Harvard Chabad Center for Jewish Life

38, 48, 54 Banks Street
Cambridge, MA

Cambridge Historic Commission

38-40, 48, & 54 Banks Street, Cambridge

December 3, 2025

Owner: Lubavitch of Cambridge, Inc.

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ARCHITECTS

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Harvard Chabad Center for Jewish Life

Summary

- Historic District: No
- Neighborhood Conservation District: No
- Zone: C-1 Multifamily Dwellings
- The site is a combined parcel consisting of 38-40, 48 and 54-56 Banks St.
- No change to proposed demolition of 54-56 Banks Street as per Feb. 6 2025 CHC hearing CHC determination letter Feb. 27, 2025.
- Revised proposal includes demolition of 38-40 Banks Street, 48 Banks Street.



Dimensional Form

Project Address: 38-40, 48, 54-56 Banks Street **Application Date:** 4/18/2025

	Existing	Allowed or Required (max/min)	Proposed	Permitted
Lot Area (sq ft)	12,206 SF	5,000 SF (min)	12,206 SF	Yes
Lot Width (ft)	169.5'	50' (min)	169.5'	Yes
Total Gross Floor Area (sq ft)	9,642 GFA	9,155 GFA	42,669 GFA	WAIVER *
Residential Base				
Non-Residential Base				
Inclusionary Housing Bonus				WAIVER *
Total Floor Area Ratio	0.79	0.75	3.5	WAIVER *
Residential Base	0.79	0.75	3.5	
Non-Residential Base				
Inclusionary Housing Bonus				WAIVER *
Total Dwelling Units	1		3	
Base Units	1		0	
Inclusionary Bonus Units	N/A		0	WAIVER *
Base Lot Area / Unit (sq ft)				
Total Lot Area / Unit (sq ft)	12,206 sf			
Building Height(s) (ft)	38'-1"	35' NR / 74' R total	50' NR / 70'R total	WAIVER *
Front Yard Setback (ft)	10', 48', 8'	10', 10'	10', 10'	WAIVER *
Side Yard Setback (ft)	2', N/A, N/A (left)	2'(exg), 21.5', 11' (left)	5' 6", 6', 7' (left)	WAIVER *
Side Yard Setback (ft)	N/A, N/A, 20' (right)	14', 13.5', 7.5' (right)	8', 9' (right)	WAIVER *
Rear Yard Setback (ft)	17', 1'-4", 12'	N/A	N/A	WAIVER *
Open Space (% of Lot Area)	47%	30%	61.56	
Private Open Space	47%	50% of Open Sp.	51.3%	
Permeable Open Space	N/A	50% of Open Sp.	57.5%	
Other Open Space (Specify)	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Off-Street Parking Spaces	10	0	6	Yes
Long-Term Bicycle Parking	0	6	3	WAIVER *
Short-Term Bicycle Parking	0	15	1	WAIVER *
Loading Bays	0	1	0 (street space)	WAIVER *

Use space below and/or attached pages for additional notes:

