

*2<sup>nd</sup> Preliminary Consultation*  
**MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**  
**STAFF REPORT**

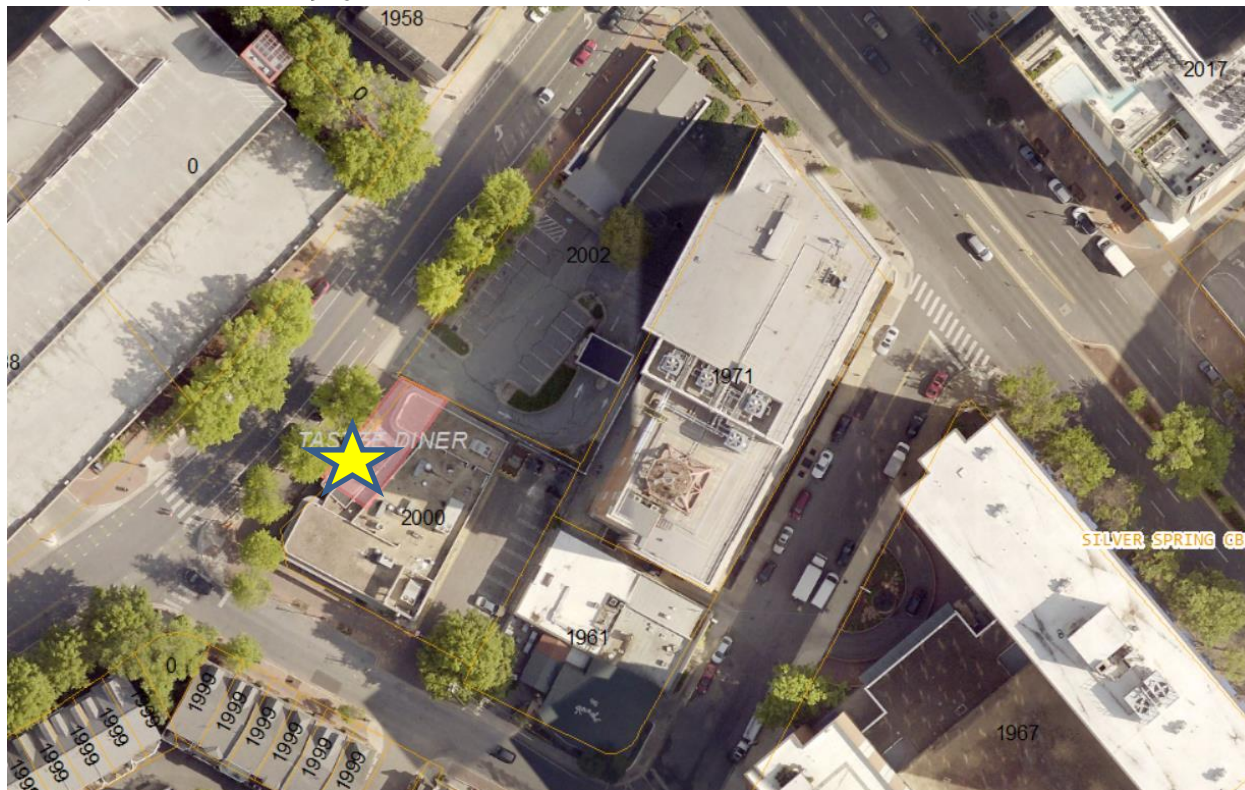
<b>Address:</b>	8601 Cameron St., Silver Spring	<b>Meeting Date:</b>	10/25/2023
<b>Resource:</b>	Individually Listed Master Plan Site (Tastee Diner #36/13)	<b>Report Date:</b>	10/18/2023
<b>Applicant:</b>	8676 Georgia Ave., LLC Stacy Silber, Agent	<b>Public Notice:</b>	10/11/2023
<b>Review:</b>	Preliminary Consultation	<b>Staff:</b>	Dan Bruechert
<b>Proposal:</b>	New Construction and Building Relocation		

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends the applicant make any revisions recommended by the HPC and return for a 3<sup>rd</sup> Preliminary Consultation.

**ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION**

**SIGNIFICANCE:** Individually Listed Master Plan Site #36/13, Tastee Diner  
**STYLE:** Art Moderne  
**DATE:** 1946



*Figure 1: The Tastee Dinner’s environmental setting comprises the four walls of the original diner building. It is located on the east side of Cameron Street in downtown Silver Spring.*

From *Places from the Past*:

“The Silver Spring Tastee Diner is an important example of the machine-expressive Art Moderne style and is one of the few historic diners left in the State of Maryland. The structure is a classic example of vernacular commercial architecture based on the form and styling of sleek, modern railroad cars. The exterior surface of porcelain enamel has rounded corners trimmed with curved bands of stainless steel wrapping around the diner’s streamline form. A continuous band of ribbon windows flows across the front and sides. Jerry O’Mahoney, Inc. constructed the diner at its Elizabeth, N.J. factory and shipped it to Silver Spring in two sections. In 2000, the diner was moved from its original site at the northwest corner of Georgia and Wayne Avenues to its present location. The Tastee Diner is the only historic diner in the county exhibiting its original railroad car design, and is one of only a dozen pre-1960 diners known to exist in Maryland.”

## **BACKGROUND**

The HPC heard a Preliminary Consultation on the proposal to relocate and develop the site of the Tastee Diner at the August 16, 2023 HPC meeting.<sup>1</sup> The Preliminary Consultation focused on three issues:

1. Is it appropriate to demolish the non-historic building additions?
2. Is relocating the diner building consistent with the required guidance?
3. Is the diner building appropriately integrated into the new building?

The HPC unanimously supported #1 and #2, but was split as to the appropriateness of the diner’s new location and orientation. The applicant has revised the design and returns for a second Preliminary Consultation.

## **PROPOSAL**

The applicant proposes to demolish the non-historic building additions; relocate the diner building; and construct a multi-use high-rise while incorporating the diner building into the ground floor.

## **APPLICABLE GUIDELINES**

Proposed alterations to individual Master Plan Sites are reviewed under Montgomery County Code Chapter 24A (Chapter 24A) and the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation*. Rehabilitation is defined as the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features, which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values. In addition, there is specific Master Plan guidance for this building as well as a binding preservation easement with Montgomery County. The text of the easement is included as an attachment to the report.

From the Amendment to the Master Plan for Historic Preservation creating the Tastee Diner Individual Master Plan Site:

- The Tastee Diner was transported to and assembled on its current site in 1946, and is a very good example of an early 20<sup>th</sup> century diner.
- The diner building (excluding concrete block appendage, which was added later) features an exterior surface of porcelain enamel with wraparound bands of trim on the front section, and stainless steel detailing.
- Diners are a classic vernacular commercial building form, and are representative of the types of

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<sup>1</sup> The Staff Report for the August 2023 Preliminary Consultation is available here:

<https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/II.A-8601-Cameron-Street-Silver-Spring.pdf>. The recording of the hearing is available here: [https://mncppc.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?publish\\_id=b388082e-3d03-11ee-9e9a-0050569183fa](https://mncppc.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?publish_id=b388082e-3d03-11ee-9e9a-0050569183fa).

“roadside” architecture which sprang up in the United States in the 1930s and 1940s, as a direct result of the increasingly mobile, car-oriented society of the period.

- The diner building itself is an established visual feature which merits preservation even though the concrete block appendage attached to it is of no visual or historic significance. The concrete block appendage is not included in the designation.
- The diner is located on a portion of the property intended for redevelopment as a part of the Silver Spring Urban Renewal project. Since the diner building is a transportable, roadside structure by design and intent, it would consistent with its historic designation for the diner building to be relocated to another suitable site in the Silver Spring CBD, which is central and accessible, with adequate parking and visibility.

***Montgomery County Code; Chapter 24A-8***

- (a) The commission shall instruct the director to deny a permit if it finds, based on the evidence and information presented to or before the commission that the alteration for which the permit is sought would be inappropriate, inconsistent with or detrimental to the preservation, enhancement or ultimate protection of the historic site or historic resource within an historic district, and to the purposes of this chapter.
- (b) The commission shall instruct the director to issue a permit, or issue a permit subject to such conditions as are found to be necessary to ensure conformity with the purposes and requirements of this chapter, if it finds that:
  - (1) The proposal will not substantially alter the exterior features of an historic site or historic resource within an historic district; or
  - (2) The proposal is compatible in character and nature with the historical, archeological, architectural or cultural features of the historic site or the historic district in which an historic resource is located and would not be detrimental thereto or to the achievement of the purposes of this chapter; or
  - (3) The proposal would enhance or aid in the protection, preservation and public or private utilization of the historic site or historic resource located within an historic district in a manner compatible with the historical, archeological, architectural or cultural value of the historic site or historic district in which an historic resource is located; or
  - (4) The proposal is necessary in order that unsafe conditions or health hazards be remedied; or
  - (5) The proposal is necessary in order that the owner of the subject property not be deprived of reasonable use of the property or suffer undue hardship; or
  - (6) In balancing the interests of the public in preserving the historic site or historic resource located within an historic district, with the interests of the public from the use and benefit of the alternative proposal, the general public welfare is better served by granting the permit.

***Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation***

2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
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**

Historically, the Tastee Diner was located at the corner of Georgia Ave. and Wayne Ave. When the diner was designated to the Master Plan for Historic Preservation, the environmental setting of the Master Plan site was limited to the four walls of the historic diner and did not include the later non-historic concrete block additions (see designation information, above). The Master Plan designation contemplated relocating the building “to a suitable location” as it was located in an area intended for redevelopment as part of the urban renewal project for Silver Spring. The diner building was relocated to its current location in 2000 when it was moved to accommodate the construction of the Discovery Channel building. The Tastee Diner’s owner entered into an easement agreement with the County in 2001 when the relocation was approved. The easement was limited to the “Dining Car” and specifically agreed to ensure the preservation of the “Dining Car Façade” as a historic resource.

The applicant proposes to relocate the dining car on site, rehabilitate it, and redevelop the site with a large residential tower along Cameron St. between Georgia Ave. and Ramsey Ave. Before proceeding to Sketch Plan review, the applicants need to finalize the location for the dining car before the Planning Board determination.<sup>2</sup>

The HPC was divided as to the appropriate placement for the diner building at the August 18, 2023 HPC meeting. Half of the Commission supported the proposed treatment and encouraged the applicant to think about ways to better integrate the design of the diner into the proposed construction. The other Commissioners supported a range of solutions including, moving the diner closer to Cameron St., reorienting the building towards the intersection of Cameron and Ramsey St., relocating it to front Georgia Ave., and restoring it as a free-standing building. The applicants have revised the design based on this feedback and have returned for a second Preliminary Consultation.

### **New Diner Location**

The applicant proposes moving the diner building approximately 45’ (forty-five feet) to the west to accommodate the proposed large construction on the site. The revised design retains the diner’s orientation toward Cameron St. The previous design pulled the diner against the façade of the proposed new building further from the sidewalk. The revised design maintains the diner’s presence along Cameron St. restores and expresses the southwest corner of the building. Because the HPC unanimously supported relocating the building, Staff will not spend any of this report further analyzing that issue.

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<sup>2</sup> A sketch plan is an illustrative plan or model that shows the maximum densities for residential and non-residential development, including building massing and height, locations of public use and other spaces, and the relationship to existing and proposed buildings and properties. A Sketch Plan is required for optional methods of development and is intended to provide circulation patterns and description of the public benefits proposed and incentive densities requested, as well as the phasing of the development and public benefits.

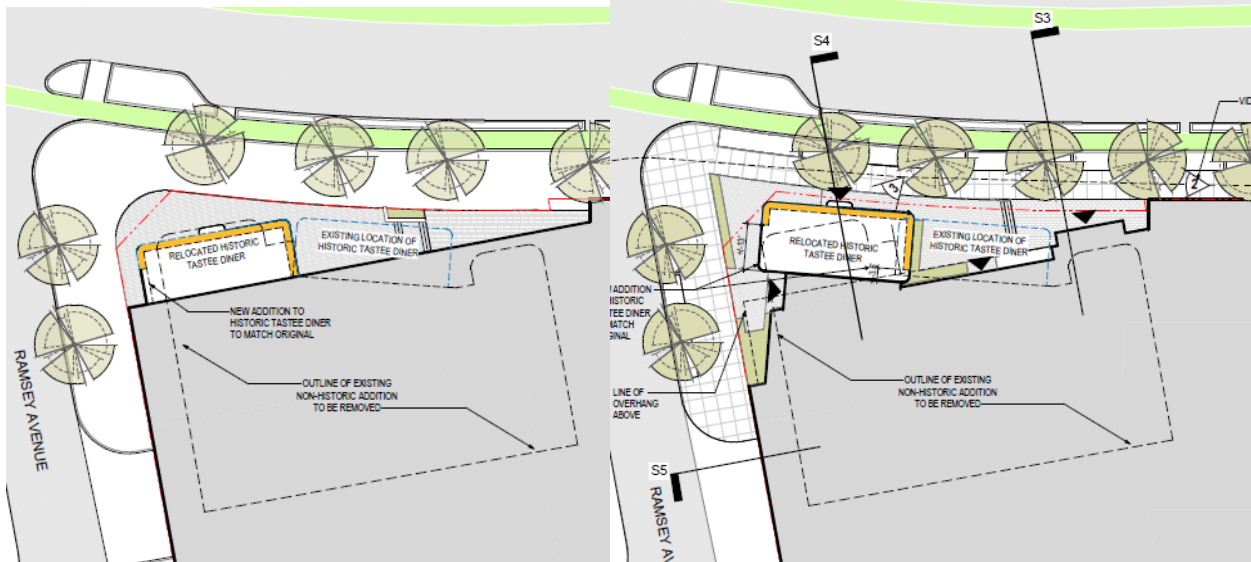


Figure 2: The first presentation (left) and the current proposal (right).

