

CITY OF BETHLEHEM

Department of Planning and Zoning

Interoffice Memo

TO: Planning Commission Members

FROM: Tracy E. Samuelson, Assistant Director of Planning and Zoning

RE: Waiver Request for Roof Sign and Front Yard Setback at The Factory, 315 Columbia Street

DATE: July 25, 2018

Enclosed are a roof sign and setback waiver request letter from The Factory dated July 23, 2018, roof sign schematics, and a dimensioned site plan for the proposed elevated addition to the front of the existing building. The Factory LLC is requesting two waivers for the following:

- Exterior illuminated roof sign (6' by 43') – Roof signs prohibited (see Section 1320.07 g)
- Elevated building addition (5.5' irreg.) at front – Insufficient front yard setback (10' required; 4.5' proposed)

Article 1308.01.c of the Zoning Ordinance allows waivers to the sign and dimensional regulations in the Zoning Ordinance to be granted by the Planning Commission for properties located in the IR zone if existing site conditions, the nature of the proposed use, hardships, or innovations in technology warrant a waiver.

Attached is a letter from The Factory's Director of Operations dated July 23, 2018, highlighting the reasons for the waiver requests. We recommend the granting of the waiver requests for the following reasons:

1. The building is located on Columbia Street and is difficult to see from 3rd Street since it is directly behind the Charter Arts High School. The proposed roof sign will assist in locating this building. Also, a wall sign would permit much more square footage (20% of front wall square footage) than the size of the proposed roof sign, which is only 1.8% of the square footage of the front wall.
2. The proposed triangular building addition at front is very small and is located over 9' above grade. It will not affect any pedestrian traffic directly below it. The three triangular projections will add color and diversity to a rather plain container type building at the front corner of the lot.

This waiver request will be presented at the July 30, 2018 Planning Commission Meeting.



Tracy E. Samuelson
Assistant Director of Planning and Zoning



Factory LLC
315 Columbia Street
Bethlehem, PA 18042
201.340.2830

Tracy E. Samuelson
Assistant Director, Planning and Zoning
City of Bethlehem
10 E. Church Street
Bethlehem, PA 18018

July 23, 2018

Dear Tracy,

Please accept our requests for (2) two Zoning Ordinance waivers as follows:

Section 1320.07G of the Zoning Ordinance, General Sign Regulations, for a proposed sign at Factory LLC, which is proposed to be located on the roof of the Factory building along Columbia Street.

Section 1306.01 (b) of the Zoning Ordinance Dimensional Regulations for Primarily Non-Residential Districts, Chart Subsection 10, IR Zone Minimum Front Yard Setback, for a proposed modification to an existing building exterior wall that will reduce the existing setback.

In addition to this letter, please find partial site plans with color elevations, as well as image examples of similar sign waivers and architecture provided recently as part of the Bethlehem Industrial Redevelopment (IR) District, and as part of our request to the Planning Commission for a waiver in accordance with Section 1308.01.C, Modifications, of the Zoning Ordinances.

Factory is located in the Bethlehem IR Zone and has a vested interest in not only supporting the City's economic development goals, but also its community development goals. The two major thrusts in these efforts were Bethlehem Works, with its modern cultural programming, community education and outreach initiatives, and the Sands casino, conference center, hotel, outlet mall and the new arts/cultural center that brought new jobs and revenue to the area. Factory will not only offer a significant contribution in all of these areas, but also bridge more gaps that connect our local communities, schools, universities, and outreach programs with business innovation and development initiatives. By integrating local community innovation to the current IR model, we effectively offer more opportunities to merge the efforts of economic and community development, and to ultimately help pave the way to more effective commercial development in the area.