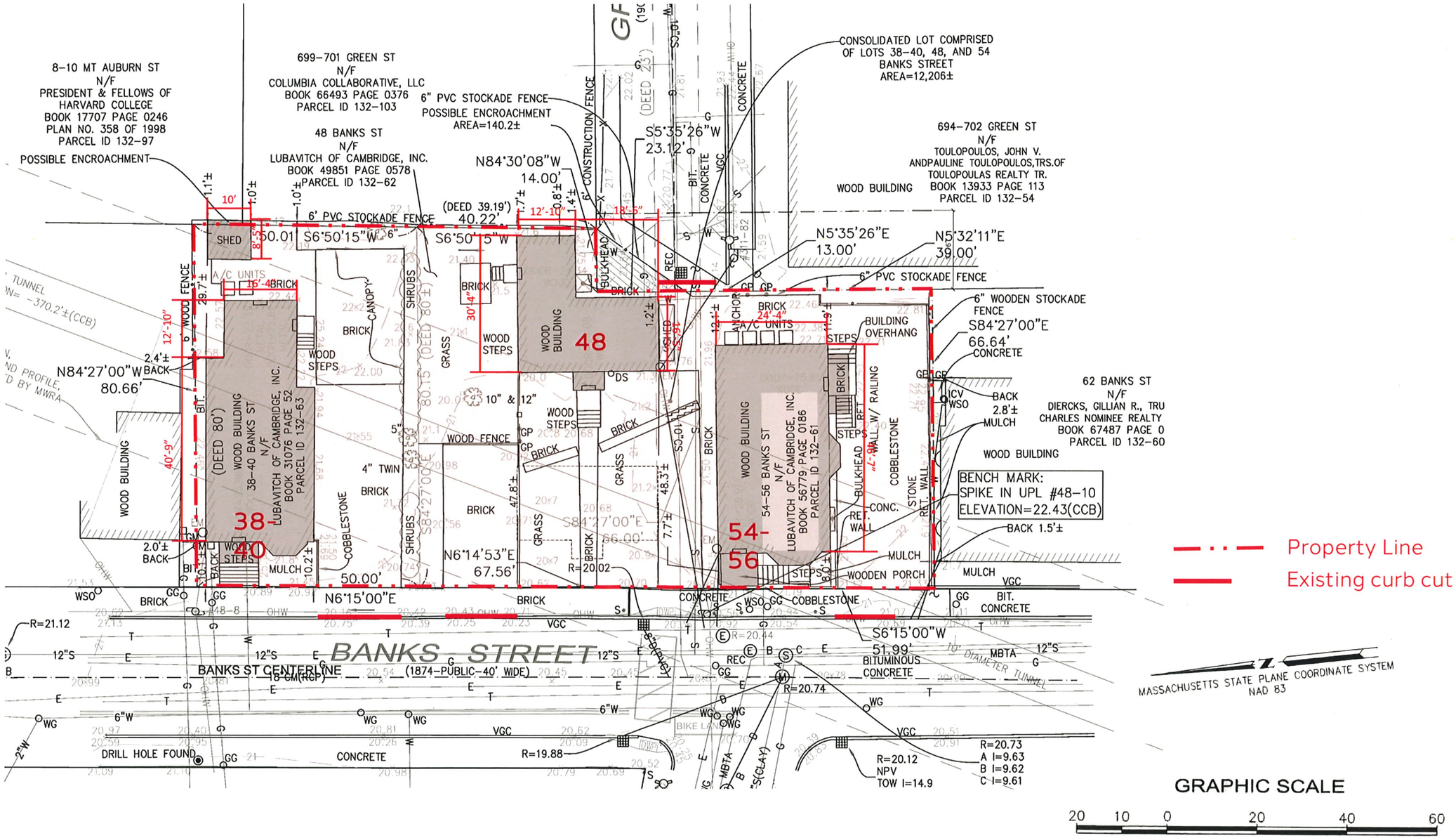
WAIVER* = Project seeking waivers from the following sections (see attached table): Article 19 and Article 22. For C-1 district, Table 5-1; Sections 5-24, 6.10-6.90, 6.100; and FAR, setbacks, and building height. For housing component in C-1 district, Sections 5.40 footnote 1, 2(a) & 37; and 11.203. For Non-residential requirements, Sections 4.33a footnote 19; and 8.20, et seq. Requirements for Special Permit under Sect. 4.56-57.

Waiver List

Inclusionary housing	For housing component in C-1 District, see Sects. 5.40 footnote 2(a) and 11.203