The new location will maintain the diner's current relationship with Cameron St. and will allow more of the building to be read as an independent structure from the right-of-way (see Figure 3 below). Additionally, by pulling the diner building away from the proposed building, the diner building is no longer under the planned overhang. While Staff found the previous design was appropriately integrated into the proposed building, several Commissioners did not. Staff finds the revised design allows the diner to better interact with Cameron St., closer to the building restriction line at the intersection of Cameron St. and Ramsey St.



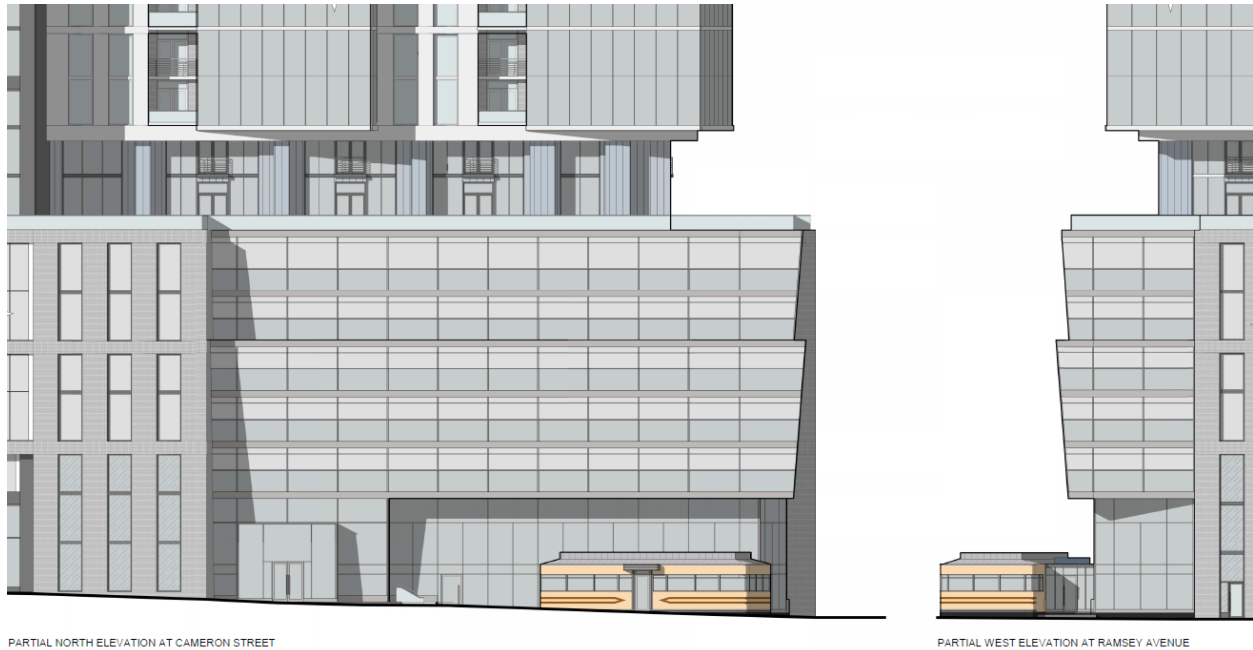
Figure 3: The original proposal (left) and the revised design (right).

### New Construction

The final issue for consideration at the Preliminary Consultation is the effectiveness of integrating the diner building into the proposed new construction. While the new building will be approximately 30 stories tall, this preliminary consultation is focused on the bottom six stories (the pedestal) near the intersection of Cameron St. and Ramsey Ave. This portion of the building will be used for resident parking. The applicant has been consulting with Staff on integrating the diner building into the new design and requests HPC feedback on the proposed design, materials, and integration of the historic diner building

The proposed design includes a 20' (twenty foot) tall glass atrium, inset from the floors above, connecting to the diner. The four floors above the atrium have a horizontal orientation with alternating bands of glazing and spandrel panels that match the color of the enamel panels on the historic diner building. The

applicant is also considering integrating horizontal lighting into this section of the proposed construction to reinforce the horizontal orientation of the historic diner building.



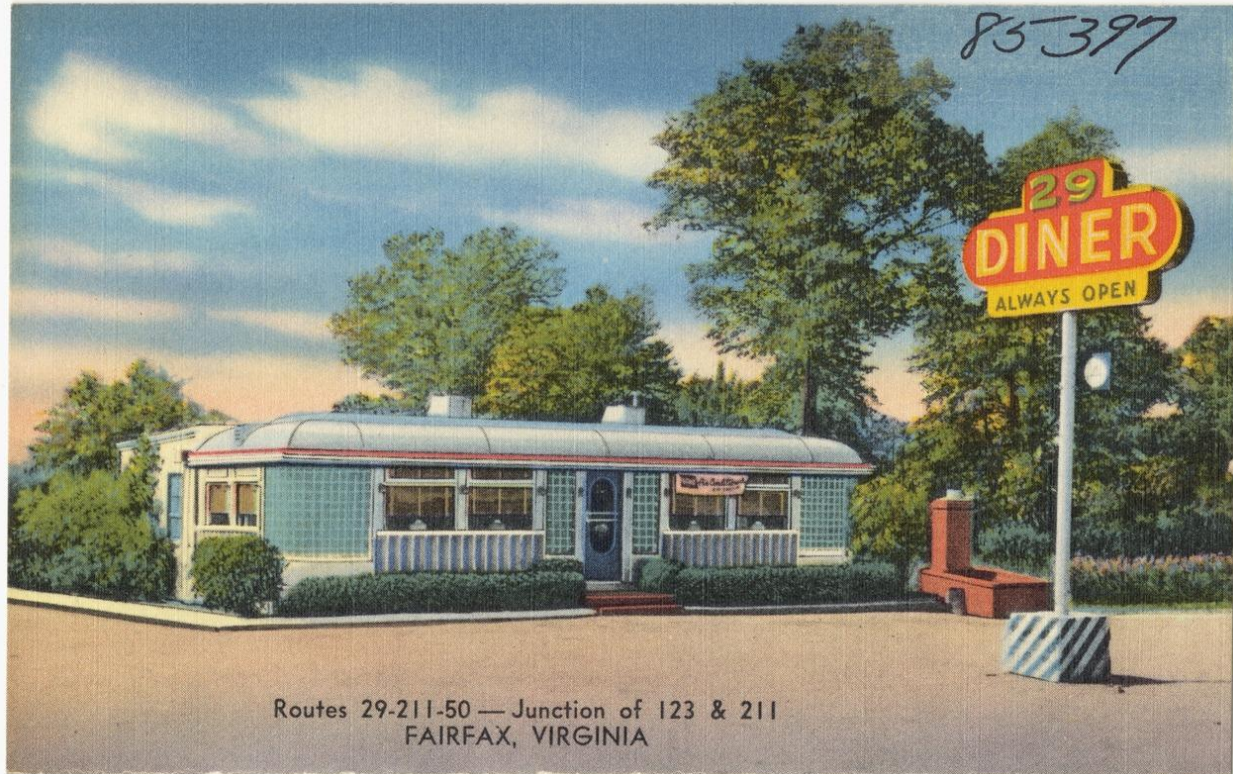
*Figure 4: Partial elevations of the proposed building as it relates to the relocated diner.*

Purely from a massing perspective, Staff finds the integration of the historic diner into the new construction is appropriate and the restored southwest corner of the diner car will allow for the building to read as a more independent structure. The proposed atrium space allows the diner to be viewed from three sides from the public right-of-way. Additionally, while Staff finds the horizontal orientation and banding of the floors above reinforce the characteristics of the diner building without trying to copy the Art Moderne design, there are other design and material approaches that could promote a successful design as well. The question at this stage is solely focused on the location of the diner car and general massing of the podium base. Feedback regarding the design and recommended materials for the pedestal should be reserved until the applicant moves into the next phase of design.



*Figure 5: Rendering from Ramsey St. looking towards Georgia Ave.*

In earlier discussions with the applicant, Staff asked about the potential to have the diner building operate independently of the proposed construction. The applicant stated that the diner could not operate economically due to a variety of reasons including ADA requirements, the additional cost of providing electrical/mechanical/water/sewer systems, and the diner building's modest size. The 29 Diner in Fairfax, which is believed to be constructed by the same manufacturer as Tastee, has had a concrete block addition since the 1940s as shown in this postcard from the 1940s. Staff does not find that the diner building can function as an independent structure.



*Figure 6: c.1940 postcard of the 29 Diner in Fairfax, Va.*

Staff requests HPC feedback on:

- The appropriateness of the proposed location for the diner building and
- Any other considerations (i.e. signage, access, etc).

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff Recommends the applicant make revisions to the design based on the feedback from the HPC and return for a 3rd Preliminary Consultation to discuss more detailed aspects of materials, site design and other considerations once the massing and building location are set.





**APPLICATION FOR  
HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT**  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
301.563.3400

FOR STAFF ONLY:  
HAWP# \_\_\_\_\_  
DATE ASSIGNED \_\_\_\_\_

**APPLICANT:**

Name: 8676 Georgia Ave LLC  
Address: 3939 Wisconsin Ave. NW, #100  
Daytime Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: Washington Zip: 20016  
Tax Account No.: 13-03277450 and 13-00964637

**AGENT/CONTACT (if applicable):**

Name: Stacy P. Silber  
Address: 7600 Wisconsin Ave., Suite 700  
Daytime Phone: 301-841-3833

E-mail: spsilber@lercheearly.com  
City: Bethesda Zip: 20814  
Contractor Registration No.: \_\_\_\_\_

**LOCATION OF BUILDING/PREMISE:** MIHP # of Historic Property 36/013-000A

Is the Property Located within an Historic District? Yes/District Name \_\_\_\_\_  
X No/Individual Site Name Tastee Diner

Is there an Historic Preservation/Land Trust/Environmental Easement on the Property? If YES, include a map of the easement, and documentation from the Easement Holder supporting this application.

Are other Planning and/or Hearing Examiner Approvals /Reviews Required as part of this Application? (Conditional Use, Variance, Record Plat, etc.?) If YES, include information on these reviews as supplemental information.

Building Number: 8601 Street: Cameron Street (& 8676 Georgia Ave)  
Town/City: Silver Spring Nearest Cross Street: Ramsey Avenue  
Lot: 10 and P1 Block: \_\_\_\_\_ Subdivision: 001 Parcel: N297 and N217

**TYPE OF WORK PROPOSED: See the checklist on Page 4 to verify that all supporting items for proposed work are submitted with this application. Incomplete Applications will not be accepted for review. Check all that apply:**

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New Construction | <input type="checkbox"/> Deck/Porch                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Shed/Garage/Accessory Structure                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Addition                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Fence                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Solar   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Demolition                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hardscape/Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Tree removal/planting                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grading/Excavation          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Roof                | <input type="checkbox"/> Window/Door   |
|  |   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: <u>Relocation and Restoration</u> |

I hereby certify that I have the authority to make the foregoing application, that the application is correct and accurate and that the construction will comply with plans reviewed and approved by all necessary agencies and hereby acknowledge and accept this to be a condition for the issuance of this permit.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Stacy P. Silber*  
Signature of owner or authorized agent

\_\_\_\_\_  
6/30/2023  
Date

Adjacent and Confronting Properties:

