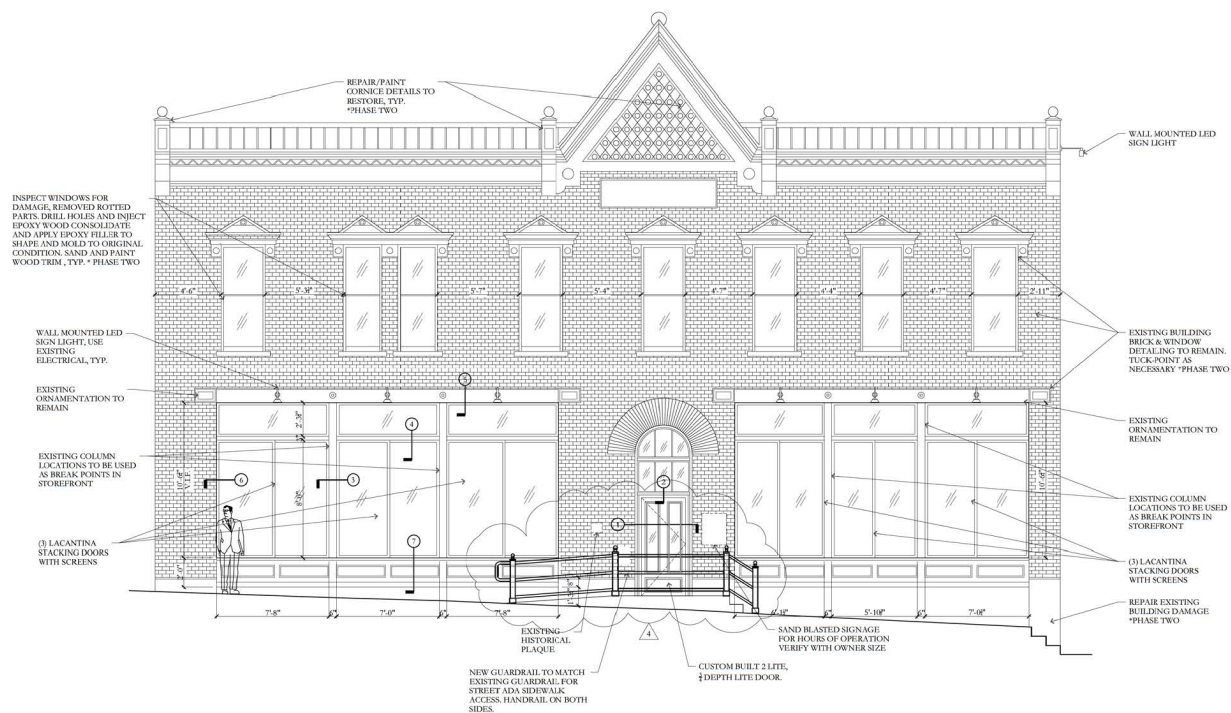
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Drawn NPM	Reviewed NPM	Drawing Number
Date 4.8.21		A100
EXPIRES 11.30.22		4 of 13

A1 FLOOR PLAN

1/4" = 1'-0"

RE:

