



CITY OF VANCOUVER

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Date: April 28, 2004
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RTS No.: 04104
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Meeting Date: May 20, 2004

TO: Vancouver City Council

FROM: Director of Current Planning

SUBJECT: Heritage Revitalization Agreement and Designation for "The Ellison Building" - 1226 Homer Street

RECOMMENDATION

- A. That Council authorize the Director of Legal Services to enter into a Heritage Revitalization Agreement for the property at 1226 Homer Street to:
 - i) secure the protection and ongoing maintenance of this "C" category building on the Vancouver Heritage Register; and
 - ii) vary the provisions of the HA-3 District Schedule of the Zoning and Development By-Law as described in Development Application No. DE408152, to permit an increase in the maximum floor space ratio for residential uses from 3.0 FSR to 4.4 FSR, and to make this non-conformity lawful in perpetuity.
- B. That Council designate, by bylaw, the building at 1226 Homer Street as protected heritage property;
- C. That the Director of Legal Services bring forth the bylaws to authorize the Heritage Revitalization Agreement and to designate the building;
- D. That Council require that an agreement be registered to secure the timely rehabilitation of the heritage building; and,
- E. That the agreements be given priority over all other charges on title, except those already held by the City, to the satisfaction of the Director of Legal Services.

GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The General Manager of Community Services **RECOMMENDS** approval of A, B, C, D, and E.

COUNCIL POLICY

Heritage Policies and Guidelines

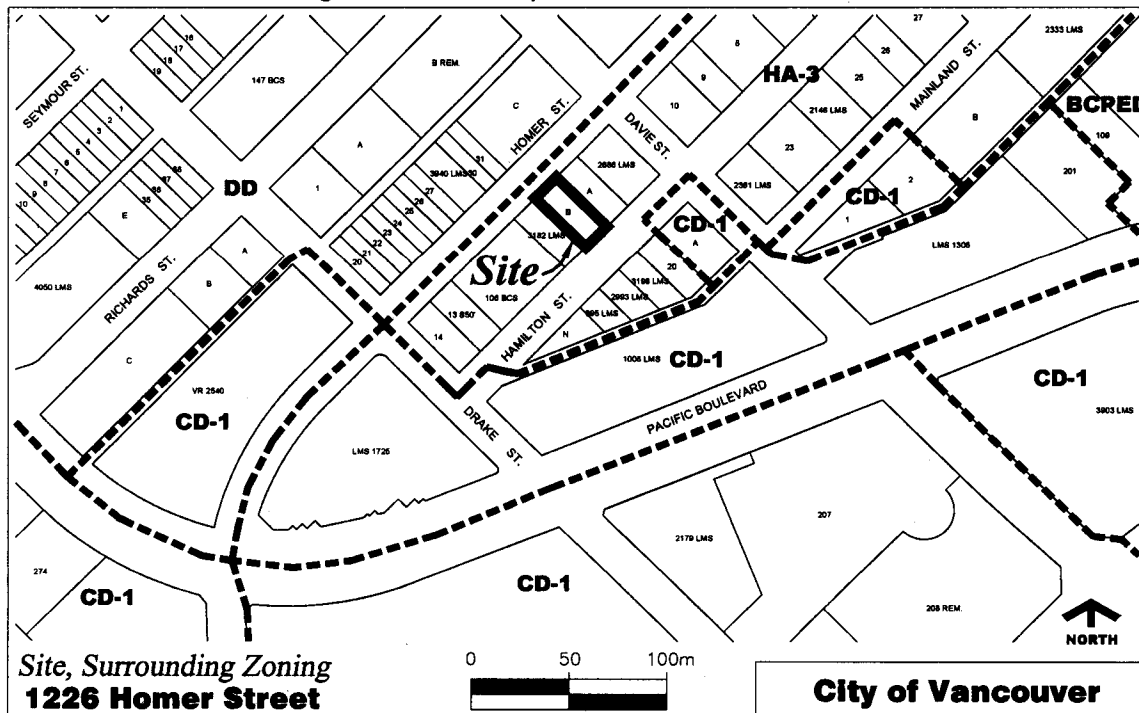
PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's approval to designate and enter into a Heritage Revitalization Agreement for the "C" listed heritage building at 1226 Homer Street.

BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY

The heritage building at 1226 Homer Street is located within the Historic Yaletown Area. Howard/Bingham/Hill Architects has submitted a development application to convert to commercial retail/restaurant at grade and residential use in the existing upper floors, plus a two storey addition (see drawings Appendix A). In exchange for a zoning variance, the owner is prepared to enter into a Heritage Revitalization Agreement and to designate.

Figure #1: Site Map



DISCUSSION

Heritage Value: The “C” listed, “Ellison Building” at 1226 Homer Street was built in 1929 of concrete and heavy timber construction to serve as a warehouse. Its partial concrete construction represents the second generation of warehouse construction in Yaletown. The Homer Street façade is the more formal of the two facades with a stepped parapet, subsidiary cornice, recessed main entry and original true divided wood windows. The Hamilton Street façade is more functional with punched window openings, timber loading-dock canopy and corrugated metal elevator penthouse. The building construction and utilitarian facades maintain the functional character of this historic area.

Compatibility with the Zoning: The intent of the HA-3 District Schedule is to encourage the retention and rehabilitation of existing warehouses, producing a more contemporary mix of commercial, industrial and residential, and introducing more activity-oriented uses. The maximum floor space ratio for all uses in an entire building should not exceed 5.0 FSR; and, the maximum floor space ratio for residential uses should not exceed 3.0 FSR.

A Heritage Revitalization Agreement may vary the use and density regulations of a zoning district schedule to facilitate heritage conservation. To make the rehabilitation of 1226 Homer Street economically viable, the development application and requested HRA propose to increase the maximum residential FSR from 3.0 (permitted) to 4.4 (proposed). Staff feel that the proposed HRA will fulfil the intent of the district schedule by enabling the retention, rehabilitation and protection of this heritage warehouse. Staff acknowledge the commercial component is less than the 2.0 FSR prescribed by the district schedule, but feel that the range of uses already existing in the overall area compensates, on balance, for the shortfall on this site.

Parking: See Public Notification Section, page 4.

Restoration Approach: The heritage building possesses a high level of integrity. The conservation approach which is supported by the Heritage Commission and staff is to:

- restore the Homer elevations by repainting in original colours, refurbishing wood windows and refurbishing the cornice;
- rehabilitate the Hamilton Street façade and restore and replicate the elevator machine penthouse;
- retain and refurbish the industrial doors to the Hamilton Street façade;
- retain timber structural framing and metal wall brackets of loading-dock canopy while integrating new glazing to portions of the canopy; and,
- retain original brick paving of loading dock surface.

The proposed two storey addition will terrace back from the original facades with a contemporary and distinguished design. The addition will be clad in zinc to reinforce the industrial character.

Vancouver Heritage Commission: On February 23, 2004 the Commission supported the project unanimously, but advised that the central window openings of the proposed Hamilton Street elevation should reflect the existing façade more closely. The architects have submitted revised drawings that address the Commission’s advice to staff’s satisfaction.

Public Notification: Following standard notification procedures, 414 surrounding property owners were notified and invited to comment on the proposal. Staff received 2 responses expressing concerns. The first expressed concern over potential loss of privacy. The second expressed concern over accepting payment-in-lieu for required parking rather than supplying the required parking on site.

To address the respondent's concern over loss of privacy, staff requested that the architects prepare a complete graphic analysis of the condition. Staff will be consulting with the adjacent neighbours once the analysis is finished to assess the degree of privacy impacts. If there are undue impacts, staff will set conditions of development permit issuance to mitigate them.