Silver Spring, MD 20910

8676 Georgia Avenue

8670 Georgia Avenue

8701 Ramsey Avenue

8716 Ramsey Avenue

8714 Ramsey Avenue

8712 Ramsey Avenue

8710 Ramsey Avenue

8708 Ramsey Avenue

8706 Ramsey Avenue

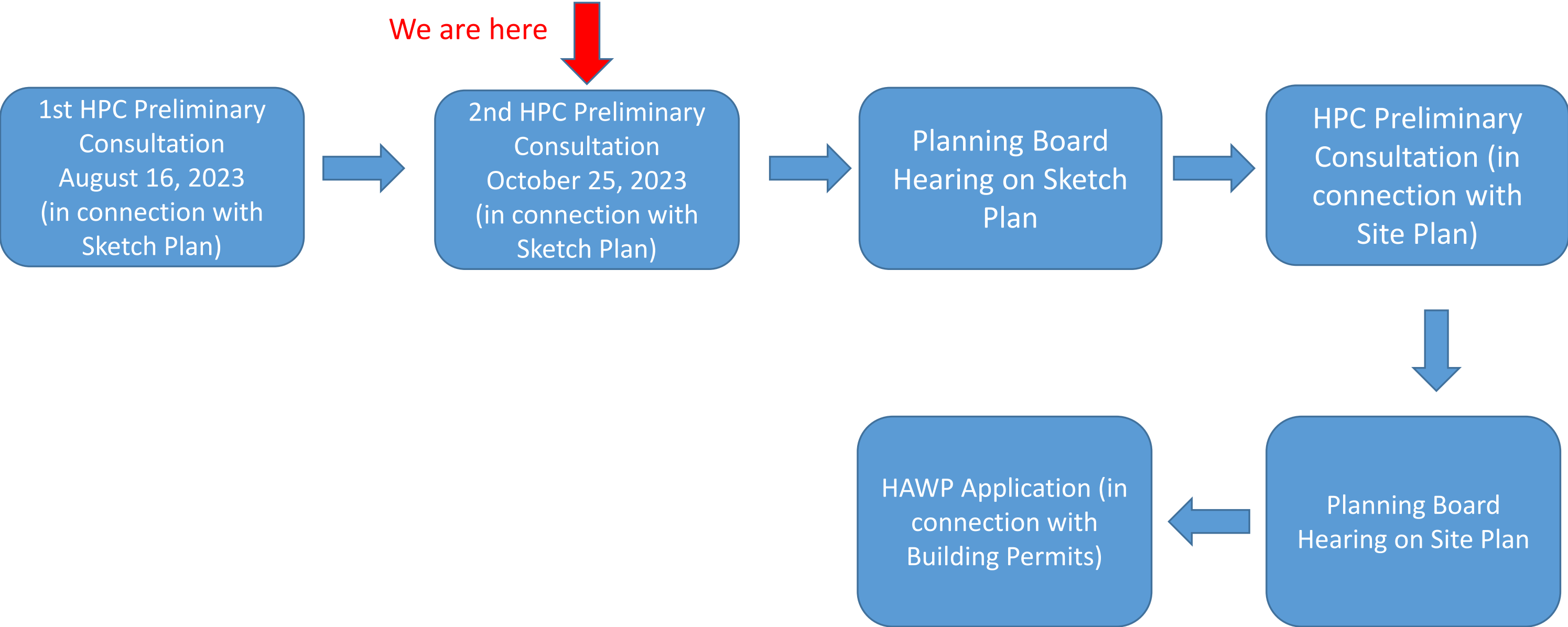
**8676 GEORGIA AVENUE  
8601 CAMERON STREET  
SILVER SPRING, MD**

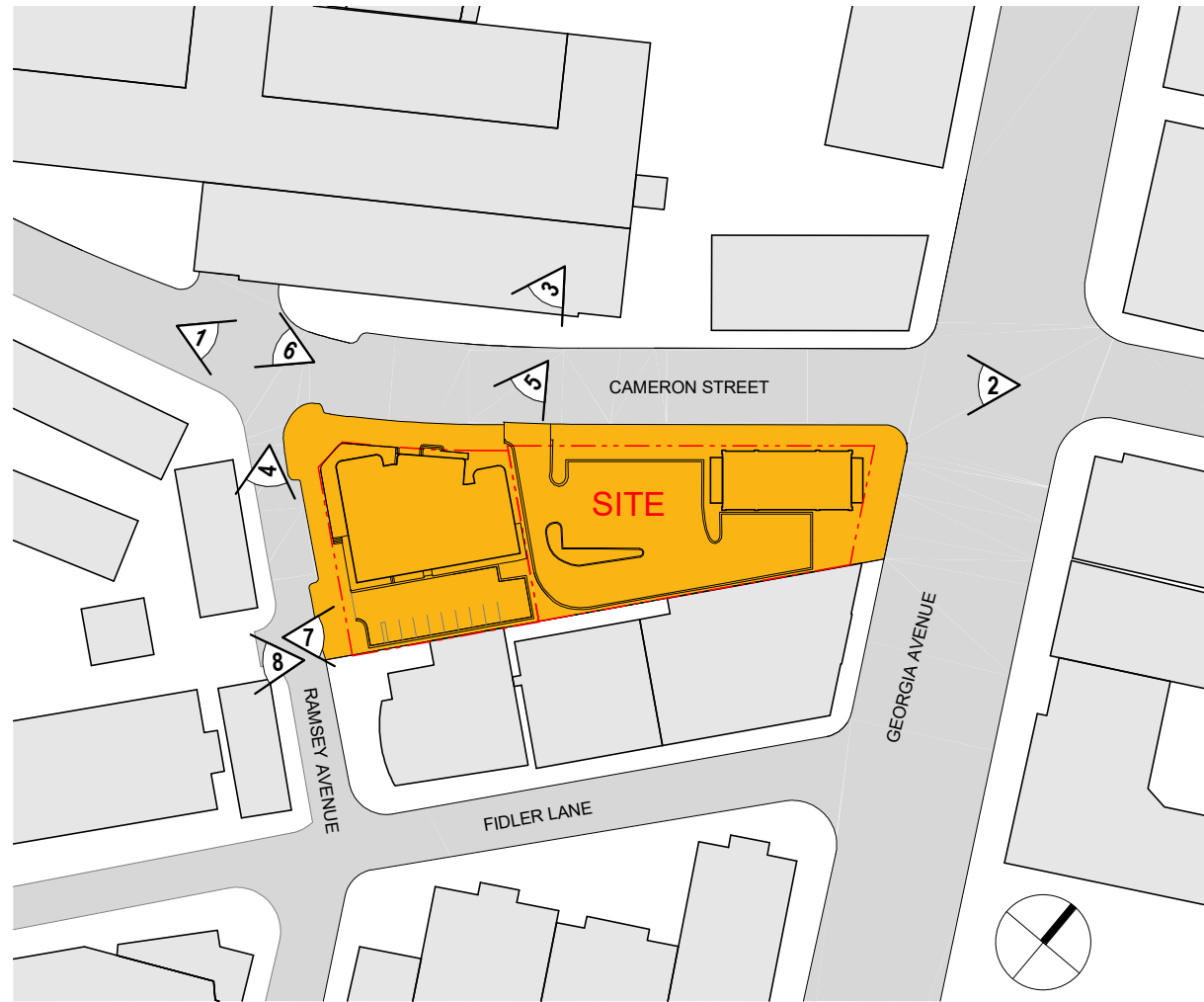
**HPC Preliminary Consultation**

**10/02/2023**



# Development Review Process





1 VIEW FROM CAMERON STREET LOOKING SOUTHEAST



2 VIEW FROM GEORGIA AVE LOOKING WEST



3 TASTEE DINER LOOKING SOUTH



4 RAMSEY AVENUE LOOKING SOUTH



5 VIEW FROM CAMERON STREET LOOKING SOUTH



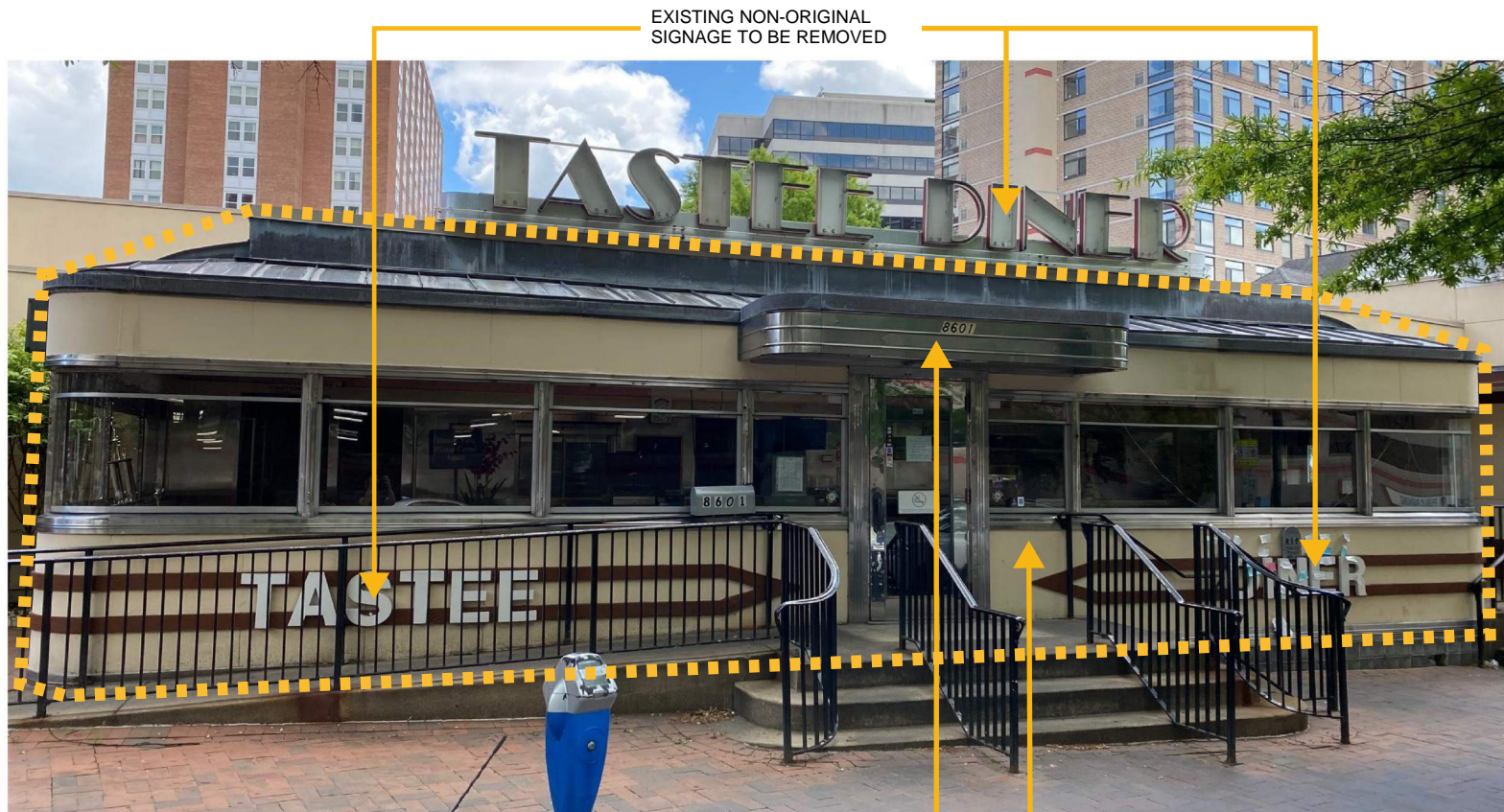