That said, an important component in the IR strategy is to project continuity in preserving the historical "Big Steel" architecture, bold presentations of new ideas and land marks, community pride, and to revitalize an attractive vibrant thriving commercial environment. As part of Factory's efforts to maintain this continuity, we have refurbished the original brick, steel, and roofing inside and out on the Factory building at 315 Columbia Street to preserve its historical architecture. Even the large glass areas of the building were preserved with new energy efficient window systems that hold on to the historical tones. In short, Bethlehem Steel still shines through at Factory inside and out, and like other waivers in the first

phases of the IR project, the addition of a few bold architectural attributes at Factory will help it maintain the look, feel and spirit of the IR goals that bolster community pride and commercial interest in the area. Factory's goals are to redevelop and revitalize a historical part of the Southside Bethlehem industrial revolution and innovation of the 1940's, into a modern premier innovation center for food, beverage and pet food, that captures the passions of the millennial generation and gives birth to the next revolution of innovation and growth in Southside Bethlehem.

These waiver requests fall under Article 1351.03, Variances, of the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO), where variances or waivers can be granted when practical difficulties result from strict compliance with the regulations. In the classification of districts section of the Zoning Ordinance, the IR Zone "promotes the economic revitalization on underutilized properties" and "allows...flexible design standards to be applied during the site plan approval process".

Under Section 1320.07G, General Sign Regulations, signage that extends beyond a building rooftop is not permitted. Factory is requesting a waiver to allow a roof-top mounted sign consisting of steel block letters spelling the word "FACTORY" as designated on the partial site plan provided. The nominal size of the sign is 6' x 43' or 258 square feet (only about 1.8% of the permissible 20% area of a wall sign for the same building). The depth of the sign letters are about 6" and protrude no more than 3" past the face of the building. The following are a few arguments/benefits for the roof-top mounted sign at Factory.

- Like Bethlehem Works and Sands, Factory will also be a destination point for Southside Bethlehem. As a destination point, Factory will not only draw in the local and surrounding communities, but will also draw food, beverage and pet food businesses and commercial opportunities from all over the country and internationally who will be looking to partner with Factory as a premier innovation center. Many of these businesses will hopefully even find new homes in Southside Bethlehem.
- The main Factory building is located on Columbia Street (a minor street) a block off 3rd Street directly behind the Charter Arts School and not easily seen or identifiable from 3rd Street. As provided images will show, a rooftop sign will make locating this destination point significantly easier.
- The main factory building is significantly lower than all the surrounding buildings making it difficult to impossible to identify the building itself let alone a wall sign driving past on main roads. A rooftop sign can help identify the building from a variety of main streets where the building would otherwise not be visible.
- A perfect example of a similar building lower than the surrounding buildings, where a waiver was granted for similar reasons, is the PBS39 Building on 839 Sesame Street. Please see Images 6 & 8.
- The large aerial steel letters would reflect and contribute to the general theme of "big steel" and bold architectural statements in the IR Zone. Please see Images 1, 3, 4, & 7.

Under Section 1306.01.(b) of the Zoning Ordinance Dimensional Regulations for Primarily Non-Residential Districts, Chart Subsection 10, IR Zone Minimum Front Yard Setback should be (10) feet. Factory is requesting a waiver to allow steel architecture (a portion of shipping containers modified into office space) to protrude through the wall of the existing building into the existing setback on Columbia Street. Details are as follows:

- Current front yard setbacks to the existing Factory building on the corner of Columbia and Polk Streets are (10) feet from Columbia Street right-of-way and (23) feet from Polk Street right-of-

way. This request only references a waiver for the Columbia Street front yard setback of (10) feet.

- The proposed portions of architectural office space would extend (5.5) feet from the existing building wall reducing the front yard setback from the Columbia Street right-of-way from (10) feet to (4.5) feet.
- The height off the ground of the proposed portions of architectural office space at the lowest point would be (9.6) feet above the ground (well above the minimum (7) feet of required height under overhead structure).
- The proposed architectural office space modifications do not impact the sight triangle or impact any walkways, traffic or obstruct visibility.
- We believe that the spirit of the proposed architectural modification would not only reflect and contribute to the general theme of "big steel" and bold architectural statements in the IR Zone, but add artistic expression and inspiration to students and visitors at the Charter Arts School across the street.
- Finally, in addition to the proposed architectural office space modifications, Factory will be proposing a sidewalk along Columbia Street that extends the westerly sidewalk in front of Factory, along Columbia Street under the proposed architectural office space modifications, to the corner of Columbia and Polk Streets. Currently there are no sidewalks along Columbia Street on either side that extend uninterrupted from Taylor Street to Polk Street causing Students of the Charter Arts School and the general public to enter the street and traffic at various points while traveling East-West. As part of our efforts to improve the aesthetics of the community and IR Zone, we feel that providing the students of the Charter Arts School and the general public an uninterrupted sidewalk with interesting character and attributes will improve community safety while also adding to the architectural and artistic tones of the area.