APRIL 8, 2021 - HPC REVIEW



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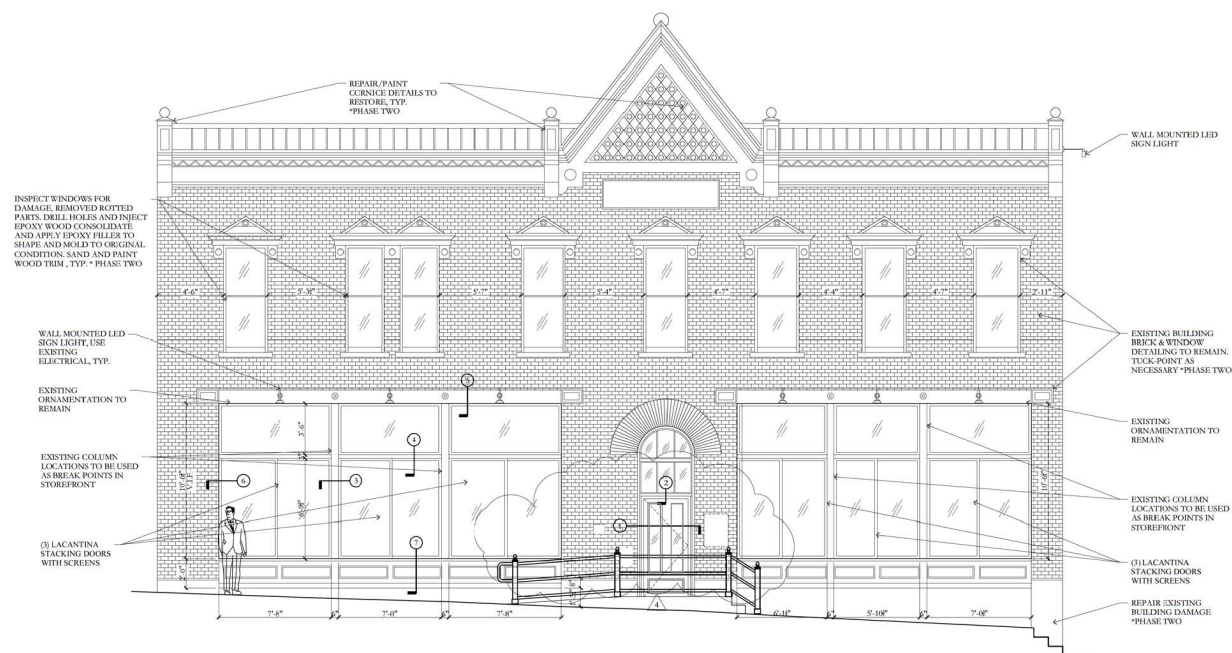
Drawing Title
SOUTH ELEVATION

Seal/Stamp 	Designed NPM	Project Number 28,19
Drawn NPM	Reviewed NPM	Drawing Number A101A
Date 4.8.21		5 of 13

A1 SOUTH ELEVATION (DOORS AT 8' STANDARD HEIGHT)

1/4" = 1'-0"

RE:




NO.	REVISIONS/SUBMISSIONS	DATE
1	RE-ISSUED FOR PERMIT	01.03.20
3	PLAN MODIFICATIONS	03.05.20
4	RE-ISSUED FOR PERMIT	03.19.20
5	RE-ISSUED FOR PERMIT	04.03.20
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OLD REPUBLIC [KITCHEN + BAR] GENEVA
 101 W. STATE ST.
 GENEVA, IL. 60134