6 VIEW FROM CAMERON STREET LOOKING WEST



7 RAMSEY AVENUE LOOKING EAST

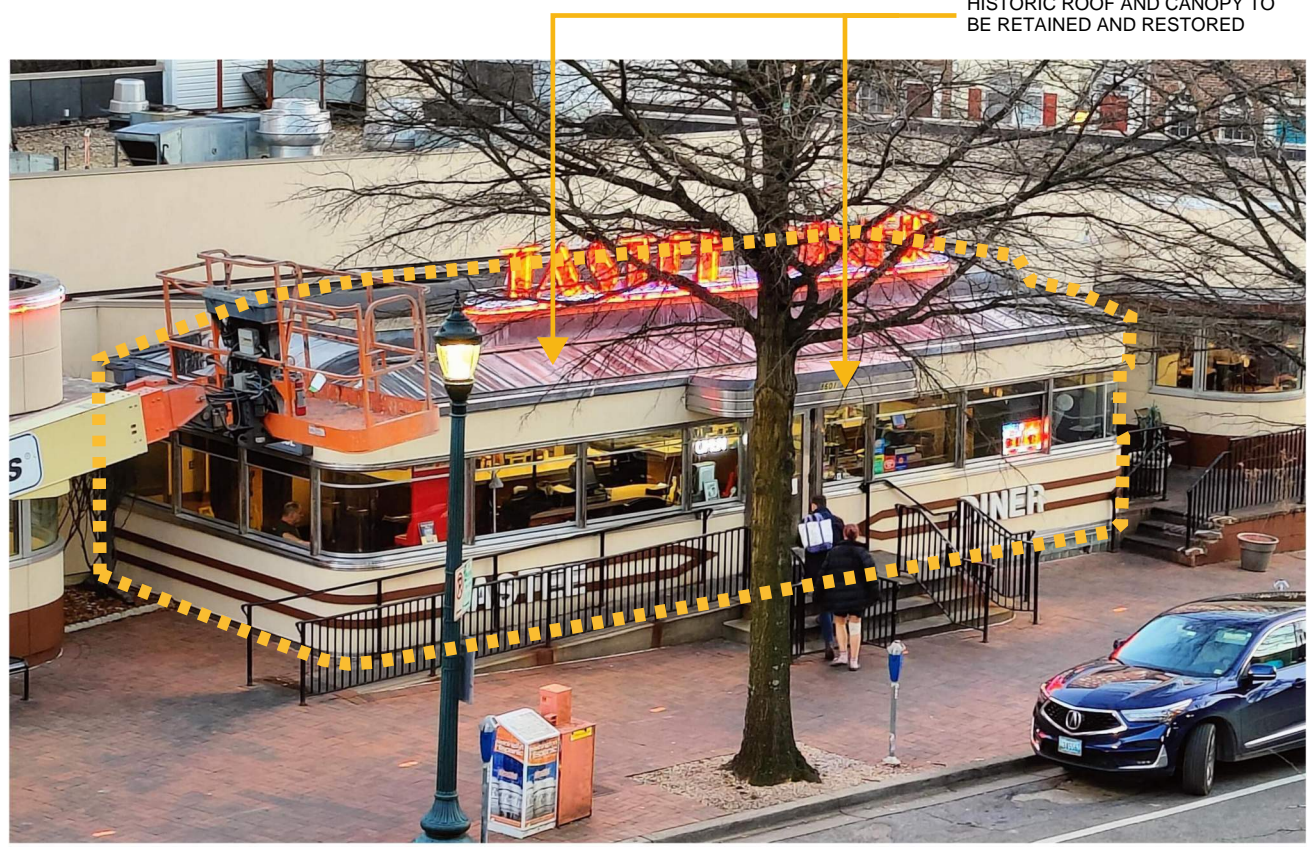


8 RAMSEY AVENUE LOOKING WEST



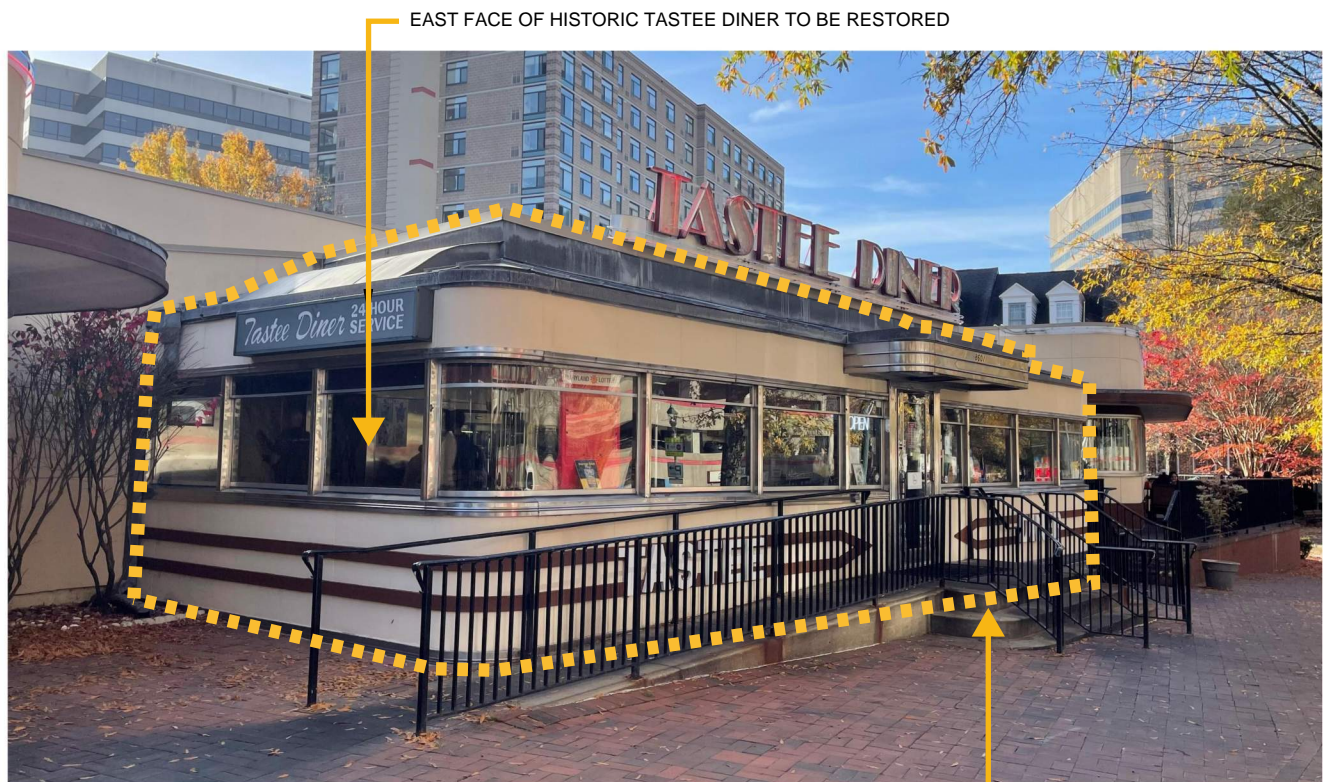
EXISTING VIEW FROM NORTH

STAINLESS STEEL CANOPY TO BE PRESERVED  
 NORTH FACE OF HISTORIC TASTEE DINER TO BE RESTORED



EXISTING AERIAL VIEW

EXPOSED WEST FACE OF HISTORIC RESOURCE TO BE RESTORED



EXISTING VIEW FROM NORTHEAST

EAST FACE OF HISTORIC TASTEE DINER TO BE RESTORED  
 NON-HISTORIC STEPS, RAILING AND RAMP TO BE REMOVED



EXISTING VIEW FROM NORTHWEST

GLASS BLOCK BASE TO BE REPLACED WITH STONE



NON-HISTORIC ADDITION  
TO BE REMOVED



RESTORATION AND  