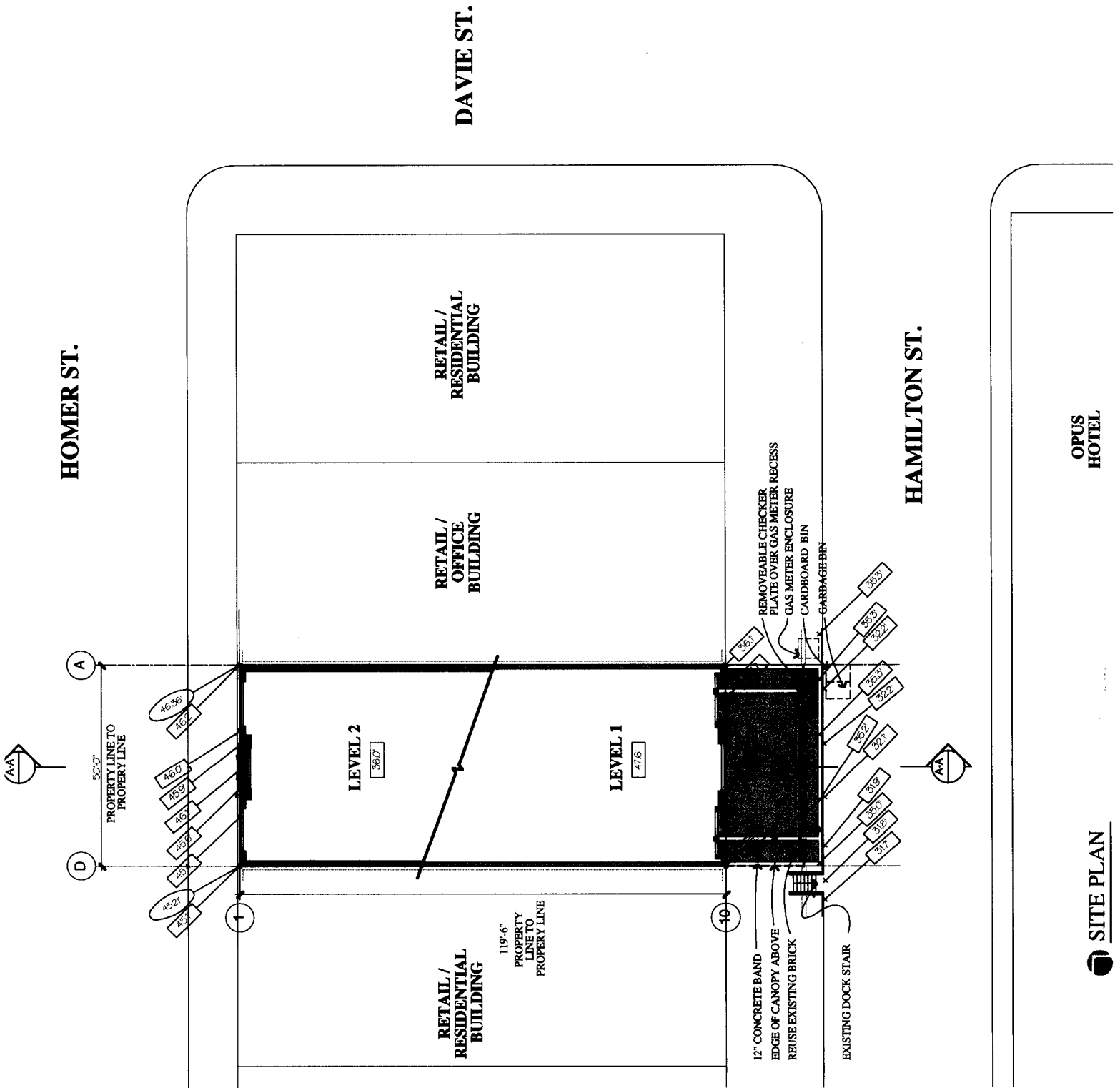
The Director of Planning may relax parking requirements in the event of hardship caused by heritage retention for either, (a) parking requirements for existing heritage buildings or, (b) provision of pay-in-lieu stalls for residential uses. Staff determine that it is not practical to provide parking on site. Access cannot occur off of Hamilton Street because of the loading dock, and it is not practical to provide parking access off Homer Street because of the large grade difference to the basement. In this context, the Director of Planning (consistent with previous projects) is prepared to relax the parking requirements for the existing warehouse and permit nine pay-in-lieu stalls for the new residential construction.