We believe our requested waivers are a perfect example of flexible design for the IR Zoning district, intended to contribute and bolster the historical elements of Bethlehem Steel, the bold and artistic architectural statements that identify local destination landmarks, and fit within the spirit of the community and commercial goals. We have provided examples of a number of other businesses within the IR Zone that have used similar roof top and aerial signage and bold architecture for your reference.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and we look forward to working with you to support building a great community.

Best Regards,



Michael Palmer
Director of Operations
Factory LLC



FACTORY INNOVATION CENTER - SCHEME "COLOR ALMOND"
WEST END VIEW FROM COLUMBIA ST 12 JUN 18



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FACTORY INNOVATION CENTER

335 COLUMBIA STREET
 BETHLEHEM, PA

SIGN ELEVATION OPTION 'A'

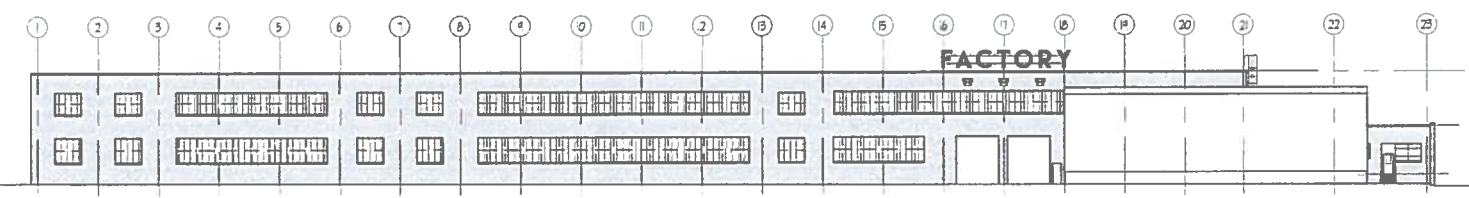
SCALE AS NOTED

DATE 30 MAY 18 REVISION 07 JUN 18

1

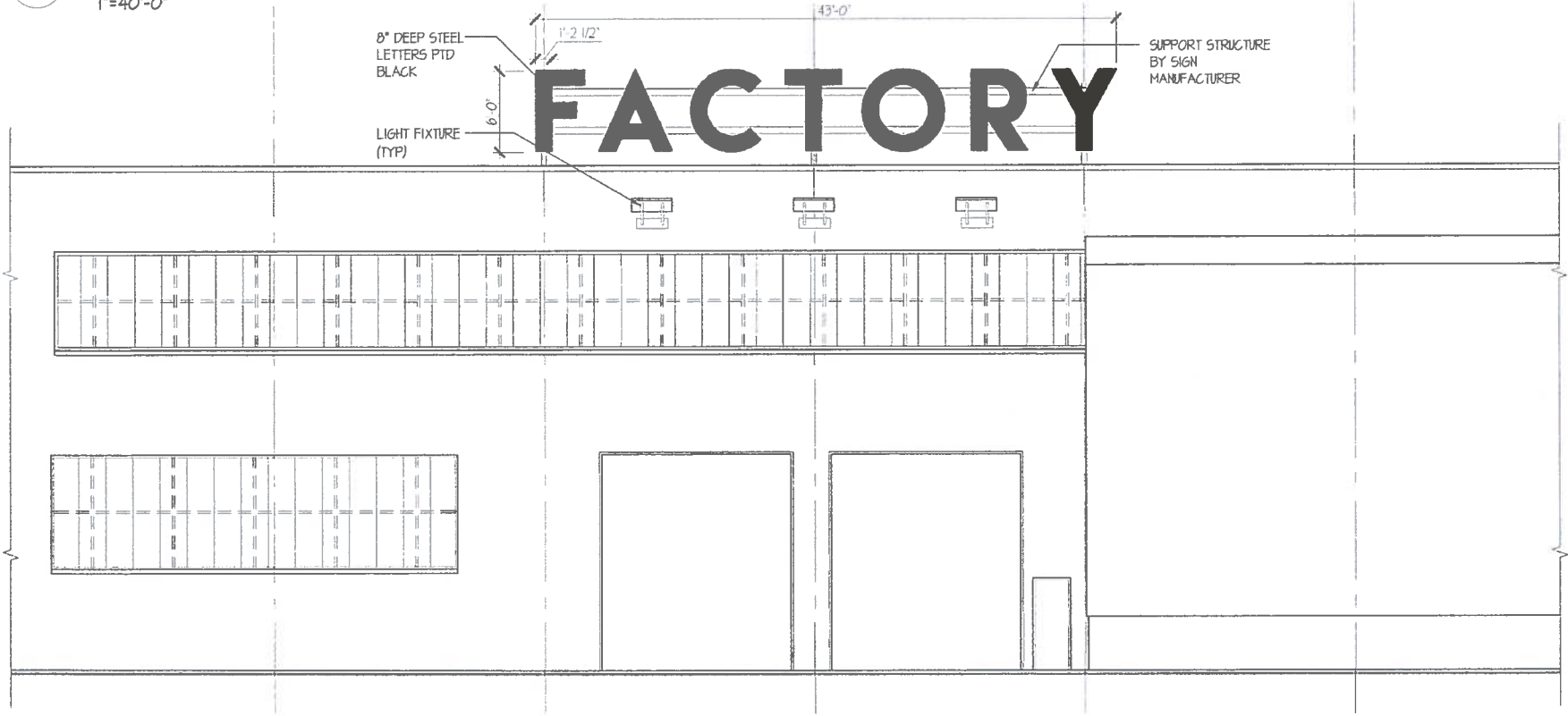
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 COMMISSION 16066.01

DRAWING SK.01A



2 SOUTH ELEVATION W/ SIGNAGE

1"=40'-0"



1 PARTIAL SOUTH ELEVATION

1/8"=1'-0"

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CARMINE CERMINARA, AIA
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 224 COURTYARD DRIVE
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FACTORY, LLC
 COOLER SHOW ROOM