Site Plan

Existing



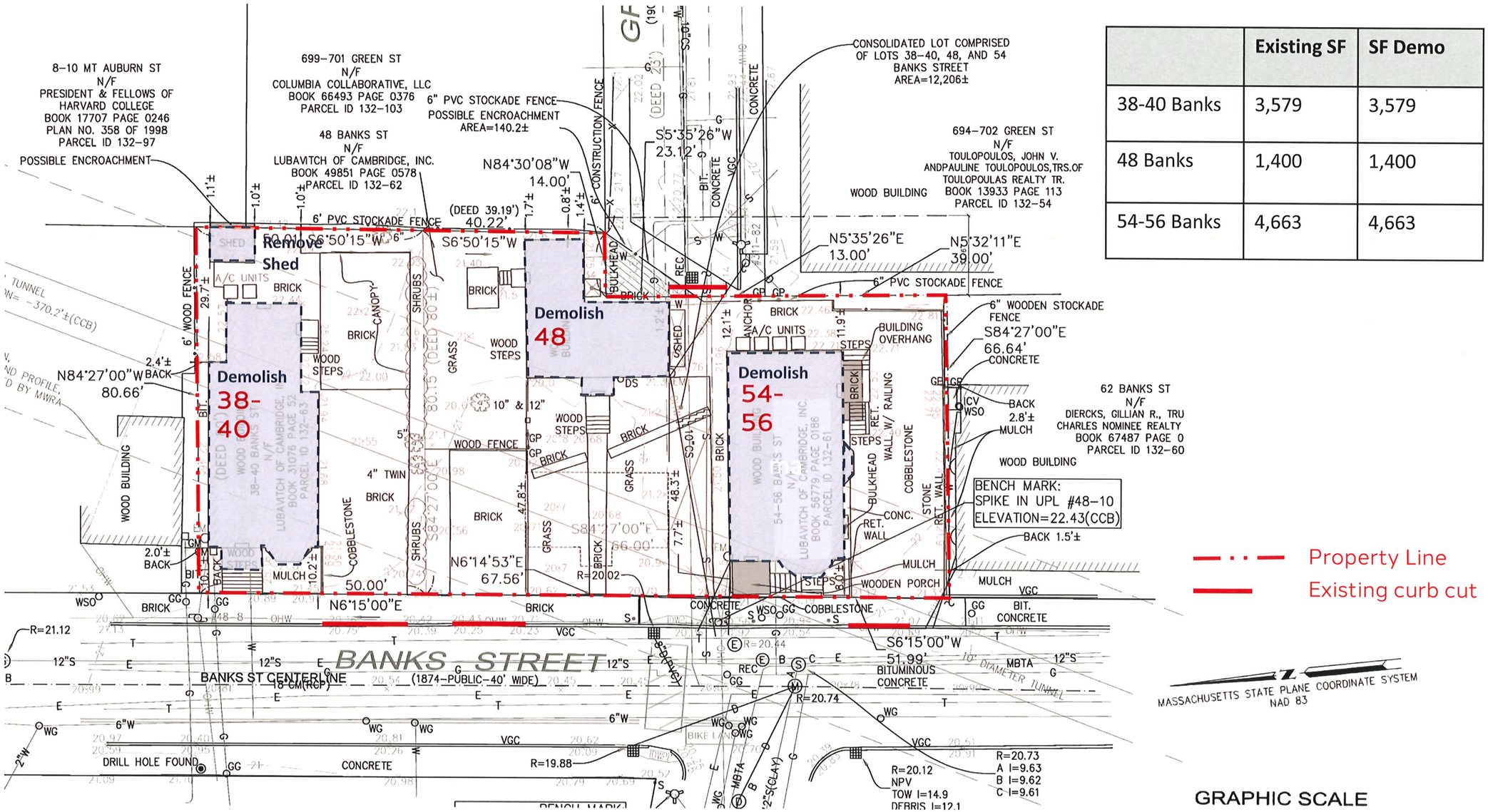
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Site Plan

