

Preliminary Consultation
MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT

Address:	10500 & 10520 St. Paul St., Kensington	Meeting Date:	10/10/18
Resource:	Primary Resources Kensington Historic District	Report Date:	10/3/18
Applicant:	McCaffery Interests	Public Notice:	9/26/18
Review:	Preliminary Consultation	Staff:	Rebecca Ballo
Proposal:	Partial demolition, rehabilitation, new construction, and site work.		

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

SIGNIFICANCE: Primary Resources to the Kensington Historic District
STYLE: Folk Victorian & Commercial.
DATE: c. 1930

The property evaluated for this *Preliminary Consultation* consists of two historic buildings that have been combined to operate as a single business. Both structures are categorized as Primary Resources in the Kensington Historic District.

The southernmost building (10500 St. Paul Street) is a Folk Victorian commercial structure, with a steeply pitched front gable roof, clapboard siding, three bays wide, with a full-width hipped front porch, and a small window in the front gable end. This building is located at the intersection of St. Paul Street and the adjacent railroad tracks.

The second historic structure (10520 St. Paul Street), located to the north of the first building, is an early 20th-century roadside commercial building, oriented for its high visibility at the corner of St. Paul Street and Metropolitan Avenue. The Metropolitan Avenue façade has a side gable roof and with the principal entrance to the left, and a large divided lite storefront window. The St. Paul Street façade has a divided lite storefront window to the right, with a pair of casement windows an entrance door, and a vehicle door to the left. This structure dates to the mid-1930s, though an earlier commercial structure was in this location by 1924 per Sanborn maps. That structure was connected to the property at 10500 via a breezeway and weigh station that largely conforms to the footprint of the existing connector. The earlier building was demolished by 1936 when the existing gas station appears on the Sanborn maps.

By 1924, the two buildings were combined with a connecting addition that allow them to operate and function as a single building. The connectors are frame construction with clapboard siding. Both buildings also have later additions to the rear; these additions are located within the historic district, but are not considered to contribute to the historical or architectural character of these buildings or the larger district. The remained of the site functions as an industrial storage yard. An historic gas station sign remains on the site adjacent to the Metropolitan Avenue frontage. This sign is a contributing element to the historic district; it is the only such site element or hardscape element that should also be considered for retention, in addition to the historic structures on site.

BACKGROUND

The applicant proposes to rehabilitate the two historic buildings, construct a five-story senior housing complex to the rear of the two historic buildings, and create a new connection between the historic buildings and to the adjacent new construction. New site work, curb cuts, and other improvements are also proposed.

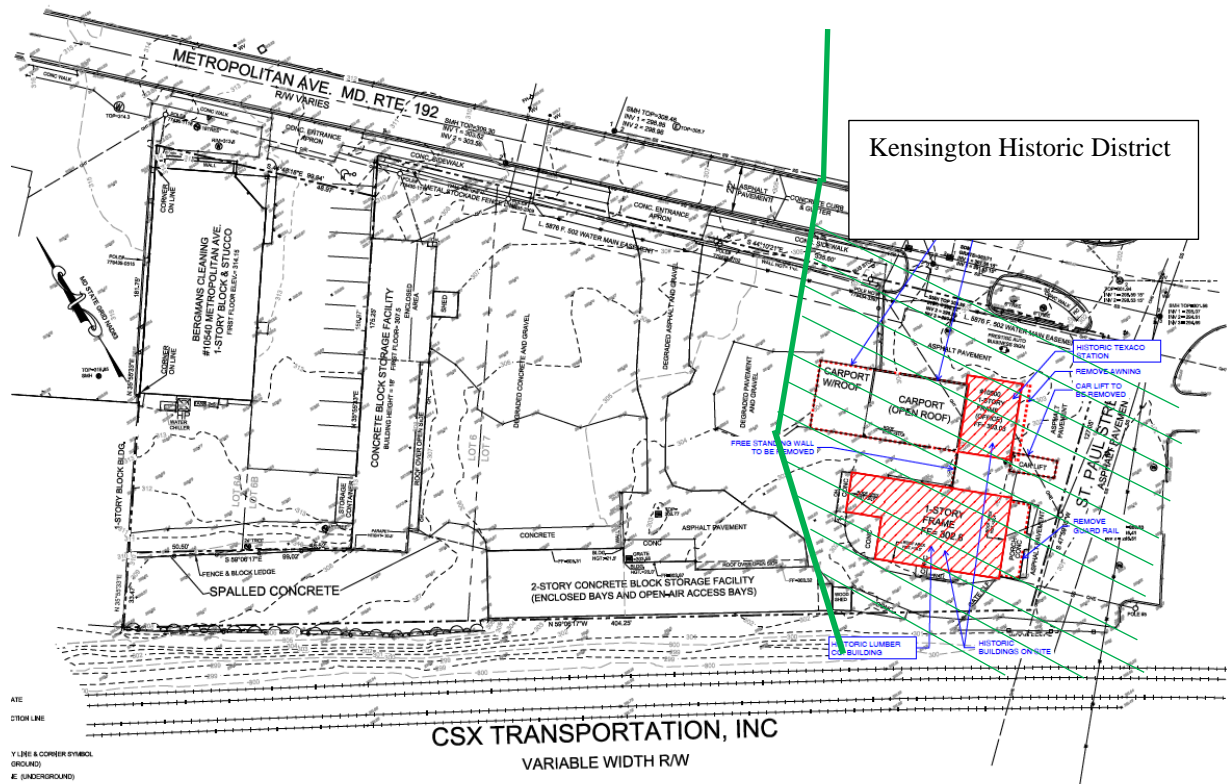


Figure 1: The proposed building site. The portion of the lot to the right of the green line is within the Kensington Historic District.