EXTENSION OF HISTORIC  
ROOF TO FORMER FULL  
WIDTH TO MATCH EXISTING

RESTORATION AND  
EXTENSION OF WEST  
FAÇADE TO FORMER FULL  
WIDTH TO MATCH  
EXISTING



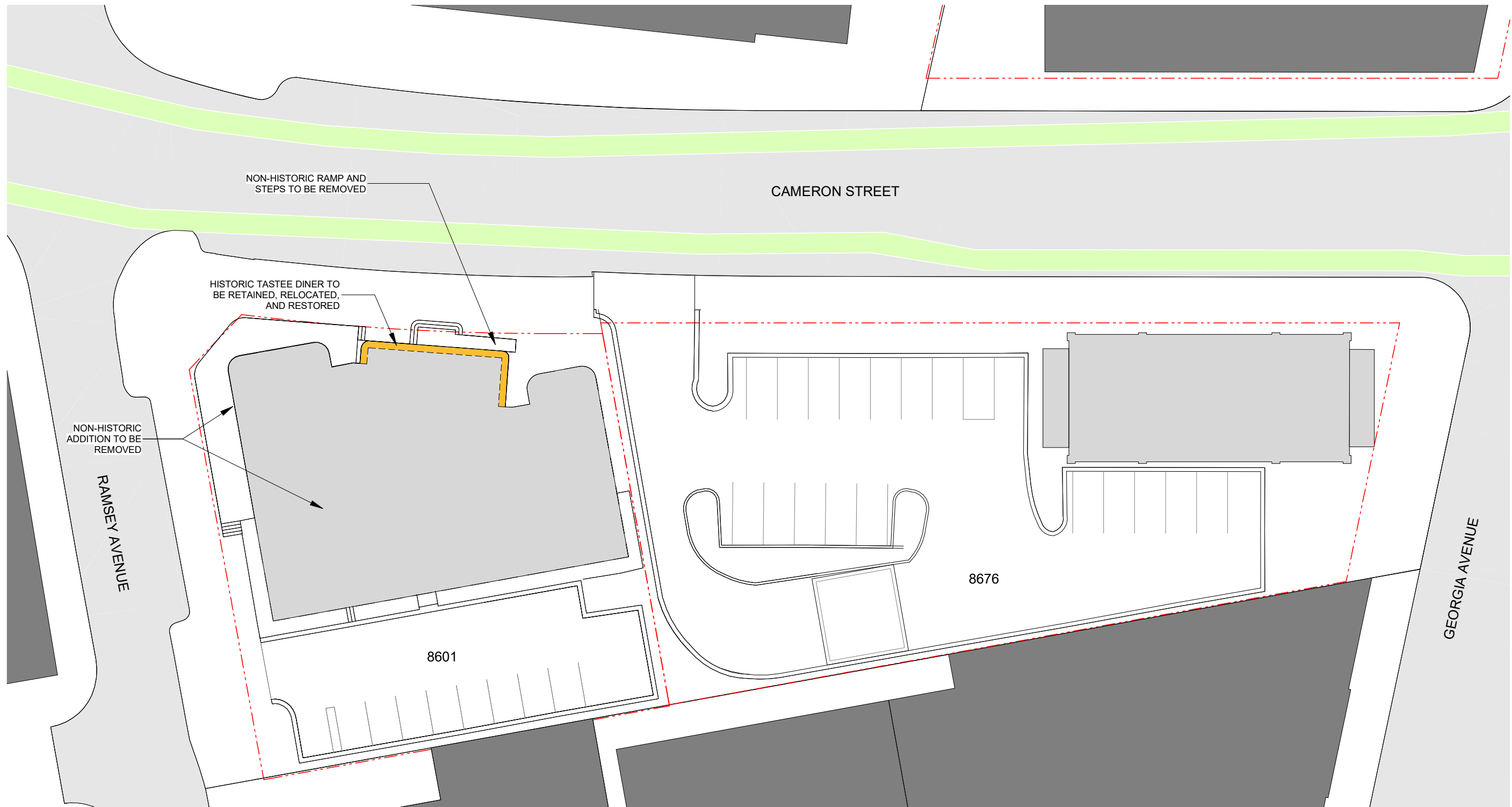
NON-HISTORIC SIGNAGE  
TO BE REMOVED



NON-HISTORIC SIGNAGE  
TO BE REMOVED

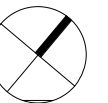
NON-HISTORIC RAMP  
AND STEPS TO BE  
REMOVED

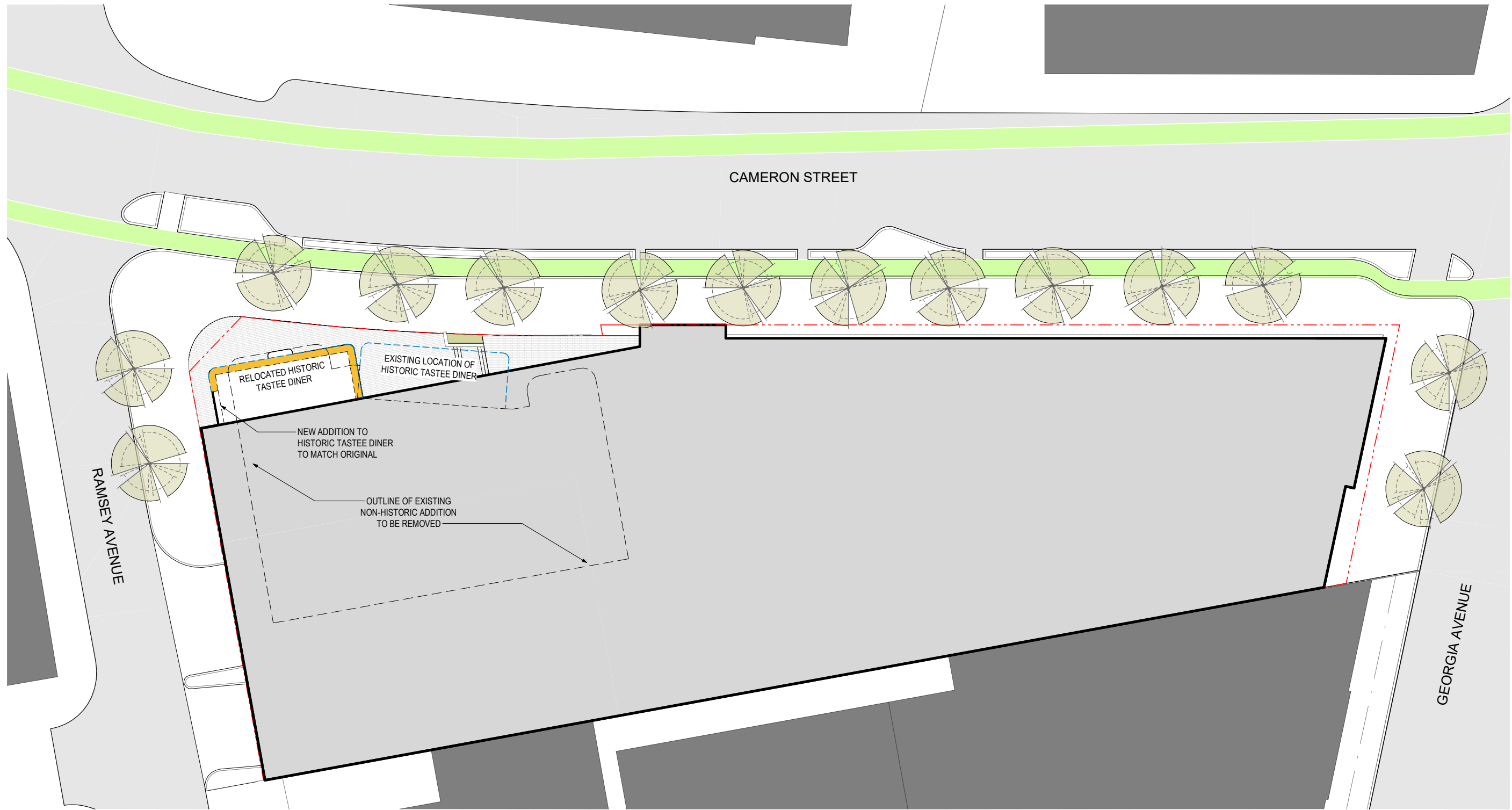




LEGEND

EXTENT OF HISTORIC TASTEE DINER

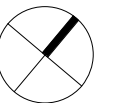


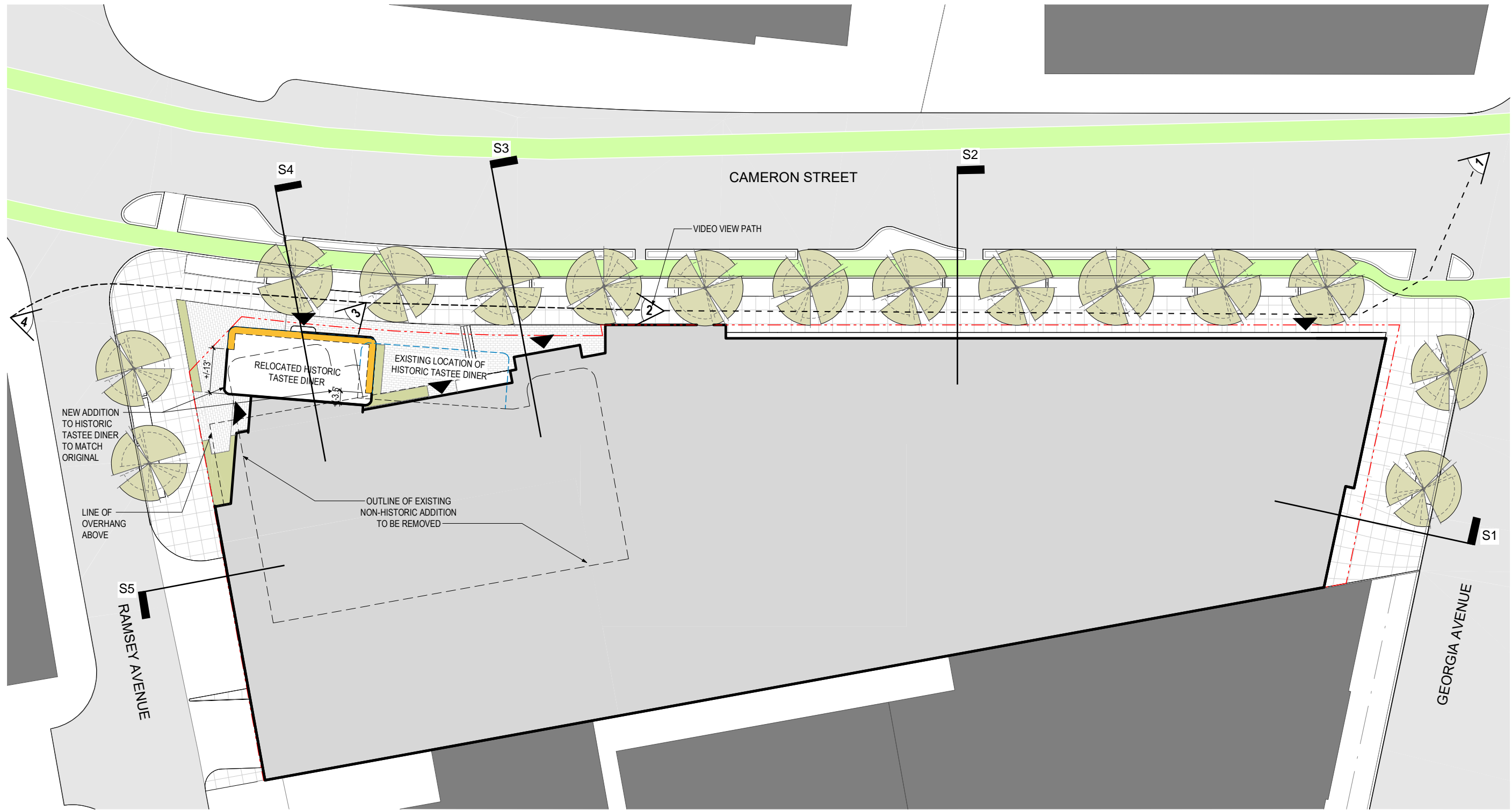


FIRST FLOOR PLAN AT RELOCATED DINER CAR

LEGEND

EXTENT OF HISTORIC TASTEE DINER

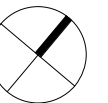