315 COLUMBIA STREET
 BETHLEHEM, PA

1ST FLOOR PROPOSED SCHEMATIC

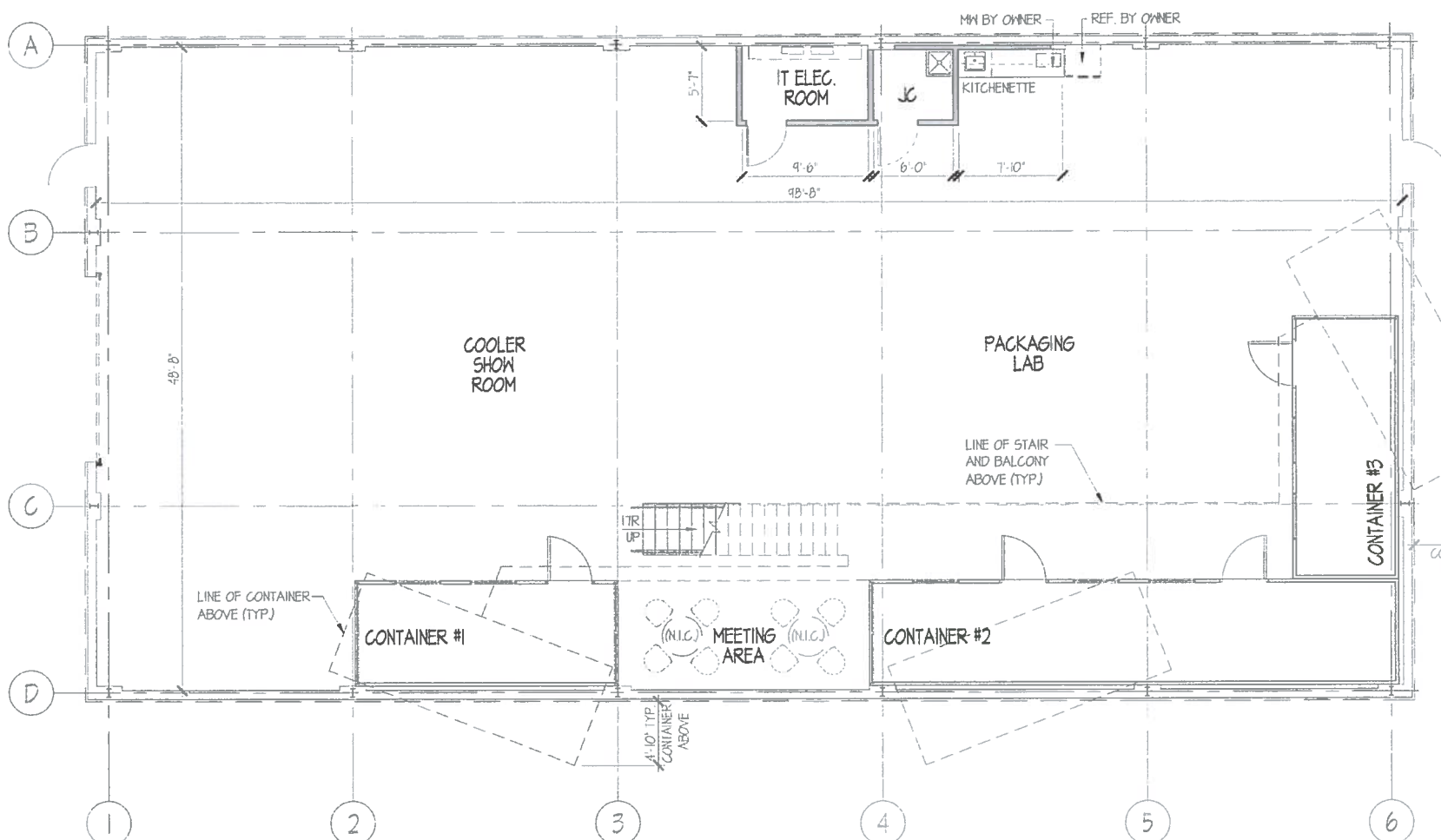
SCALE 1/8"=1'-0"