This case was previously heard as a Preliminary Consultation at the March 14, 2018 HPC meeting. The feedback from the HPC at that time included concerns about the massing and design of the new construction, questions and concerns regarding the proposed rehab of the historic buildings, and other issues. The Commissioners present were unanimous in their concerns regarding the scale and height of the proposed glass connector linking the historic properties to the new building proposed on the adjacent parcel. Commissioners’ recommendations in the hearing record include lowering the height of the connector and shifting it south on the site to connect only to the historic structure to the south while allowing the historic structure to the north to be free standing. Commissioners felt that connecting both structures to the new building overwhelmed the historic resources to a degree that threatened their continued significance as important interpretations of Kensington’s past. The Commission also agreed that the connector as it extends between the historic structures covers too many of the original window openings.

Commissioners were also concerned about the degree to which the proposed development impacted the environmental setting of the resources. Most notable of the concerns expressed focused on the entrance driveway and how it is currently proposed to cross onto the historic site and be the exit for vehicles from the entrance to the new building. Commissioners felt that the hardscape and landscape features proposed for the historic properties should be dedicated to the future uses of the renovated historic structures and not to the functional needs of the entrance to the new adjacent building.

The HPC offered several ideas for the new building design to be modified to be a better neighbor to the historic structures in order to reduce the “looming” feel of the current design upon the one-story historic resources. These ideas included moving the main entrance further way from the historic properties along Metropolitan Avenue to reduce the impact the entrance has being placed adjacent to the properties; reducing the scale and height of the proposed building at the property line shared with the historic properties, then stepping up towards the westerly direction of the site; and reducing the height of the building at its entrance as this is seen unnecessary way to convey the location of the entrance given the context of Metropolitan Avenue.

These concerns were shared with the Planning Board as part of the public testimony for the Sketch Plan hearing on April 5, 2018. The Planning Board directed the applicant to continue to work the HPC to resolve these issues concerning historic compatibility and site design prior to subsequent Planning Board hearings on the Preliminary Plan and Site Plan.

In July 2018 the applicant submitted their Preliminary Plan and Site Plan applications to the Planning Department. Those revised plans were presented for Preliminary Consultation at the September 5, 2018 HPC meeting. The applicant presented substantially revised drawings for the proposed elevations and site plan. The HPC feedback at that meeting noted that the plan was substantially improved, but additional work was required. The HPC supported the direction of the new architecture of the adjacent building, specifically pulling back the corner within the historic district so that the upper floors were substantially setback from the three-story base. HPC members asked that this brick treatment for the corner be “wrapped” around the entirety of the elevation located partially within the historic district and around to the south. HPC asked for additional elevations and renderings from all four elevations, information about the proposed sound wall, information about how many windows and other historic elements from the existing buildings would be preserved, additional information about the material treatment of the hyphen, and information about proposed new signs and retention of the historic gas station sign.

The applicant has returned with revised drawings for this Preliminary Consultation.

APPLICABLE GUIDELINES

Kensington Historic District Guidelines

When reviewing alterations and new construction within the Kensington Historic District several documents are to be utilized as guidelines to assist the Commission in developing their decision. These documents include the *Approved & Adopted Amendment to the Master Plan for Historic Preservation: Kensington Historic District, Atlas #31/6 (Amendment)*, *Vision of Kensington: A Long-Range Preservation Plan (Vision)*, *Montgomery County Code Chapter 24A (Chapter 24A)*, and the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation (Standards)*. The pertinent information in these documents is outlined below.

Vision of Kensington: A Long-Range Preservation Plan

The HPC formally adopted the planning study, *Vision of Kensington: A Long-Range Preservation Plan*, and is directed by the Executive Regulations, which were approved by the County Council, to use this

plan when considering changes and alterations to the Kensington Historic District. The goal of this preservation plan "was to establish a sound database of information from, which to produce a document that would serve the HPC, M-NCPPC, their staff and the community in wrestling with the protection of historic districts amidst the pressures of life in the 21st century." (page 1). The plan provides a specific physical description of the district as it is; an analysis of character-defining features of the district; a discussion of the challenges facing the district; and a discussion of proposed strategies for maintaining the character of the district while allowing for appropriate growth and change.

The *Vision* identifies the following, as those features that help define the character of Kensington's built environment:

- Building Setbacks: Residential and Commercial Patterns
- Rhythm of Spacing between Buildings
- Geographic and Landscape Features
- Scale and Building Height
- Directional Expression of Building
- Roof Forms and Material
- Porches
- Dominant Building Material
- Outbuildings
- Integrity of Form, Building Condition, and Threats
- Architectural Style

The *Amendment* notes that:

The district is architecturally significant as a collection of late 19th and early 20th century houses exhibit a variety of architectural styles popular during the Victorian period including Queen Anne, Shingle, Eastlake, and Colonial Revival. The houses share a uniformity of scale, setbacks, and construction materials that contribute to the cohesiveness of the district's streetscapes. This uniformity, coupled with the dominant design inherent in Warner's original plan of subdivision, conveys a strong sense of both time and place, that of a Victorian garden suburb.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation:

2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, space and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.

6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.

9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportions, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

STAFF DISCUSSION

The applicant is proposed to demolish the non-historic additions to the rear, rehabilitate the two subject buildings, create a new interior connection, and integrate them with the larger proposed five-story senior housing facility.