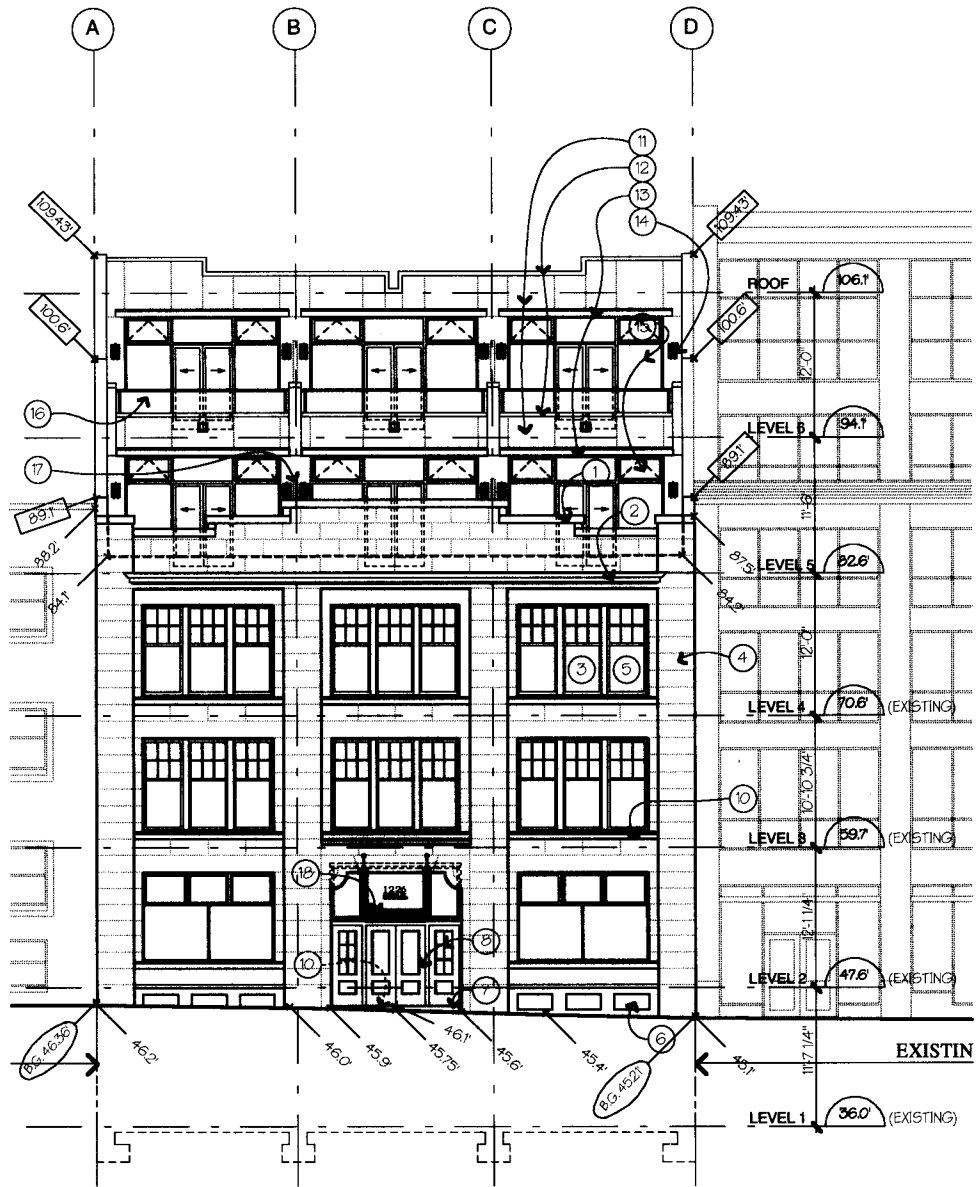
Financial Implications: A financial analysis of the project was provided by the applicant and analyzed by staff. The Manager of Real Estate Services advises that the additional residential floor space would not provide the applicant with an extraordinary profit. The owner is prepared to accept the zoning variance proposed in the HRA as fair compensation for the designation and the HRA obligations, and will waive future claims for compensation.