Proposed Demolition



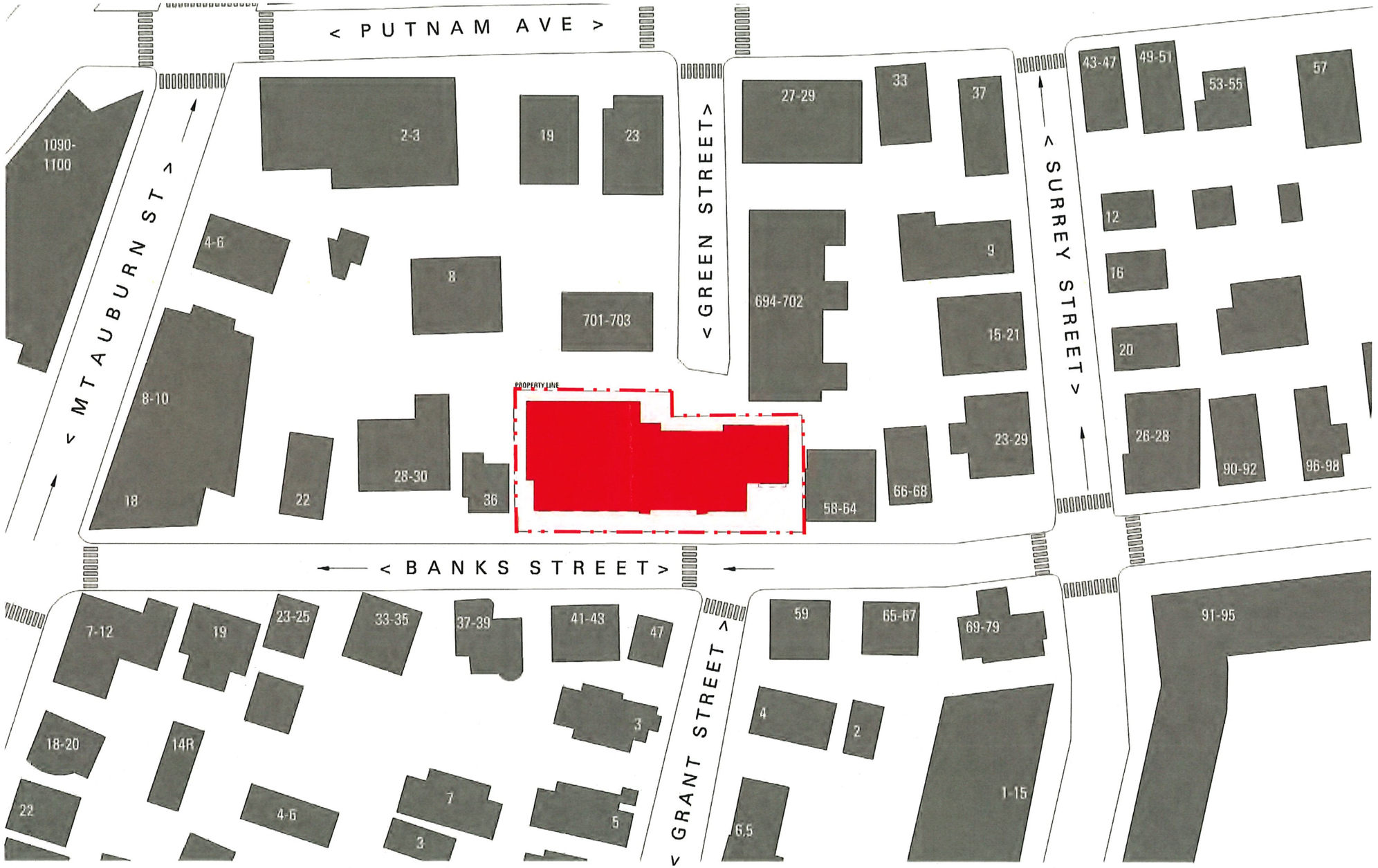
Property Line

Existing curb cut

	Existing SF	SF Demo
38-40 Banks	3,579	3,579
48 Banks	1,400	1,400
54-56 Banks	4,663	4,663