Demolition of Non-Historic Additions

Staff finds the proposal to remove the non-historic additions should be approved when this proposal is at the Historic Area Work Permit (HAWP) stage. They do not contribute to the historic character of the buildings or surrounding district.

Building Rehabilitation/Gas Station Sign

The applicant proposes to utilize the two historic buildings as part of the new development. Staff finds that the work the applicant is proposing for the two historic buildings focuses on the repair and retention of the historic fabric (i.e. retention of windows and doors, clapboard replacement as needed). Where features are too deteriorated to be repaired, the applicant proposes to replace them in-kind. As plans are refined, detailed elevation drawings that note specific items that will be repaired or replaced will be required for the final HAWP.

Additional information regarding the retention, rehabilitation, and reuse of the historic gas station sign are pending further refinement of the overall plan for redevelopment and will be addressed at a later time with the final HAWP.

New Hyphen/Connector

After demolishing the non-historic additions, the applicant proposes new construction between the two historic buildings and the proposed new construction. This connector piece has been greatly reduced in size from the last iteration. In particular, the connection to 10520 St. Paul Street has been almost entirely removed and reduced so that it consists of a small hyphen that will connect to 10520 St. Paul Street to the south in much the same way that the existing hyphen does. The entire connector has been set back considerably from Metropolitan Avenue, creating a larger hardscape/courtyard area that allows for an enhanced pedestrian setting and plaza within the environmental setting. The connector has also been set back further from St. Paul Street.

Sitework

The applicant proposes to construct a five-story senior housing building to the rear of the historic buildings. The applicant has provided renderings of this proposed new construction to the HPC. Based on direction from HP and Planning Department staff, the applicant has chosen to redesign the portion of the building located within and adjacent to the historic district. The new design takes cues from the industrial related history of Kensington as a turn-of-the-century, Victorian railroad suburb. The new design reduces the massing at the corner within the historic district, and has largely reconfigured the fenestration patterns and material palette to better reflect a traditional design vocabulary that does not overwhelm the historic buildings, but that can also be a bridge to the new construction that will span the remainder of the block.

The HPC should provide feedback regarding the design and its impact on the surrounding district. In particular, feedback from the HPC as to whether these design changes and changes to the site plan have been responsive to the comments given in March and April to the applicant and Planning Board, in addition to being responsive to HPC comments from September.

The applicant has chosen a material palette that consists of traditional masonry elements (brick, metal, precast concrete), mixed with modern materials (rainscreen metal panels, veneers). The design has been modified so that these modern materials, save for the large panes of glass in the hyphen, are located

outside of the historic district boundaries.

The application has been revised to remove the sound wall from the historic district boundaries. This element does not require further review by the HPC.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff finds that the design and site changes have greatly improved the proposal since the last Preliminary Consultation in March and again in September. Reducing the footprint and location of the connector, removing and reducing the new building massing at the corner within the environmental setting, revising and enhancing the courtyard, removing the sound wall, and choosing a more traditional material palette that fundamentally relates to the history and architectural tradition of Kensington are all notable improvements. The applicant responded to previous comments by continuing the red brick palette around the entire east and southern portions of the building that are both in and adjacent to the historic district. The use of a traditional fenestration pattern, with punched openings and “blinds” in selected locations enable these elevations to be complementary to the character of the adjacent buildings and district. Staff finds that the continuation of this architectural treatment successfully mitigate previous concerns regarding massing, size, and design. Additionally, the applicant has articulated the corners of the historic buildings, including the southwest corner of 10500. The applicant has retained all of the historic roof forms and projections on both buildings.

The material treatment of the hyphen that connects the historic buildings with the new construction varies according to the elevation. On the rear, the hyphen is sheathed in siding that appears to match the material (wood) and profile of the adjacent historic building. This elevation also appears to contain traditional double-hung windows. The north side of the hyphen is clad in brick, with larger panes of glass and metal trim. This is an appropriate treatment as the hyphen serves as both a physical and design connector between the historic buildings and the new construction.

Smaller changes in the courtyard, including shifting planter boxes, and installing decorative pavers throughout also serve to connect the historic buildings and new construction so that the entire project compatibly fits within the historic district.

Additional information about the specifics of building rehabilitation are pending the next preliminary consultation.

Staff recommends that applicant revise their design based on the feedback provided by the HPC and return for one additional preliminary consultation prior to the Planning Board hearing.

Preliminary Design Consultation with Historic Preservation Committee #3



Solera Reserve **Kensington**

Antunovich Associates ©

Proposed Design - From Metropolitan Ave

SEPTEMBER 21, 2018



Solera Reserve **Kensington**

Proposed Design - From Intersection of St. Paul St & Metropolitan Ave



Solera Reserve **Kensington**

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Proposed Design - From NE Corner w/ Historic Structure