FIRST FLOOR PLAN AT RELOCATED DINER CAR

LEGEND

- EXTENT OF HISTORIC TASTEE DINER

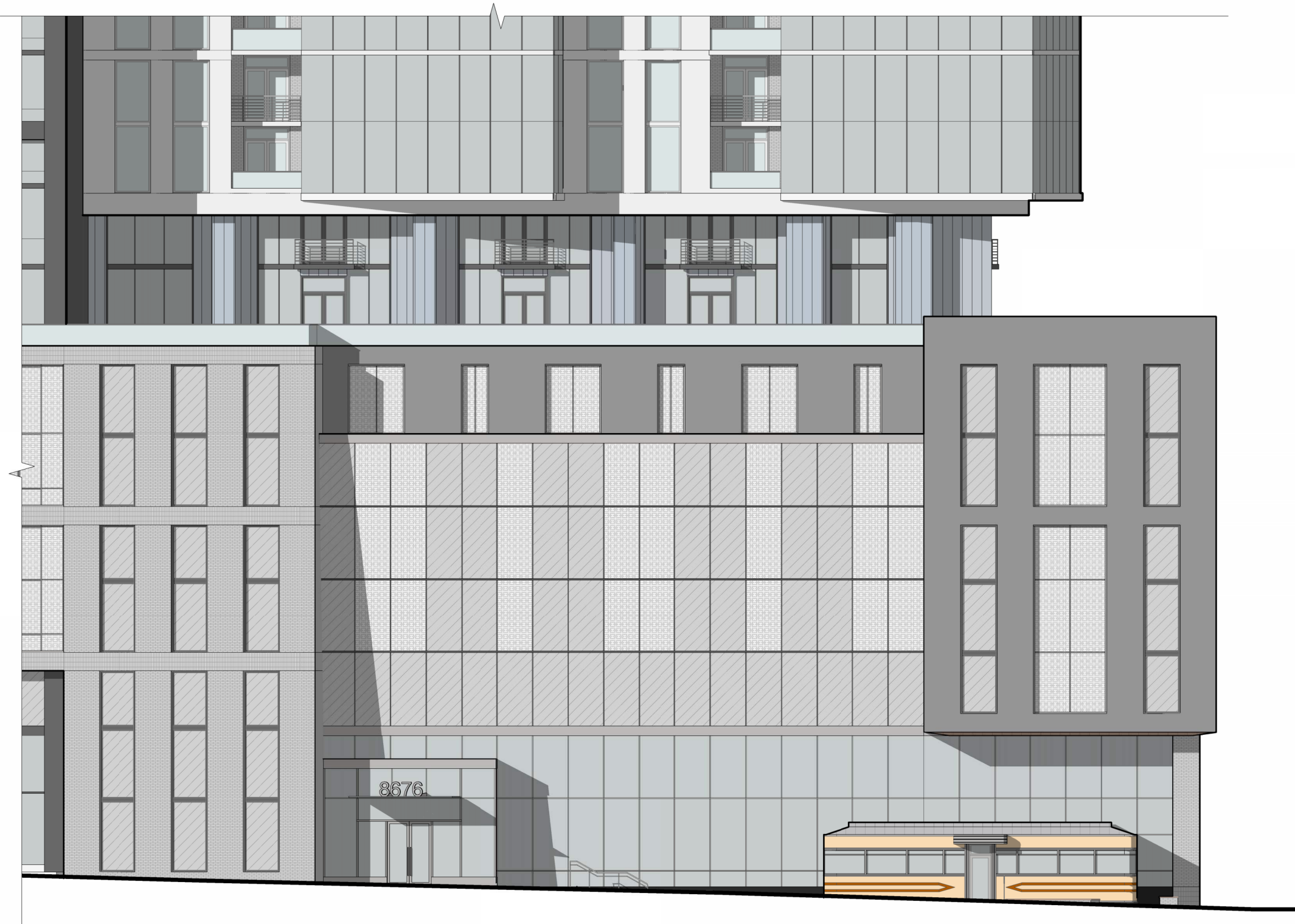




PARTIAL NORTH ELEVATION AT CAMERON STREET



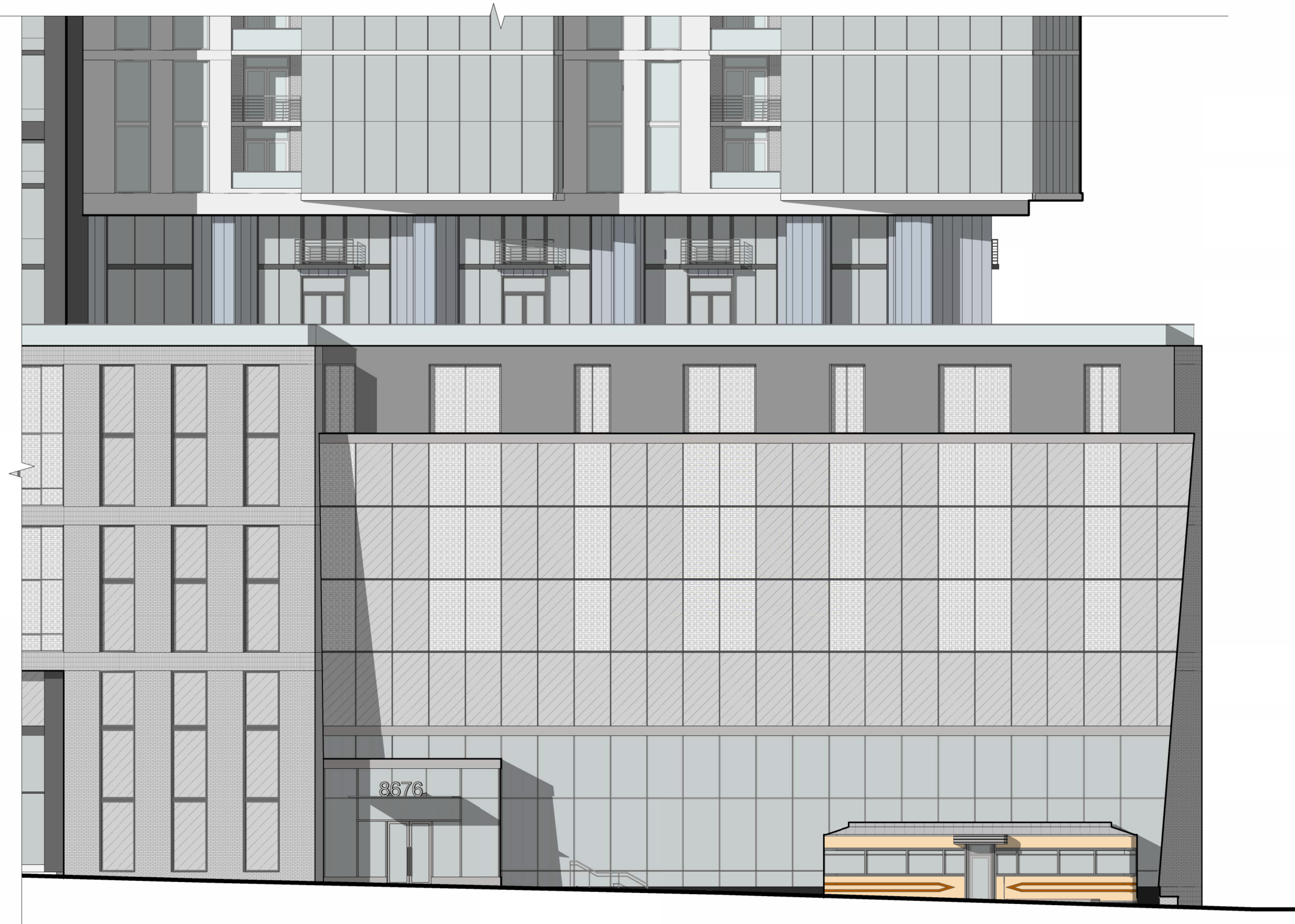
PARTIAL WEST ELEVATION AT RAMSEY AVENUE



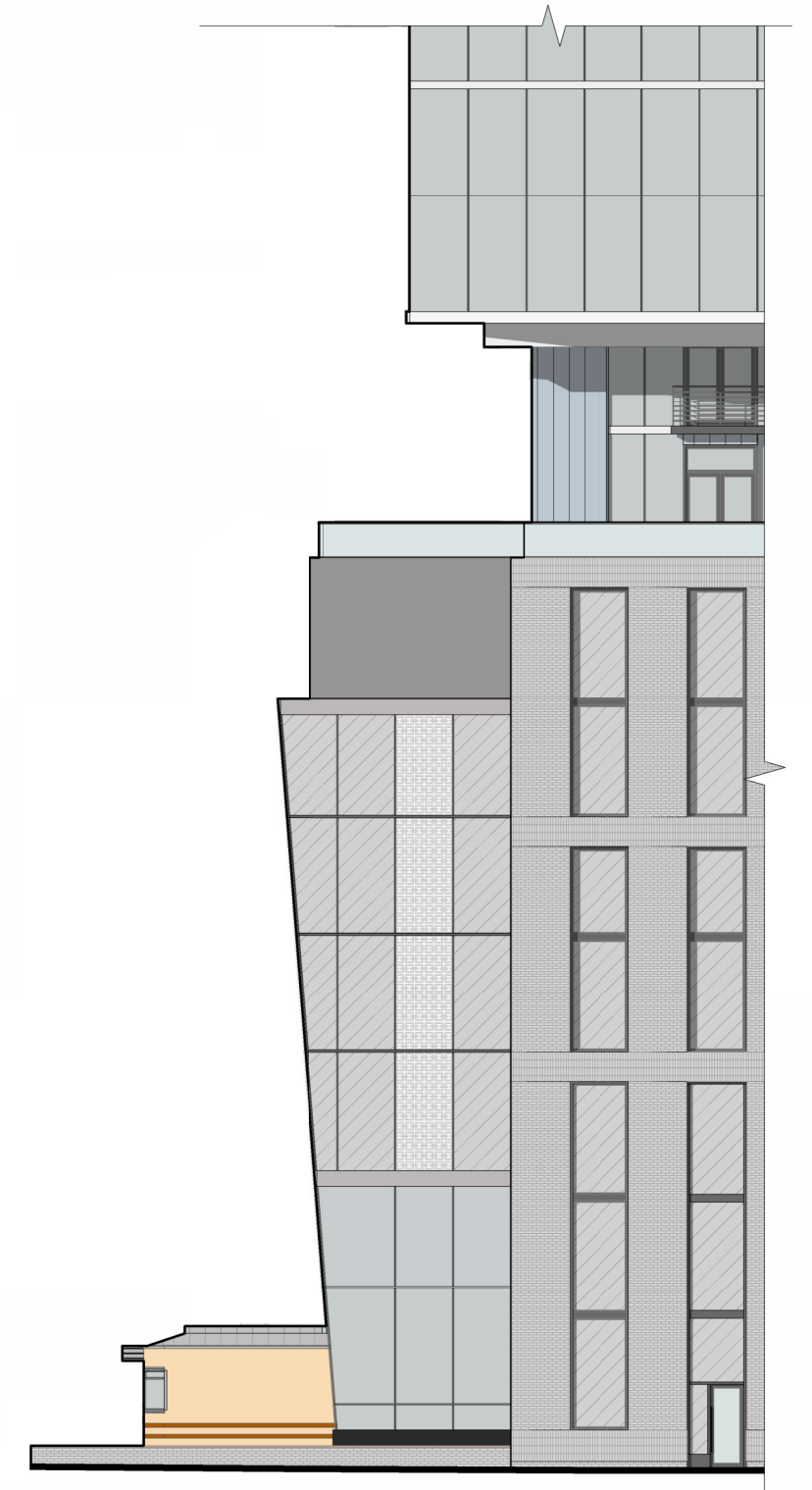
PARTIAL NORTH ELEVATION AT CAMERON STREET



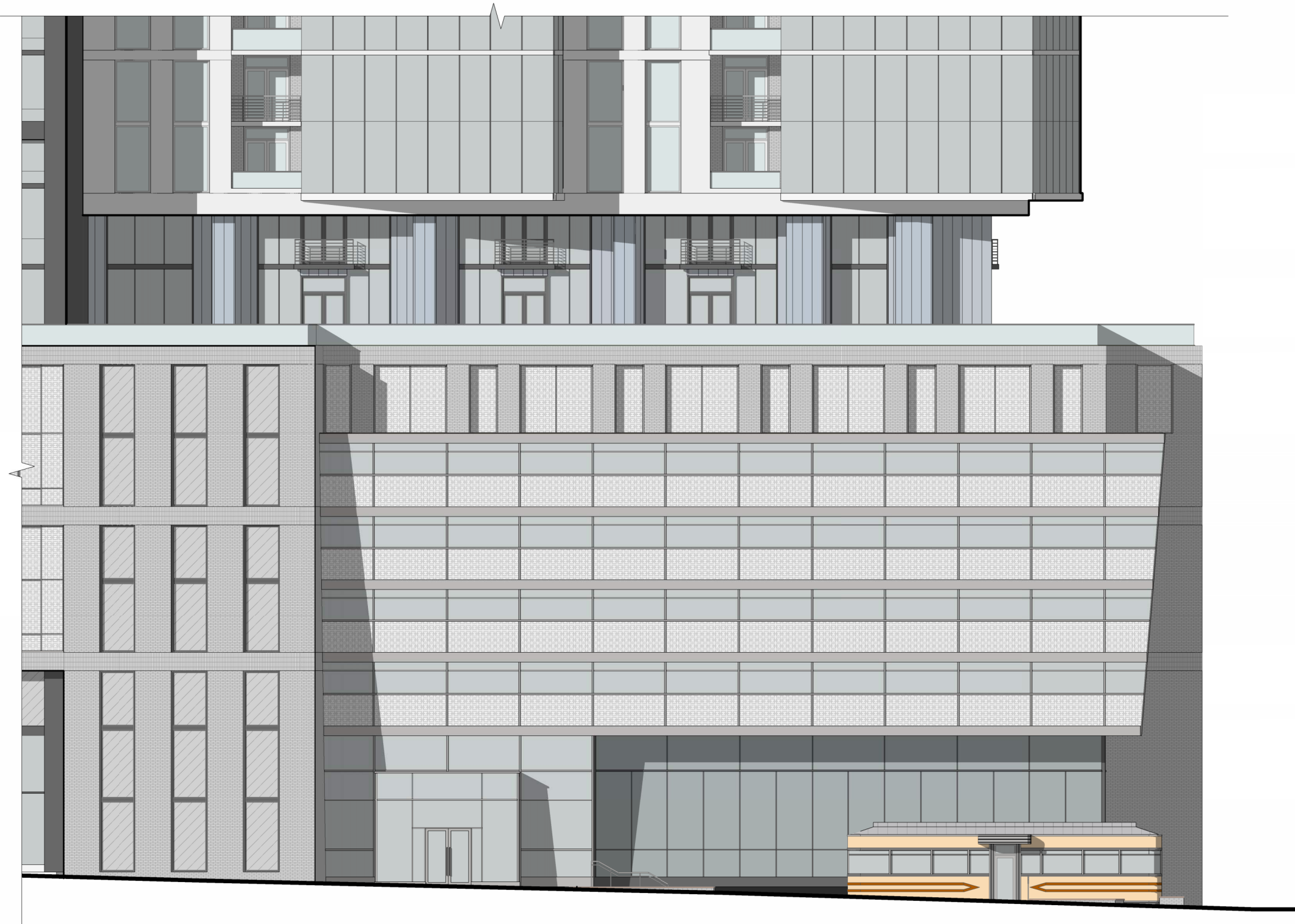
PARTIAL WEST ELEVATION AT RAMSEY AVENUE



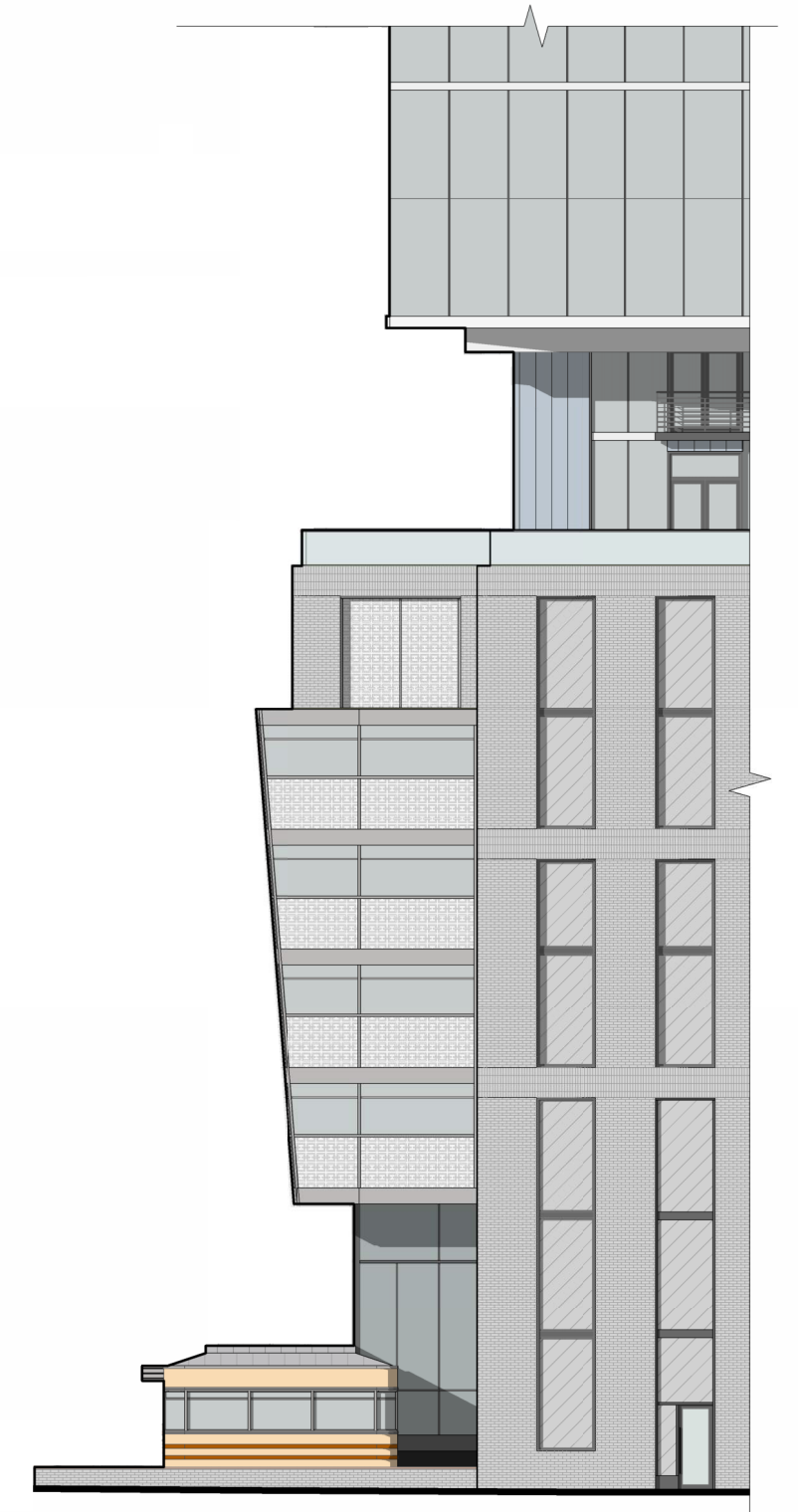
PARTIAL NORTH ELEVATION AT CAMERON STREET



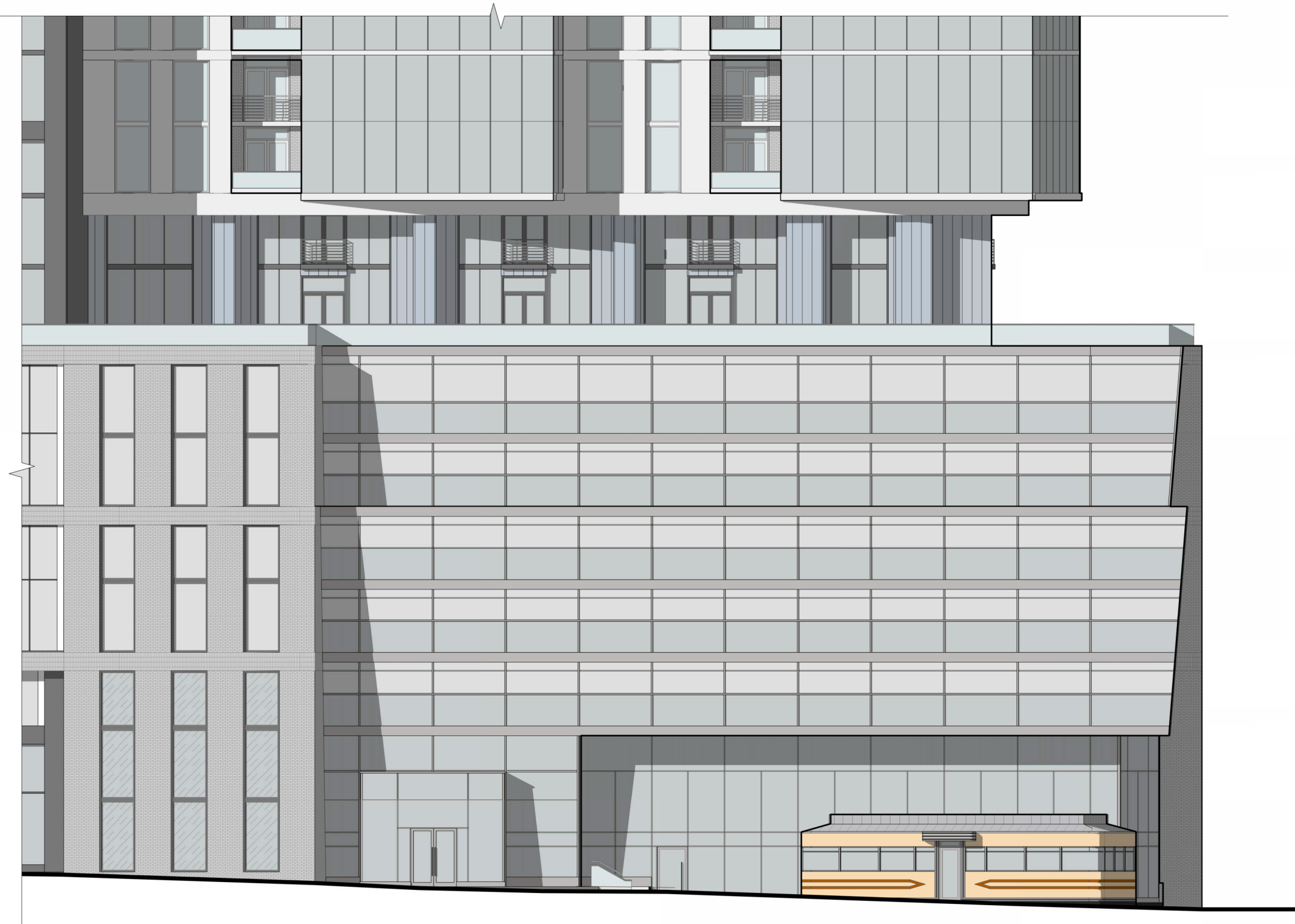
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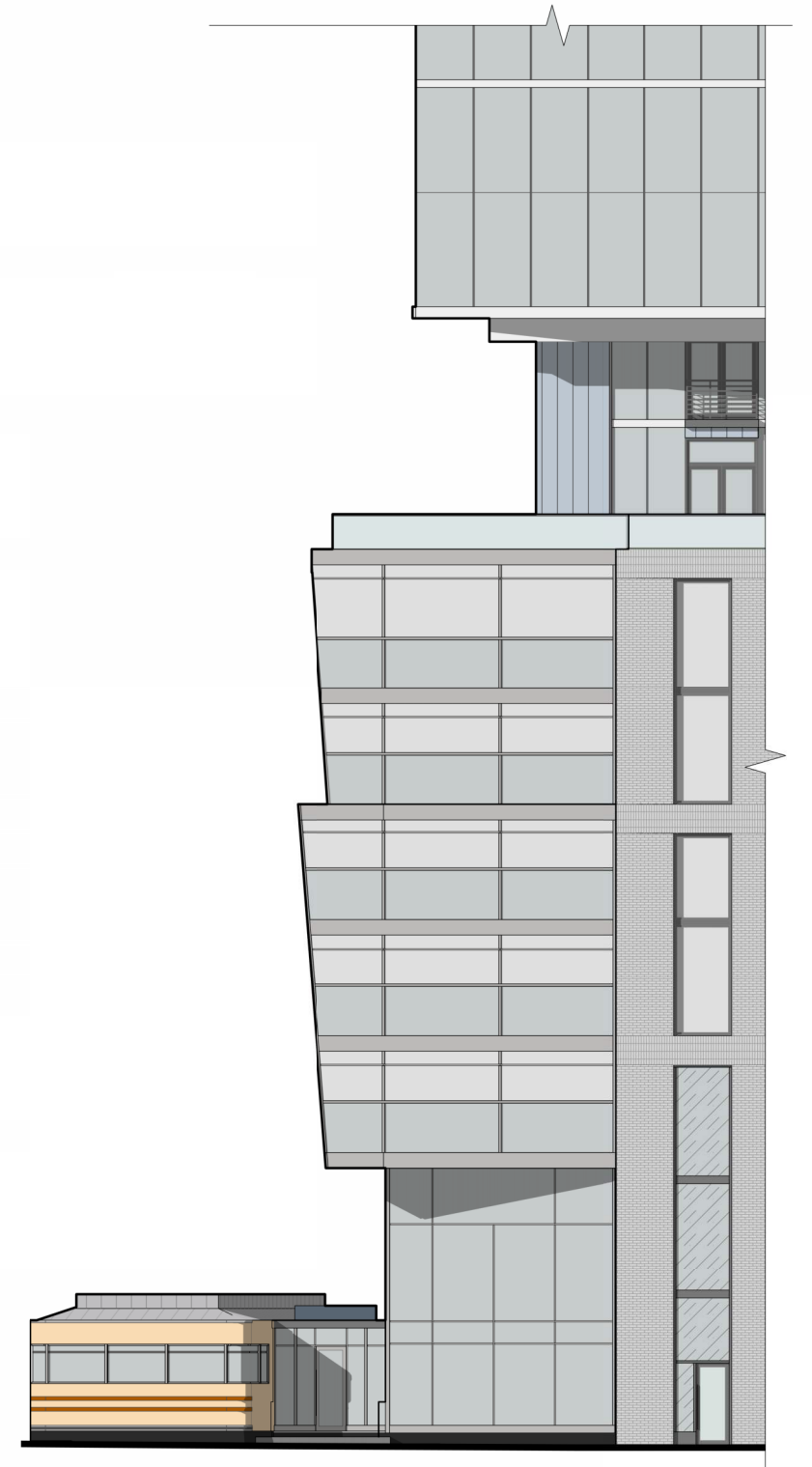
PARTIAL NORTH ELEVATION AT CAMERON STREET