Site Plan

Context and Proposed



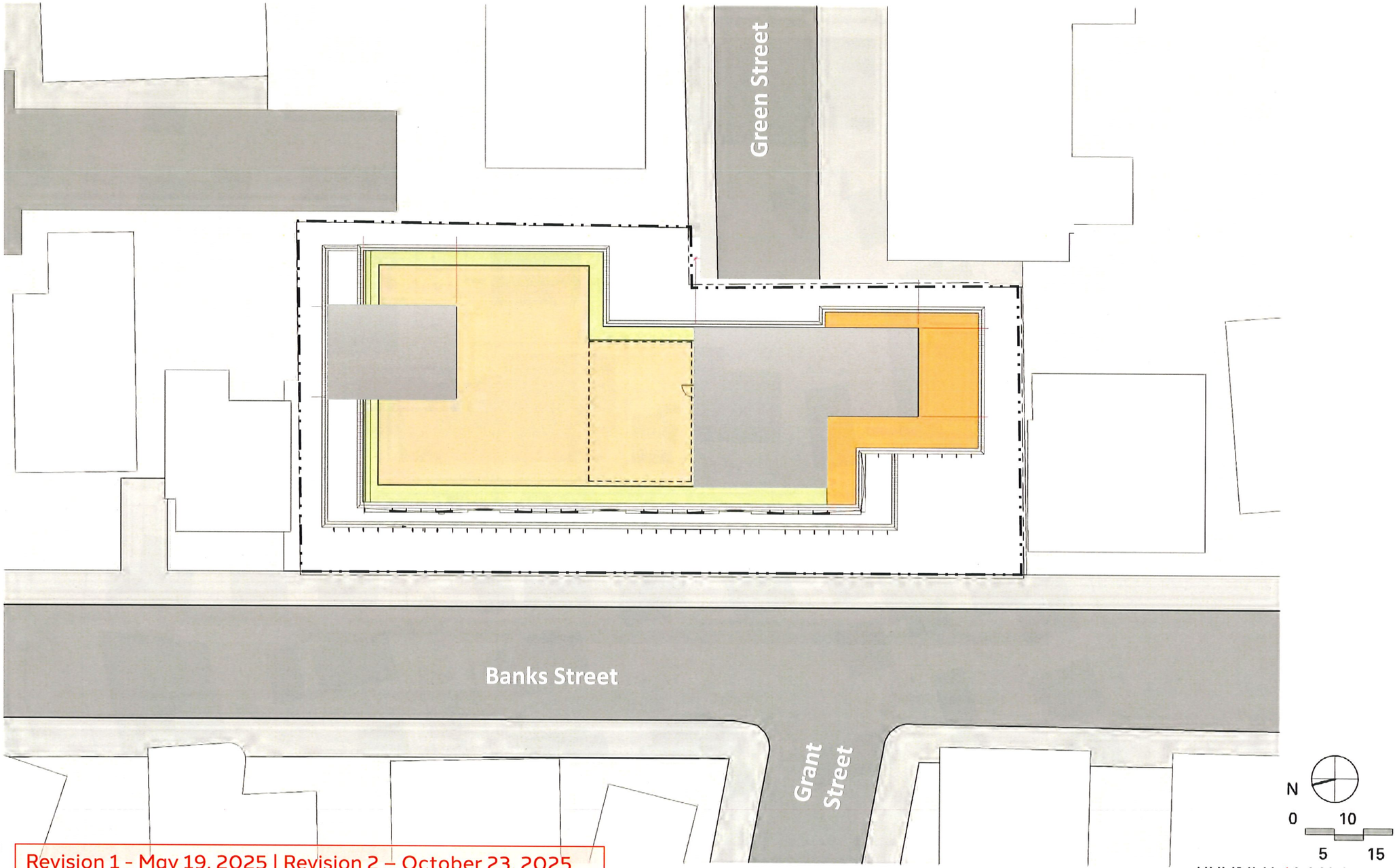
Property Line

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Site Plan
Proposed

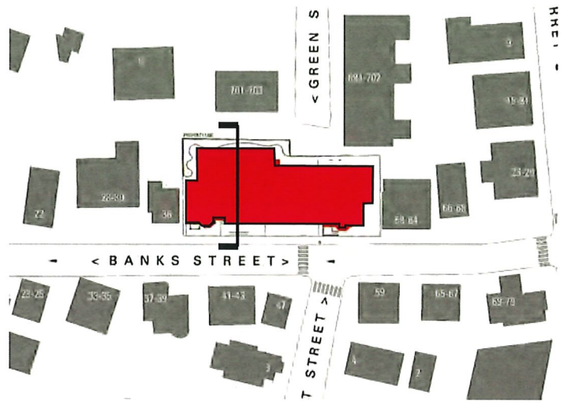