SEPTEMBER 21, 2018



Solera Reserve **Kensington**

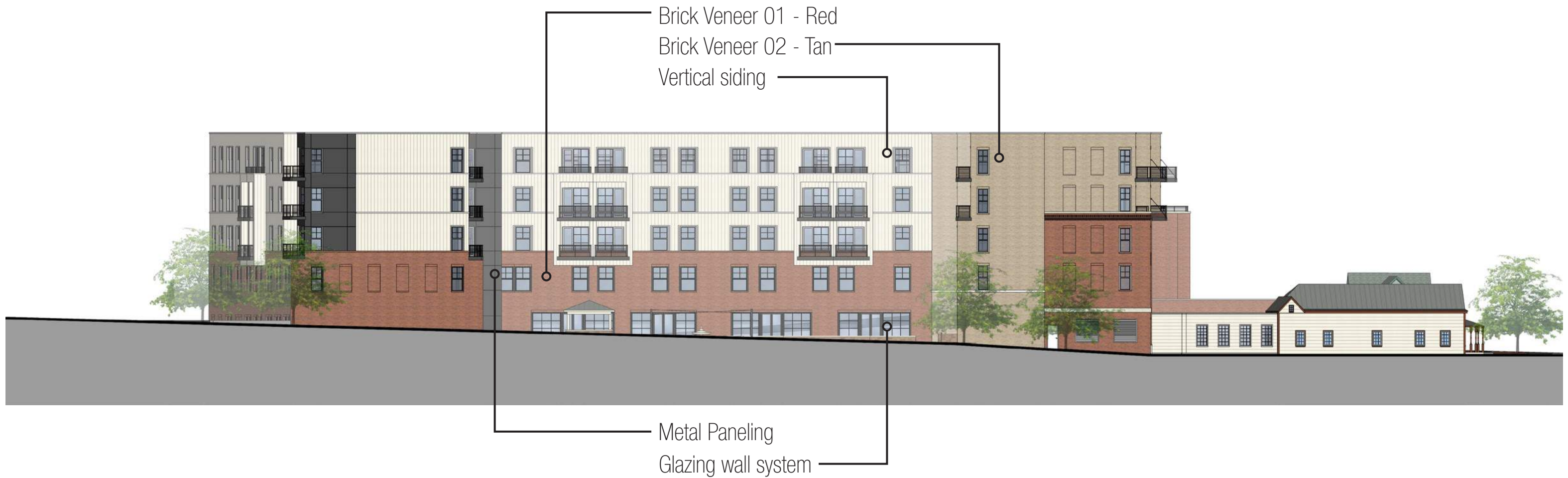
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View of The Connector/Hyphen: From Metropolitan Ave

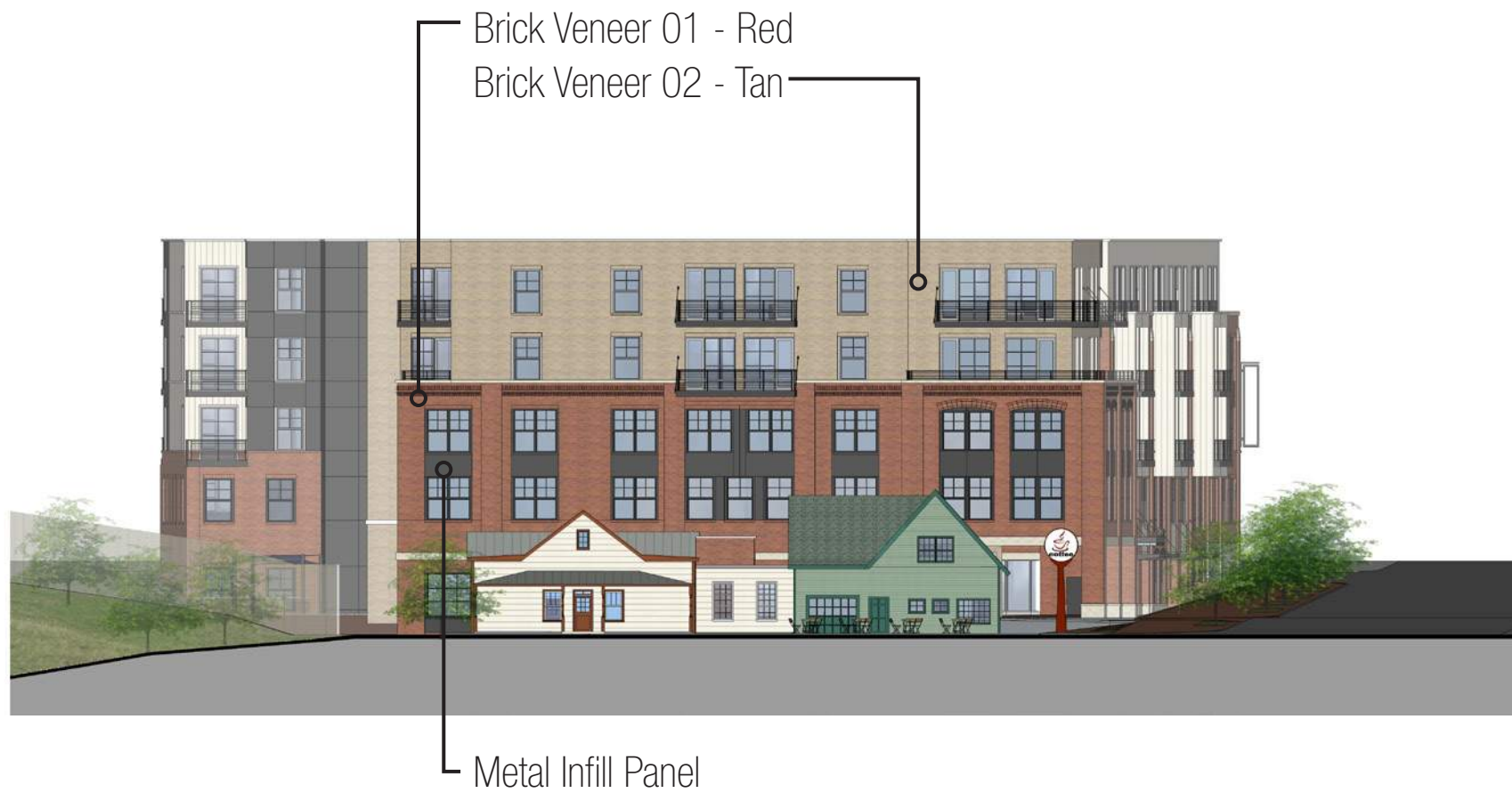
SEPTEMBER 21, 2018



Solera Reserve **Kensington**



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Solera Reserve **Kensington**