Drawing Title

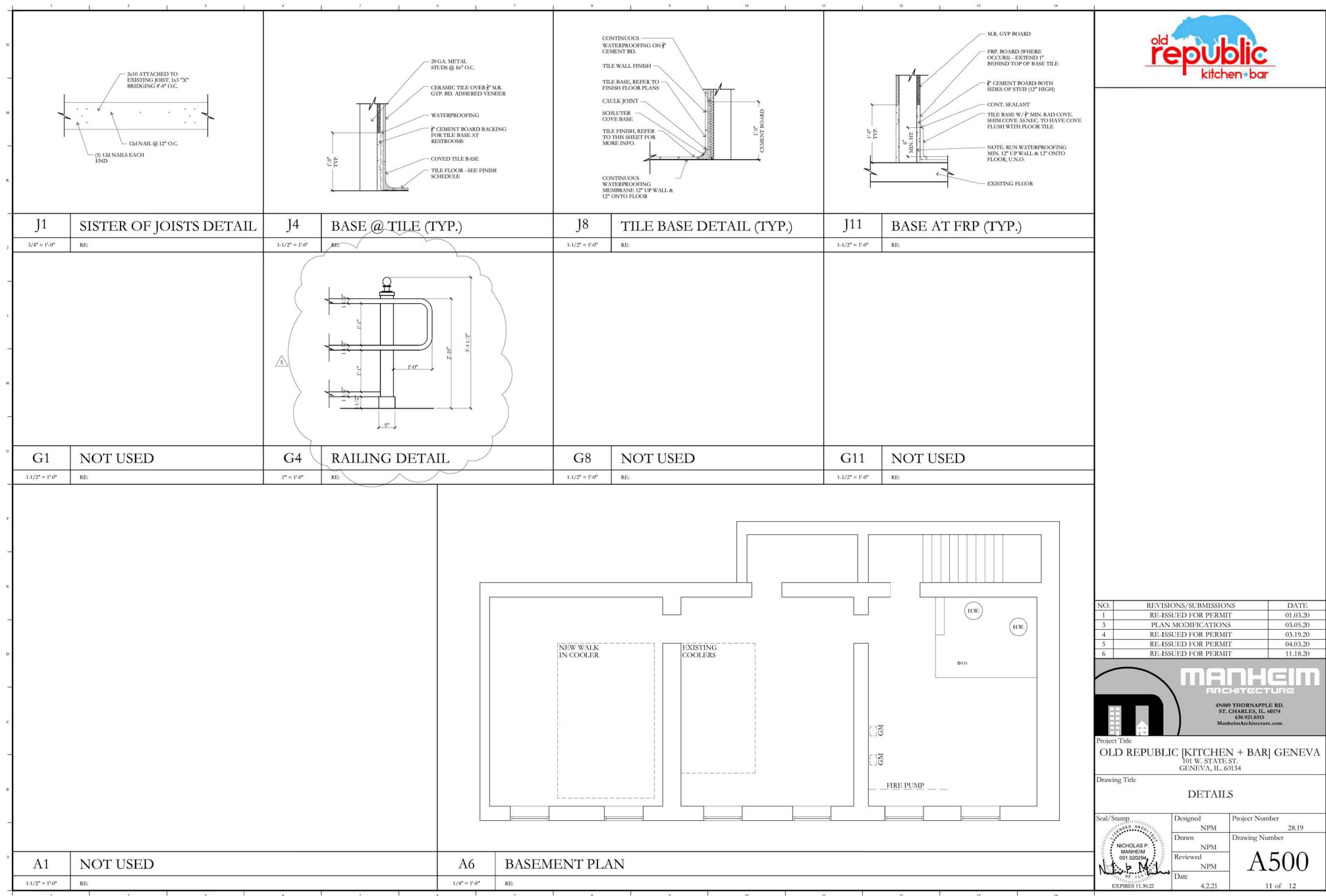
SOUTH ELEVATION

<div>Seal/Stamp</div> 	Designed	Project Number
	NPM	28.19
	Drawn	Drawing Number
	NPM	A101E
	Reviewed	
NPM	Date	5 of 13
EXPIRES 11.30.22	4.8.21	

APRIL 8, 2021 - HPC REVIEW

A1	SOUTH ELEVATION (DOORS AT 6'-10" CUSTOM HEIGHT)
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$$1/4^* = 1'.0^*$$



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1	RE-ISSUED FOR PERMIT	01.03.20
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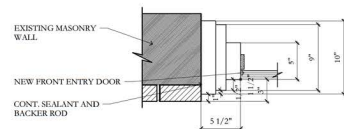
MANHEIM
ARCHITECTURE

4800 THORNAPPLE RD.
ST. CHARLES, IL 60174
630.921.0315
ManheimArchitecture.com

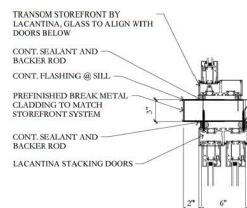
Project Title
OLD REPUBLIC [KITCHEN + BAR] GENEVA
101 W. STATE ST.
GENEVA, IL 60134

Drawing Title
DETAILS

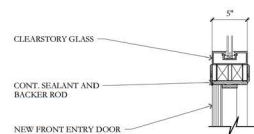
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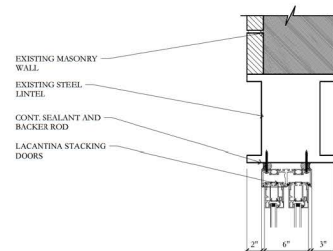
1 DOOR JAMB DETAIL
1 1/2" = 1'-0"



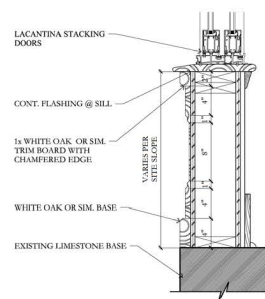
4 INTERMEDIATE DETAIL
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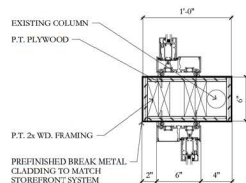
2 DOOR HEAD DETAIL
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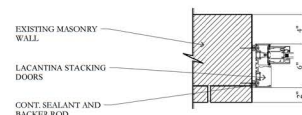
5 EXISTING LINETL DETAIL
1 1/2" = 1'-0"