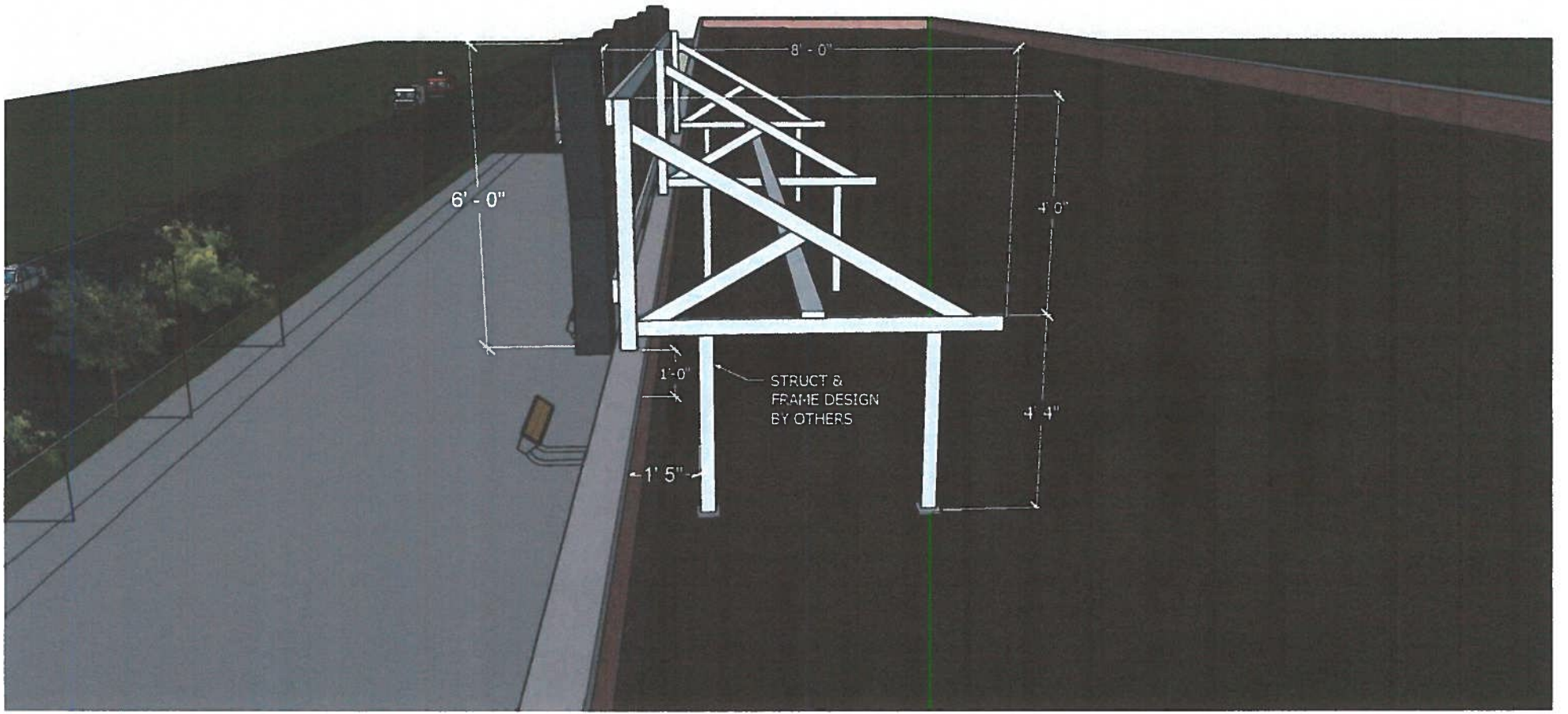
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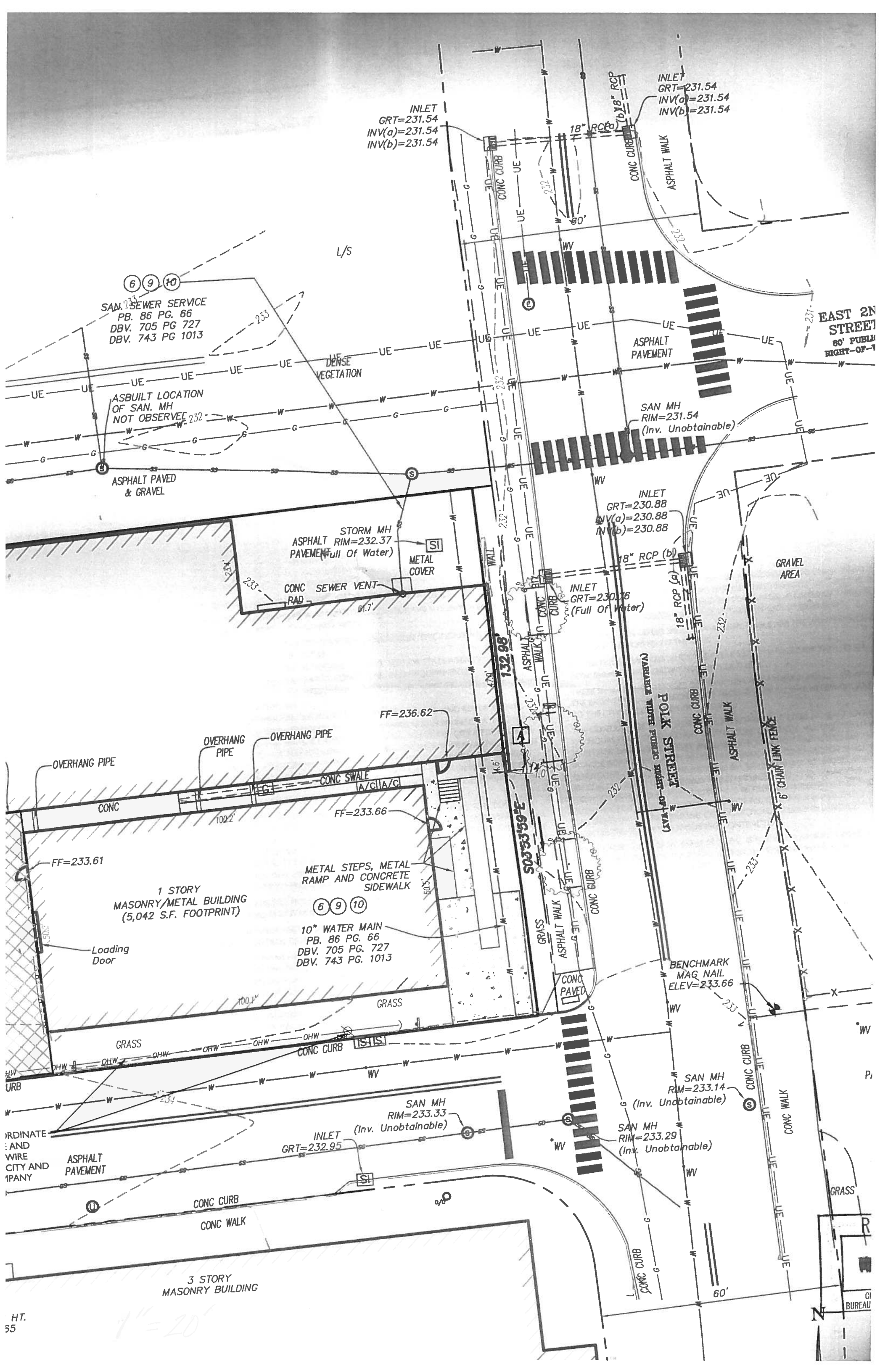
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FACTORY INNOVATION CENTER - FRAMING CONCEPTUAL DESIGN
EAST VIEW AT ROOF TOP 12 JUN 18