Solera Reserve **Kensington**



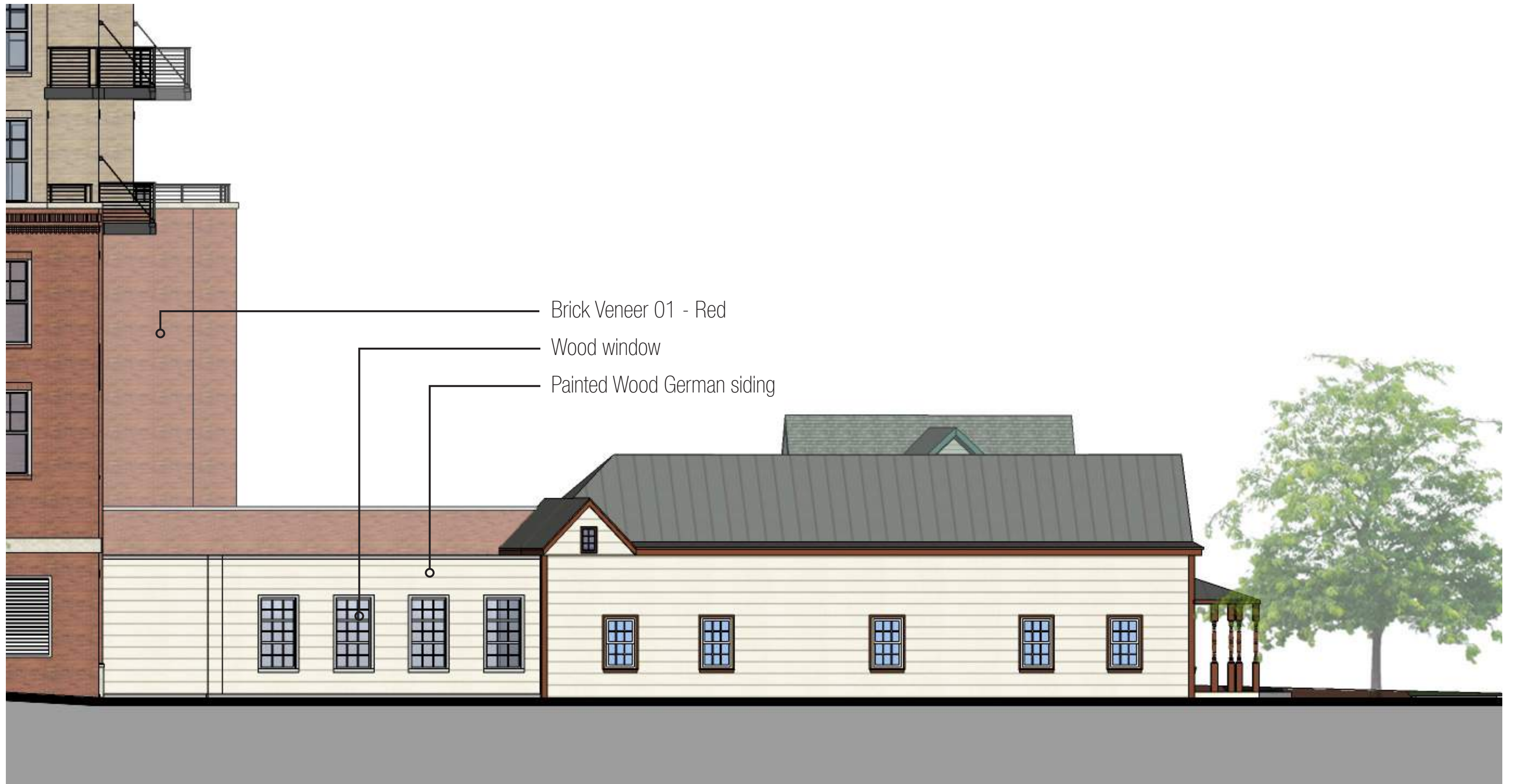
Brick Veneer 01 - Red

Wood window

Painted Wood German siding

Solera Reserve **Kensington**

Enlarged Elevation - Along St. Paul Street