7 LOW WALL DETAIL
1 1/2" = 1'-0"



3 DETAIL AT COLUMN BREAK
1 1/2" = 1'-0"



6 EXISTING WALL DETAIL
1 1/2" = 1'-0"

A1 FRONT ELEVATION SECTIONS

1/4" = 1'-0" RE: A1/A101

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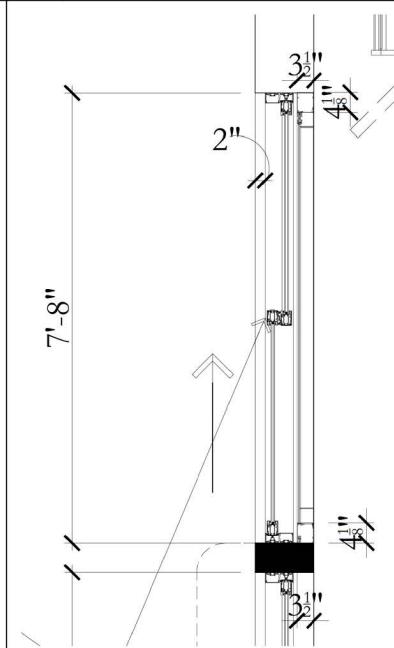
MANHEIM
ARCHITECTURE

4800 THORNAPPLE RD.
ST. CHARLES, IL. 60174
630.921.0315
ManheimArchitecture.com

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OLD REPUBLIC [KITCHEN + BAR] GENEVA
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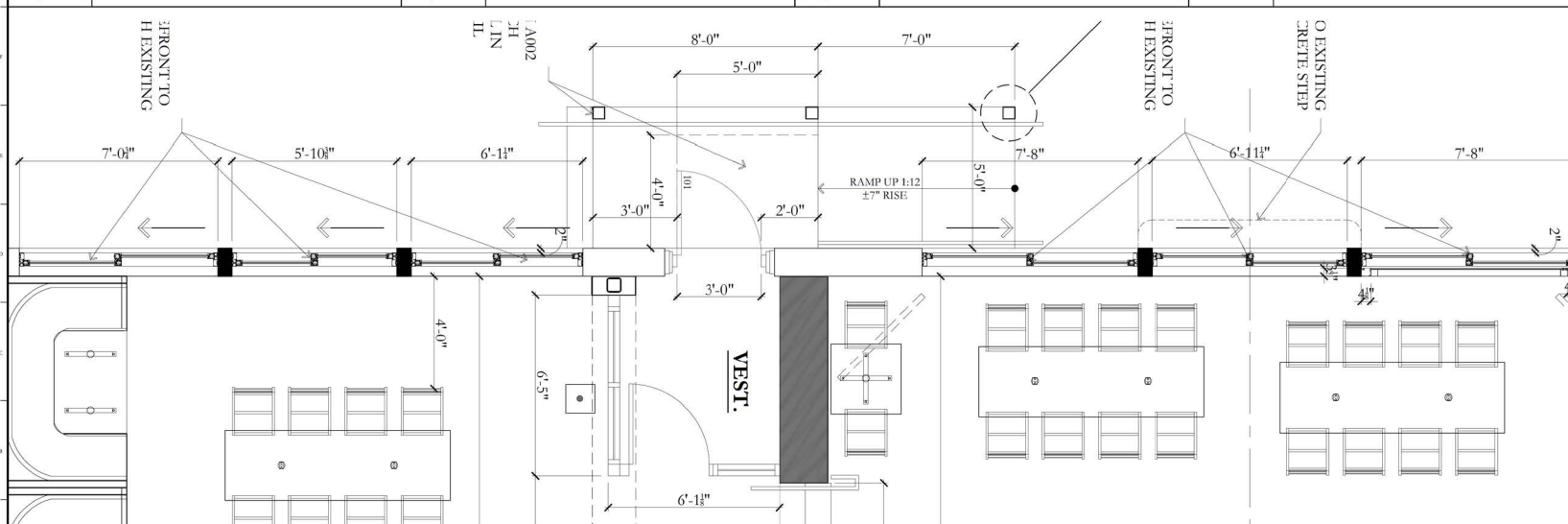
Drawing Title
DETAILS

Seal/Stamp 	Designed NPM	Project Number 28,19
Drawn NPM	Reviewed NPM	Drawing Number A501
Date 4.8.21		12 of 13