CONCLUSION

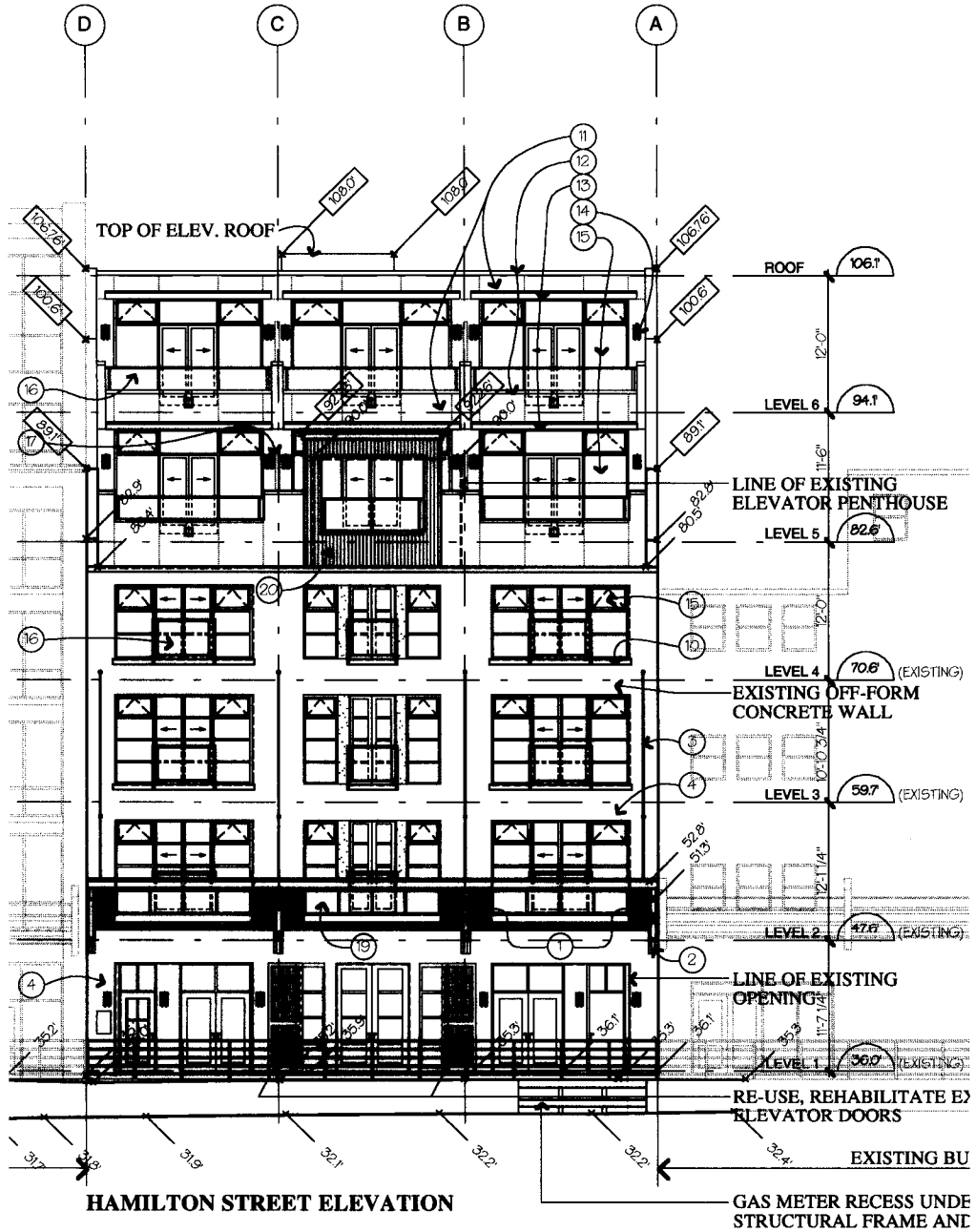
The "Ellison Building" at 1226 Homer Street is a good example of a second generation warehouse in the Yaletown Historic Area. The owner proposes to rehabilitate the building and convert it to market residential units with retail/restaurant at grade. The recommended Heritage Revitalization Agreement and designation will secure the long term protection and conservation of this building.