PARTIAL WEST ELEVATION AT RAMSEY AVENUE

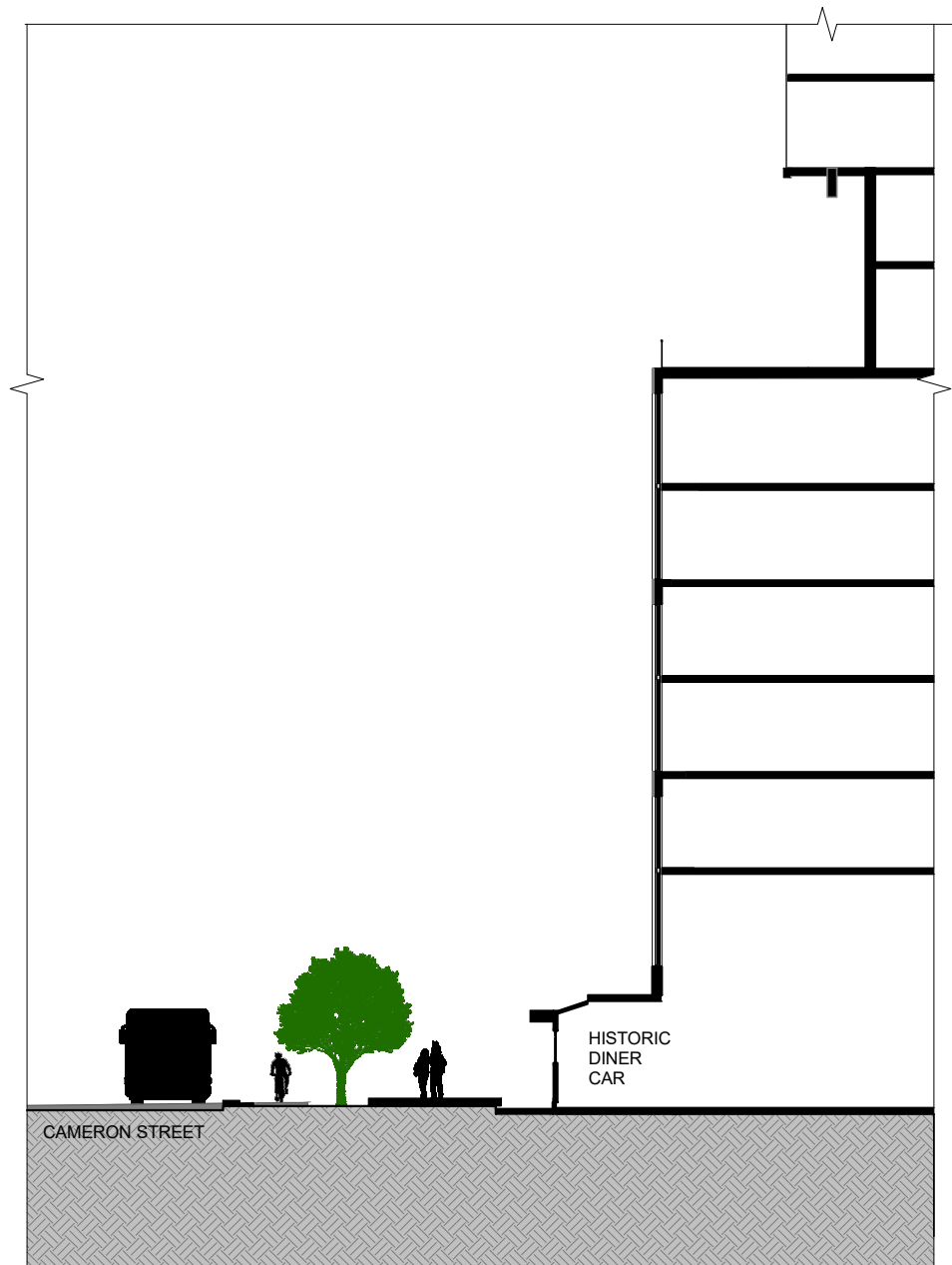


PARTIAL NORTH ELEVATION AT CAMERON STREET

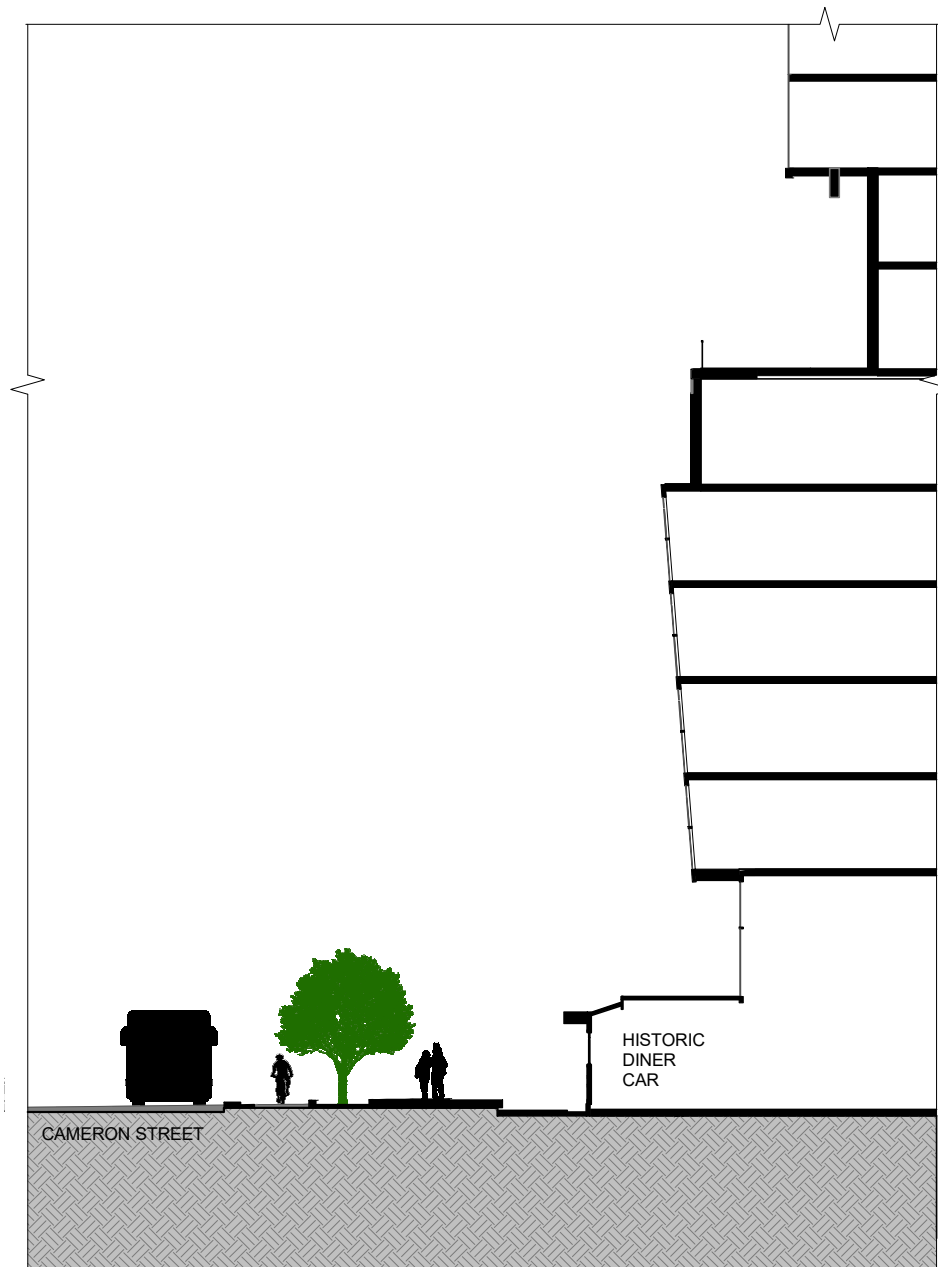


PARTIAL WEST ELEVATION AT RAMSEY AVENUE

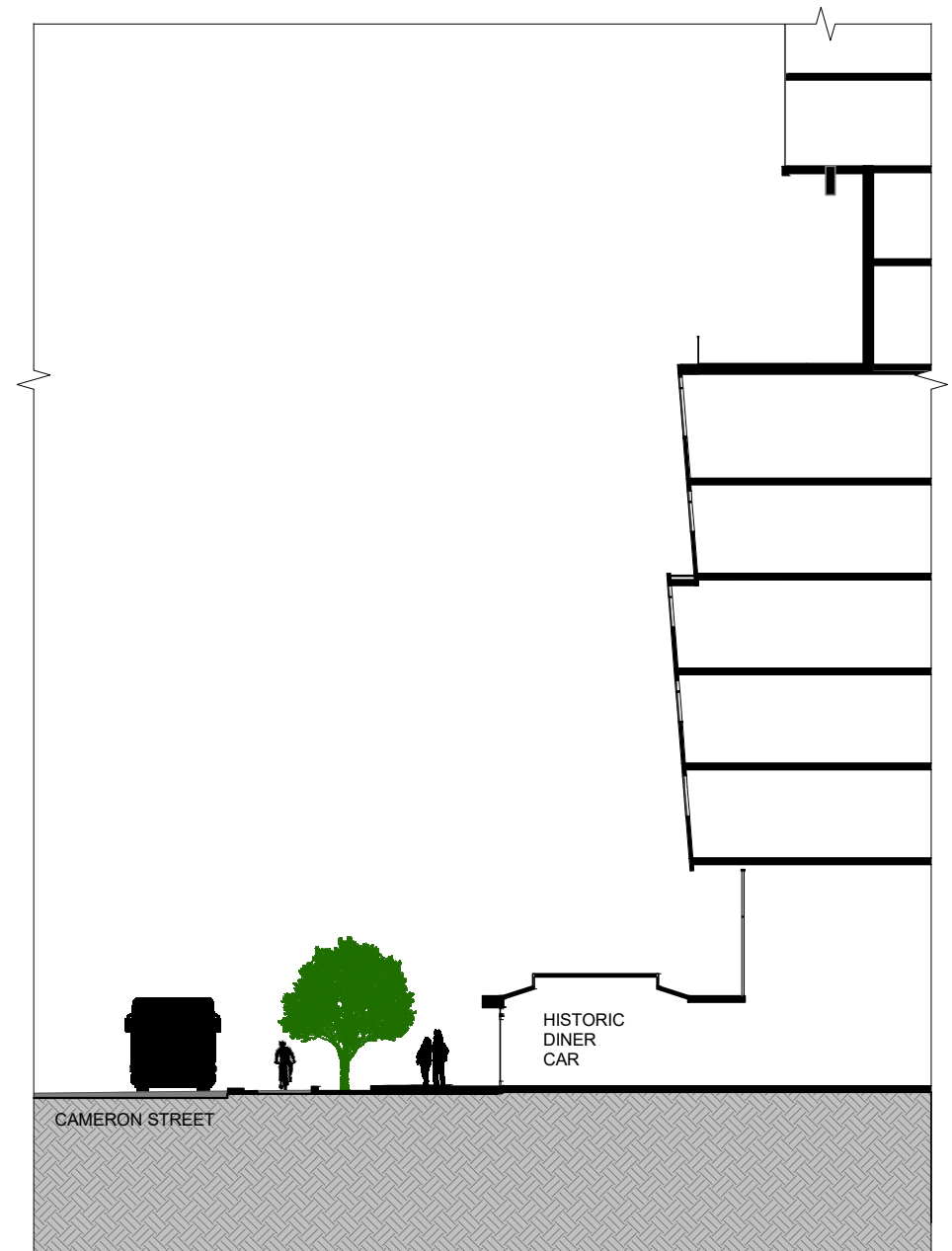




PROGRESS STUDY 1



PREVIOUS HPC SUBMISSION



CURRENT DESIGN





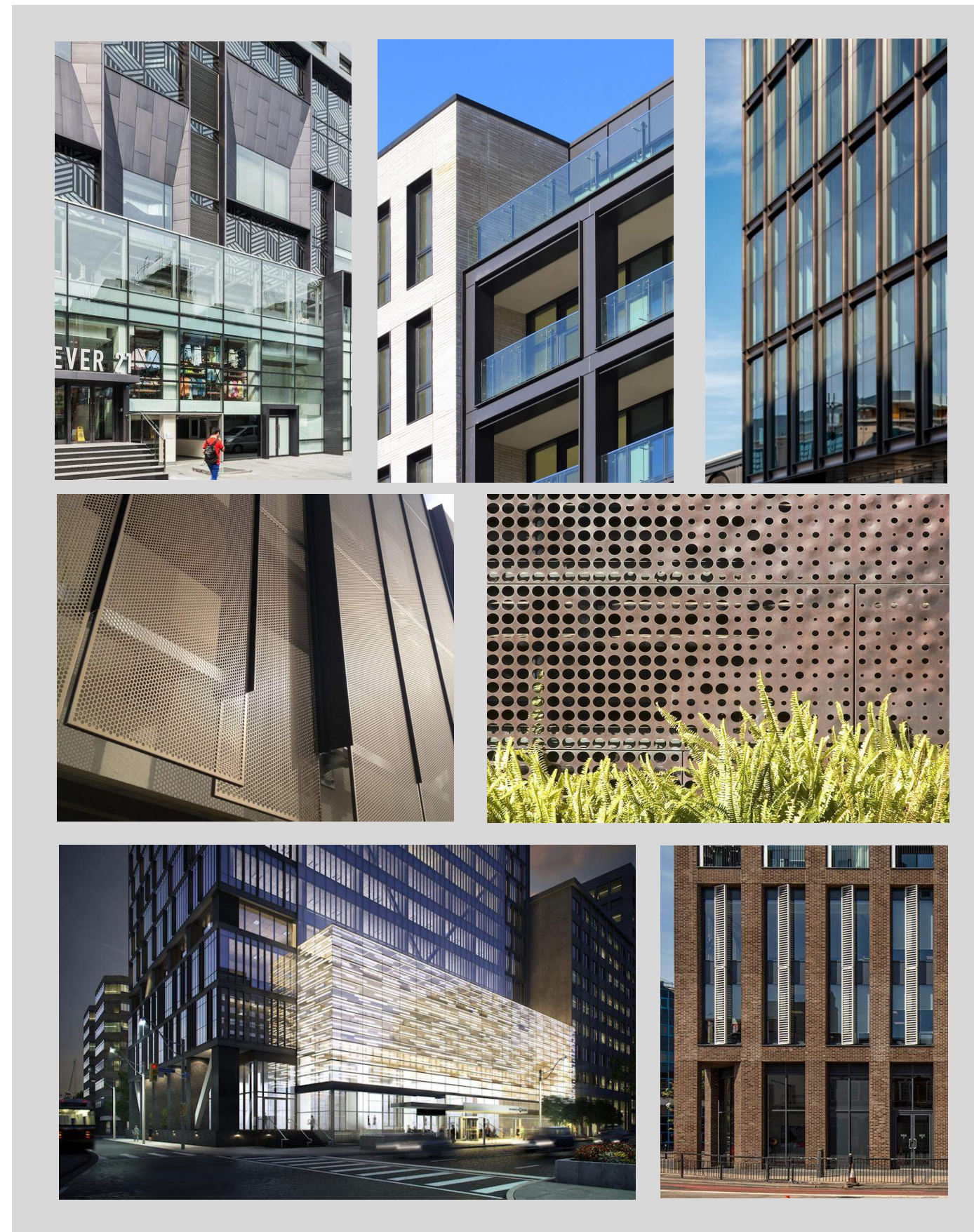




CONCEPT RENDERINGS - FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES

Roadside Development

10/02/2023  
© 2023 - Bonstra | Haresign Architects



EXAMPLES OF FACADE PLANES AND DEPTH CHANGES

FACADE MATERIALS AND PRECEDENTS

8676 Georgia Ave

**Bonstra Haresign**  
ARCHITECTS





**Supplemental - Statement in Support  
Historic Preservation Commission – Preliminary Consultation  
Tastee Diner (8601 Cameron Street) and 8676 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, Maryland**

**October 2, 2023**

On August 16, 2023, 8676 Georgia Avenue LLC, an affiliate of Roadside Development, (the "Applicant") had an initial preliminary consultation meeting with the Historic Preservation Commission ("HPC") to discuss its proposed Sketch Plan, which includes demolition of non-contributing additions to the Historic Tastee Diner and relocation of the Historic Tastee Diner on the Property. Members of the HPC concurred with the proposed demolition. They also concurred that the Historic Tastee Diner could be relocated approximately 45' to the west, but suggested making the Historic Tastee Diner more prominent in relation to the proposed new construction. Sketch Plan is a general massing study of the proposed development. More detailed plans, architecture, and site layout will be provided when the Applicant files a Site Plan for the project. The Applicant will come back to the HPC during Site Plan review for an additional preliminary consultation meeting.

**I. New Prominence of Relocated Historic Tastee Diner.**

At its meeting on August 16, 2023, HPC members asked the Applicant for additional information to better understand how the Applicant proposes to 'integrate' the Historic Tastee Diner into the overall redevelopment and to explore opportunities to make the Historic Tastee Diner more prominent. With respect to the latter, the design team has pulled the Historic Tastee Diner further away from the new building – the proposed location shown in the updated drawings is as far away from the new construction as possible, given the property boundary and the required functionality of the door leading into the Historic Tastee Diner (which cannot swing into a public right-of-way). This move pulls the Historic Tastee Diner out from under any overhang of the new construction. It also allows for its missing back corners and the partial fourth wall of the diner to be reconstructed, letting the Historic Tastee Diner read more fully in the round. This change in the location will allow the Historic Tastee Diner to have a greater visual presence in the Cameron Street streetscape and especially at the corner of Cameron and Ramsey.