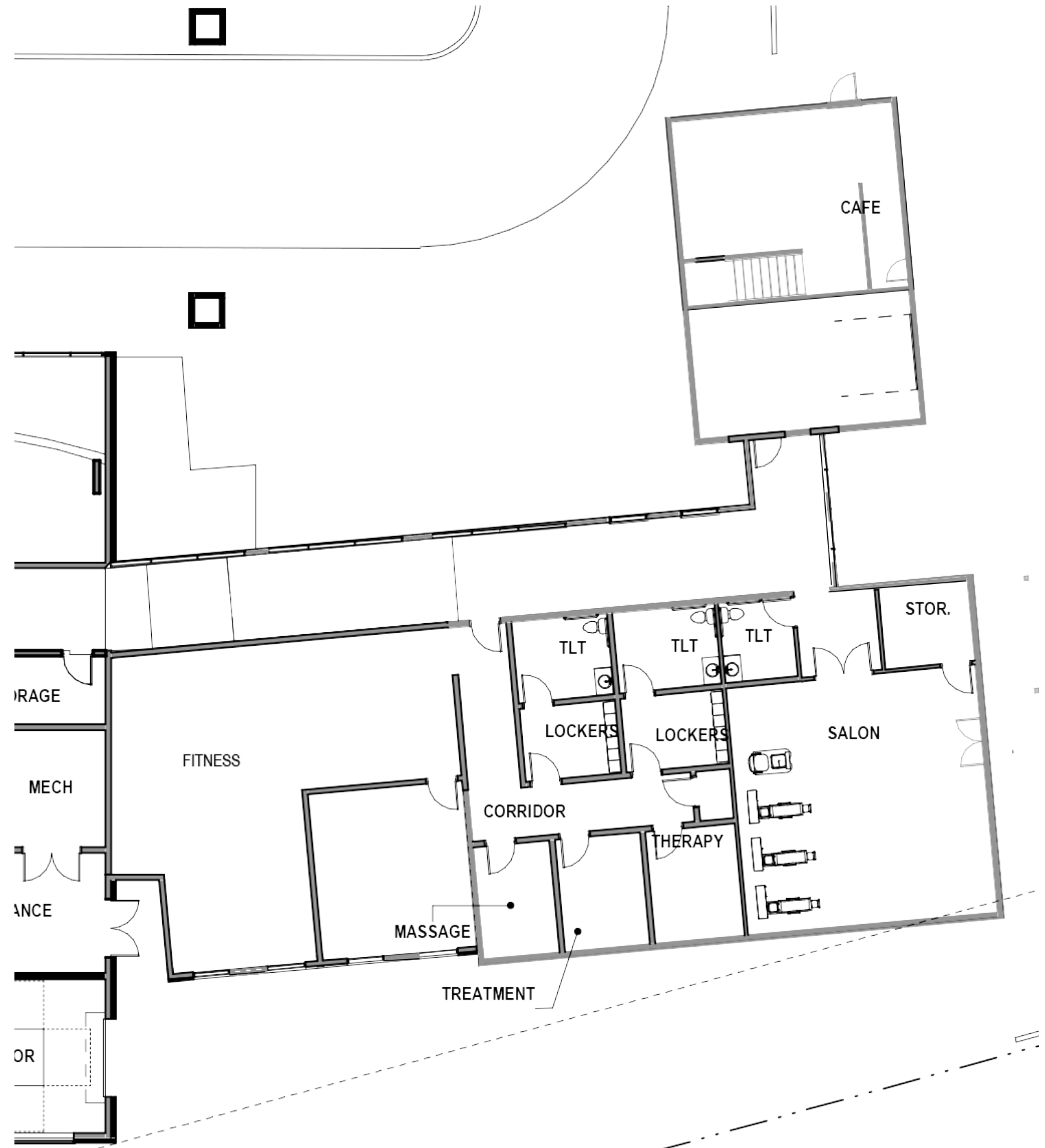
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Previous Plan



Current Plan

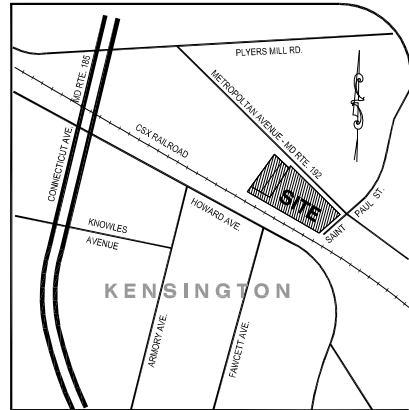
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Brick Veneer 01 - Red