G1	NOT USED	G4	NOT USED	G8	NOT USED	G11	SLIDING DOOR W/ SCREEN
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1/1/2" = 1'-0" RE: 1/1/2" = 1'-0" 1/1/2" = 1'-0" 1" = 1'-0" RE:



A1 ENLARGED STOREFRONT PLAN

1/2" = 1'-0" RE:

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6	RE-ISSUED FOR PERMIT	11.18.20

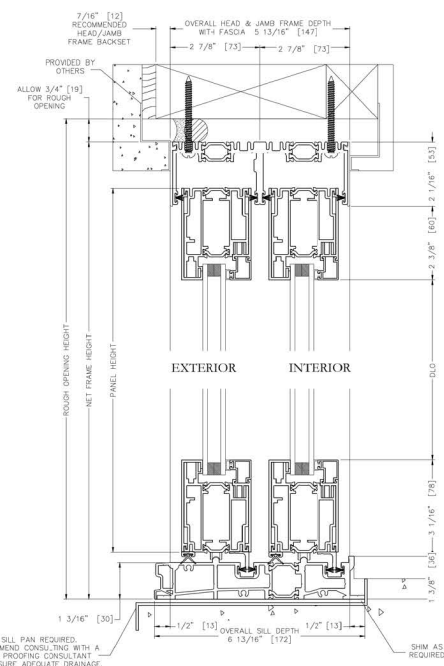
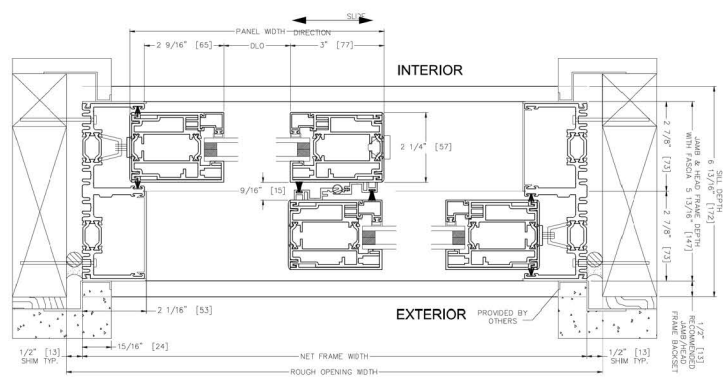
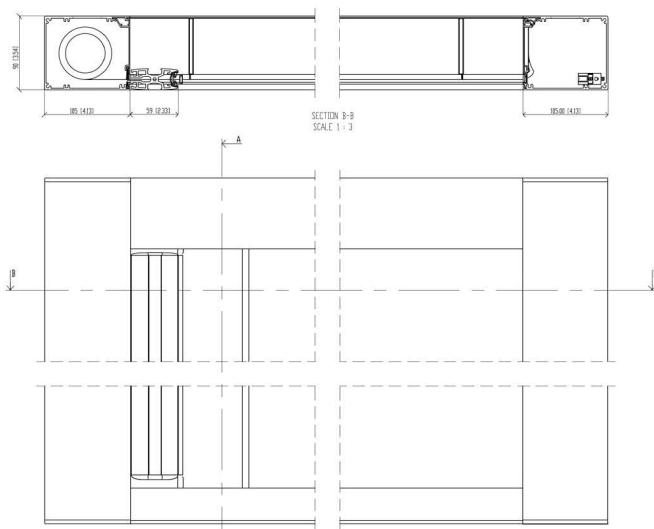


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Drawing Title
DETAILS

Scale/Stamp	Designed NPM	Project Number 28,19
	Drawn NPM	Drawing Number
	Reviewed NPM	A502
	Date 4.8.21	12 of 13

APRIL 8, 2021 - HPC REVIEW



NOTE: SILL PAN REQUIRED.
RECOMMEND CONSULTING WITH A
WATER PROOFING CONSULTANT
TO ENSURE ADEQUATE DRAINAGE.

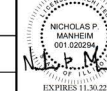
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Drawing Title
STACKING DOOR DETAILS

Scale/Stamp	Designed NPM	Project Number 28,19
	Drawn NPM	Drawing Number
	Reviewed NPM	A503
	Date 4.8.21	18 of 13



A1 LACANTINA STACKING DOORS W/ WEATHER RESISTANT SILL & CENTOR S4 SCREEN

1/4" (2") = 1'-0"
RE: A1/A101