INLET
GRT=231.54
INV(a)=231.54
INV(b)=231.54

INLET
GRT=231.54
INV(a)=231.54
INV(b)=231.54

SAN SEWER SERVICE
PB. 86 PG. 66
DBV. 705 PG 727
DBV. 743 PG 1013

ASBUILT LOCATION
OF SAN. MH
NOT OBSERVED

ASPHALT PAVED
& GRAVEL

STORM MH
ASPHALT RIM=232.37
PAVEMENT (Full Of Water)

CONC SEWER VENT
RAD

INLET
GRT=230.88
INV(a)=230.88
INV(b)=230.88

INLET
GRT=230.76
(Full Of Water)

FF=236.62

OVERHANG PIPE

OVERHANG PIPE

OVERHANG PIPE

CONC

CONC SWALE
A/C/A/C

FF=233.66

FF=233.61

1 STORY
MASONRY/METAL BUILDING
(5,042 S.F. FOOTPRINT)

Loading Door

METAL STEPS, METAL
RAMP AND CONCRETE
SIDEWALK

10" WATER MAIN
PB. 86 PG. 66
DBV. 705 PG. 727
DBV. 743 PG. 1013

GRASS

GRASS

GRASS

GRASS

GRASS

CONC CURB

SAN MH
RIM=233.33
(Inv. Unobtainable)

INLET
GRT=232.95

SAN MH
RIM=233.14
(Inv. Unobtainable)

SAN MH
RIM=233.29
(Inv. Unobtainable)