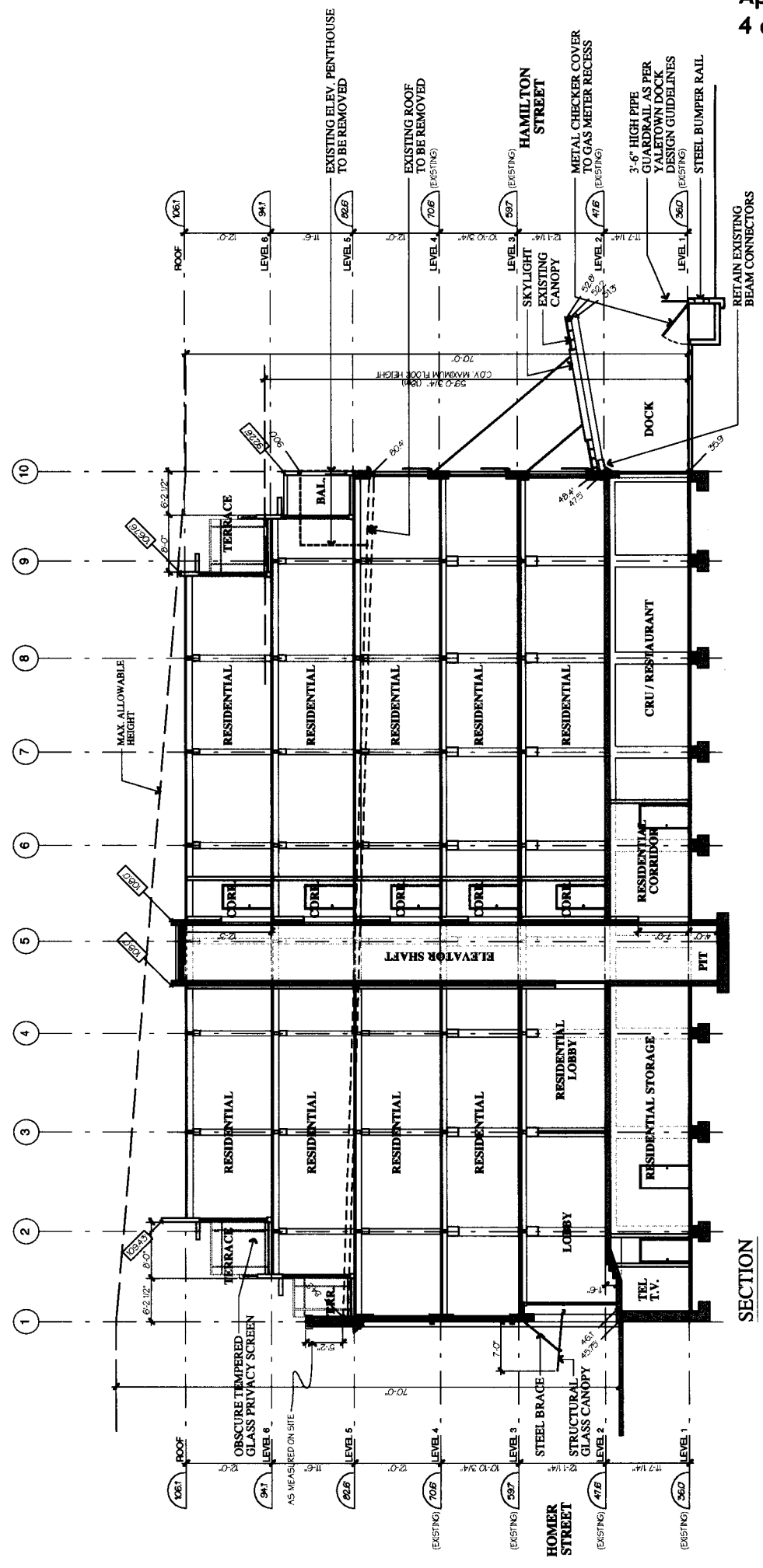
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HOMER STREET ELEVATION





SECTION