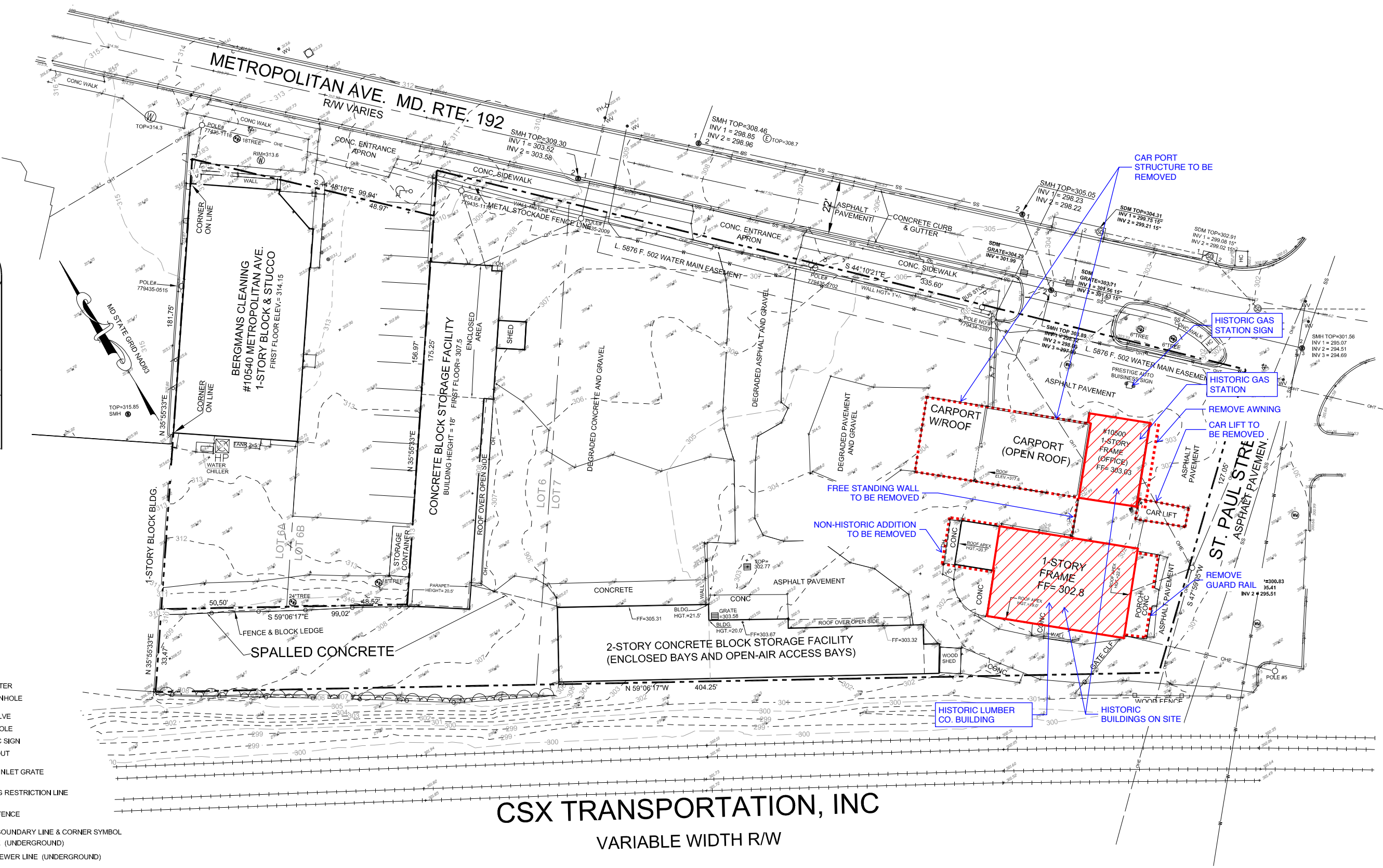


Brick Veneer 02 - Tan

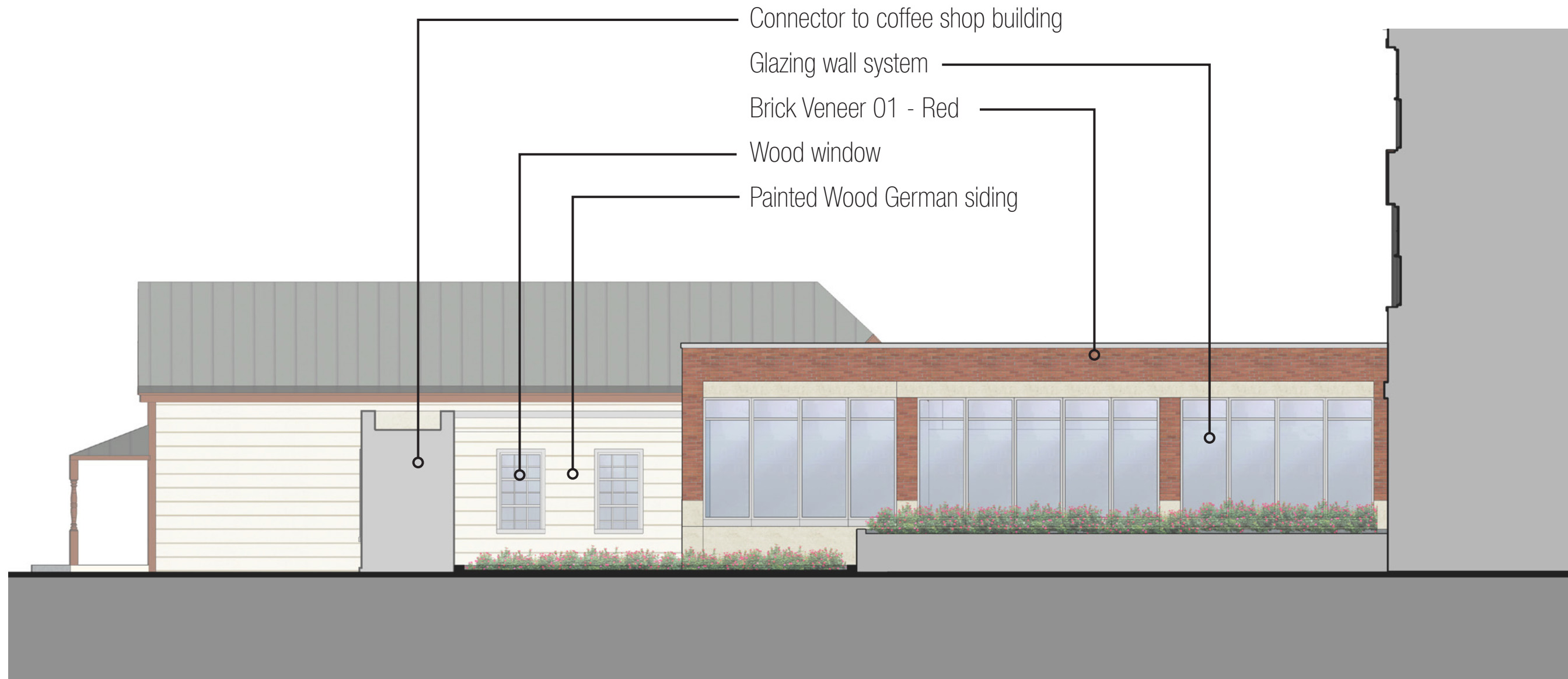


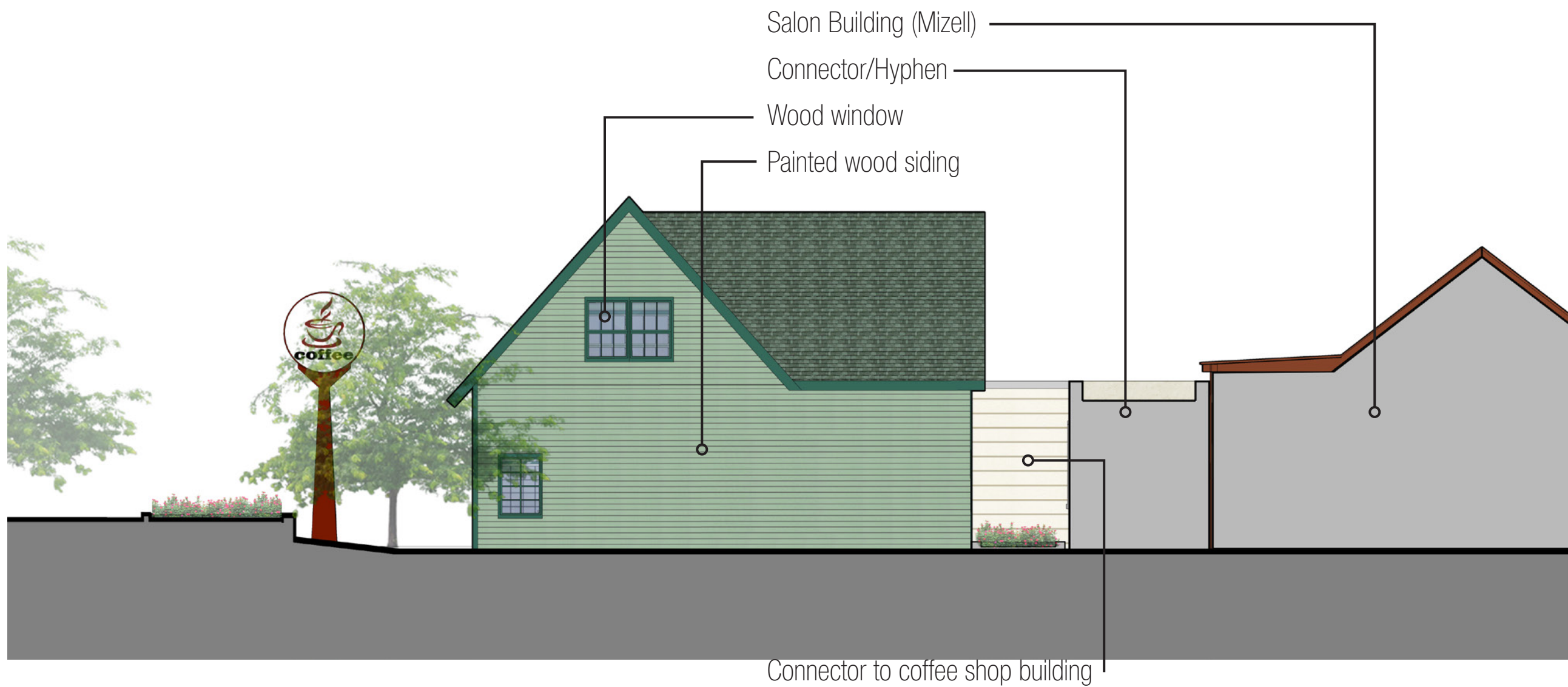
LEGEND OF SYMBOLS & ABBREVIATIONS

- OH. ROOF / BUILDING OVERHANG
- PROPERTY CORNER SYMBOL
- GMP GAS MARKER POST
- FHH COMMUNICATIONS HANDHOLE
- ⊗ WV WATER VALVE
- WM WATER METER
- W WATER MANHOLE
- ⊙ FIRE HYDRANT
- IRV IRRIGATION CONTROL
- ☐ TELEPHONE JUNCTION BOX
- ⊕ STORM DRAIN MANHOLE
- ⊕ POWER POLE
- ⊕ GUY WIRE
- ⊕ ELECTRIC MANHOLE
- ⊕ ELECTRIC TRANSFORMER
- ⊕ SANITARY MANHOLE
- ⊕ TELEPHONE MANHOLE OR PEDESTAL
- ⊕ BOLLARD
- ⊕ GAS METER
- ⊕ GAS MANHOLE
- ⊕ GAS VALVE
- ⊕ LIGHT POLE
- ⊕ TRAFFIC SIGN
- ⊕ CLEANOUT
- ⊕ STORM INLET GRATE
- BRL BUILDING RESTRICTION LINE
- CHAIN LINK FENCE
- SURVEYED BOUNDARY LINE & CORNER SYMBOL
- W WATER LINE (UNDERGROUND)
- SS SANITARY SEWER LINE (UNDERGROUND)
- OHC OVERHEAD POWER LINE
- OHT OVERHEAD TELEPHONE WIRES
- SD STORM DRAIN LINE (UNDERGROUND)



CSX TRANSPORTATION, INC
VARIABLE WIDTH R/W





Solera Reserve **Kensington**

Enlarged Elevation - Public courtyard South - Coffeeshop