BENCHMARK
MAG NAIL
ELEV=233.66

CONC CURB

CONC WALK

3 STORY
MASONRY BUILDING

EAST 2ND
STREET
60' PUBLIC
RIGHT-OF-WAY

GRAVEL
AREA

POLK STREET
PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY

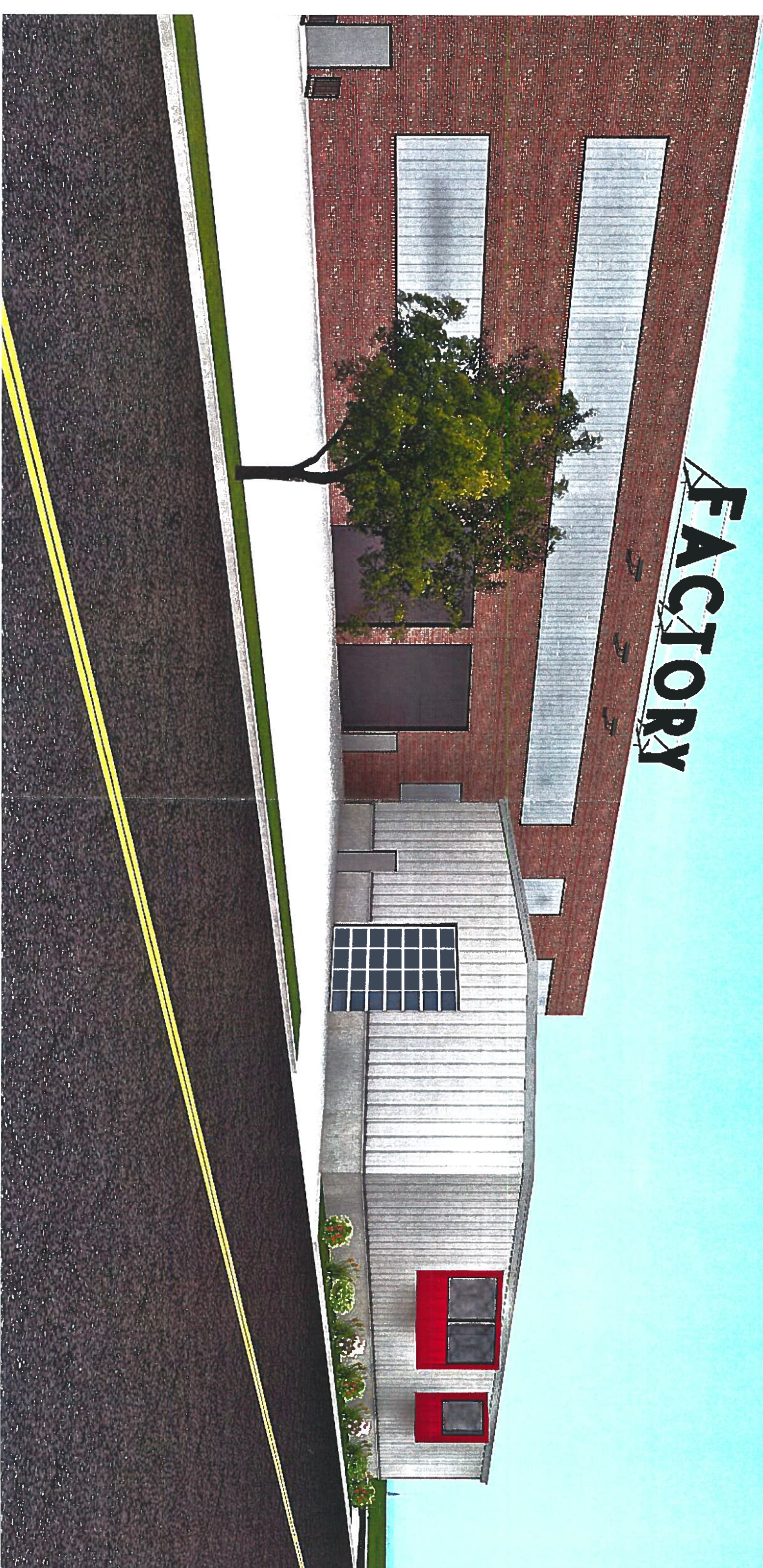
6" CHAIN LINK FENCE

CI BUREAU

HT. 55

1"=20'

FACTORY



✓



✓