The Historic Tastee Diner only contains approximately 800 square feet of space. Currently, most of the former Tastee Diner restaurant, including the kitchen, the dining room, storage, and restroom areas, is located in the non-historic addition (to be demolished), which was built when the Historic Tastee Diner was relocated to Cameron Street. To help ensure a viable future use of the Historic Tastee Diner, particularly its functionality as a restaurant space, it must remain connected to the new building behind it. This will be accomplished by a light, appropriately-designed and fully-functional link, pulled in from the back corners of the diner and connected to shared space with the new building. This will accomplish the goals of creating functionality to ensure that the Historic Tastee Diner remains vibrant and utilized while at the same time allowing it to remain visually prominent at its new location.

II. Horizontality of New Building Base Materials Complements Adjoining Historic Tastee Diner.

With respect to integrating this part of the new building and the Historic Tastee Diner, per HPC Staff's recommendations, the new building base behind the Tastee Diner is comprised of horizontal elements inspired by the horizontal banding, proportions, and overall appearance of the Historic Tastee Diner, without "... trying to copy the Art Moderne design." (See HPC Staff Report dated August 9, 2023.) The architectural vocabulary of this portion of the new building will be finalized at time of Site Plan, but is intended to honor the Historic Tastee Diner, while simultaneously blending with the overall design of the new building. At time of Site Plan, the design team, per HPC, will focus specifically on materials, colors, and textures used in this portion of the façade. Of particular importance will be ensuring that the materials shield views of vehicles and headlights in the parking garage directly above the Historic Tastee Diner so they are not visible from outside the building.

III. Additional Submittal Materials.

In addition to the drawings showing the new proposed location of the Historic Tastee Diner, per the HPC's request, the updated materials submitted concurrently with this Statement, also include the following:

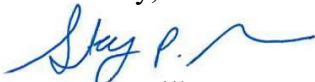
- A video that shows the new building and the relocated Historic Tastee Diner in the context of the larger streetscape;
- Precedent images for the potential materials to be used on the new building behind the Historic Tastee Diner, the specifics of which will be reviewed further at time of Site Plan.

IV. Conclusion.

The Applicant is seeking preliminary guidance from the HPC on the revised location and treatment of the Historic Tastee Diner and related area of the proposed Project. As mentioned above, the Applicant will come back before the HPC in connection with the subsequent Site Plan Application and thereafter will submit for Historic Area Work Permit review and approval.

We look forward to receiving your feedback. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or need more information.

Sincerely,

  
Stacy P. Silber

  
Elizabeth C. Rogers

Enclosures