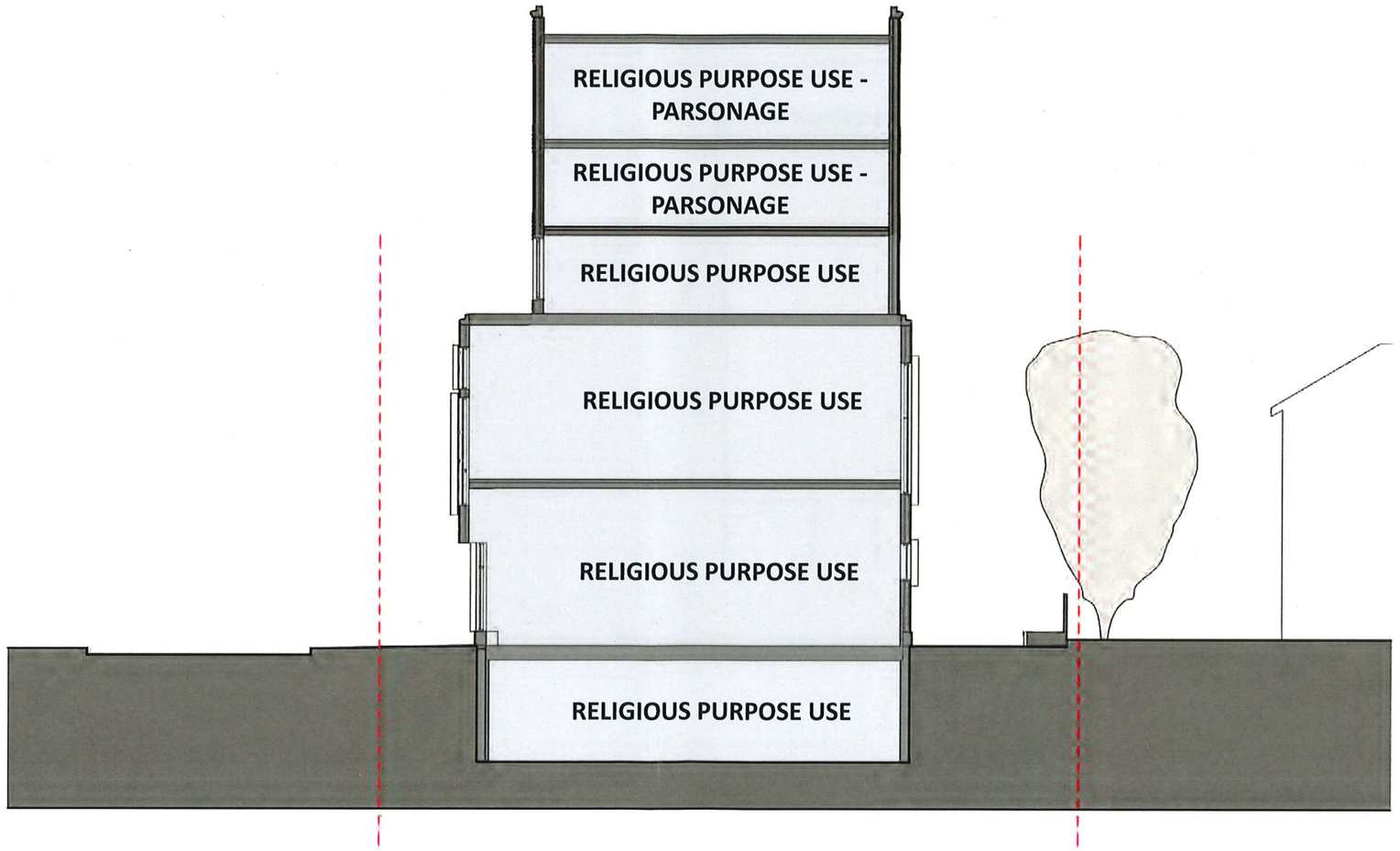
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Building Use Classification





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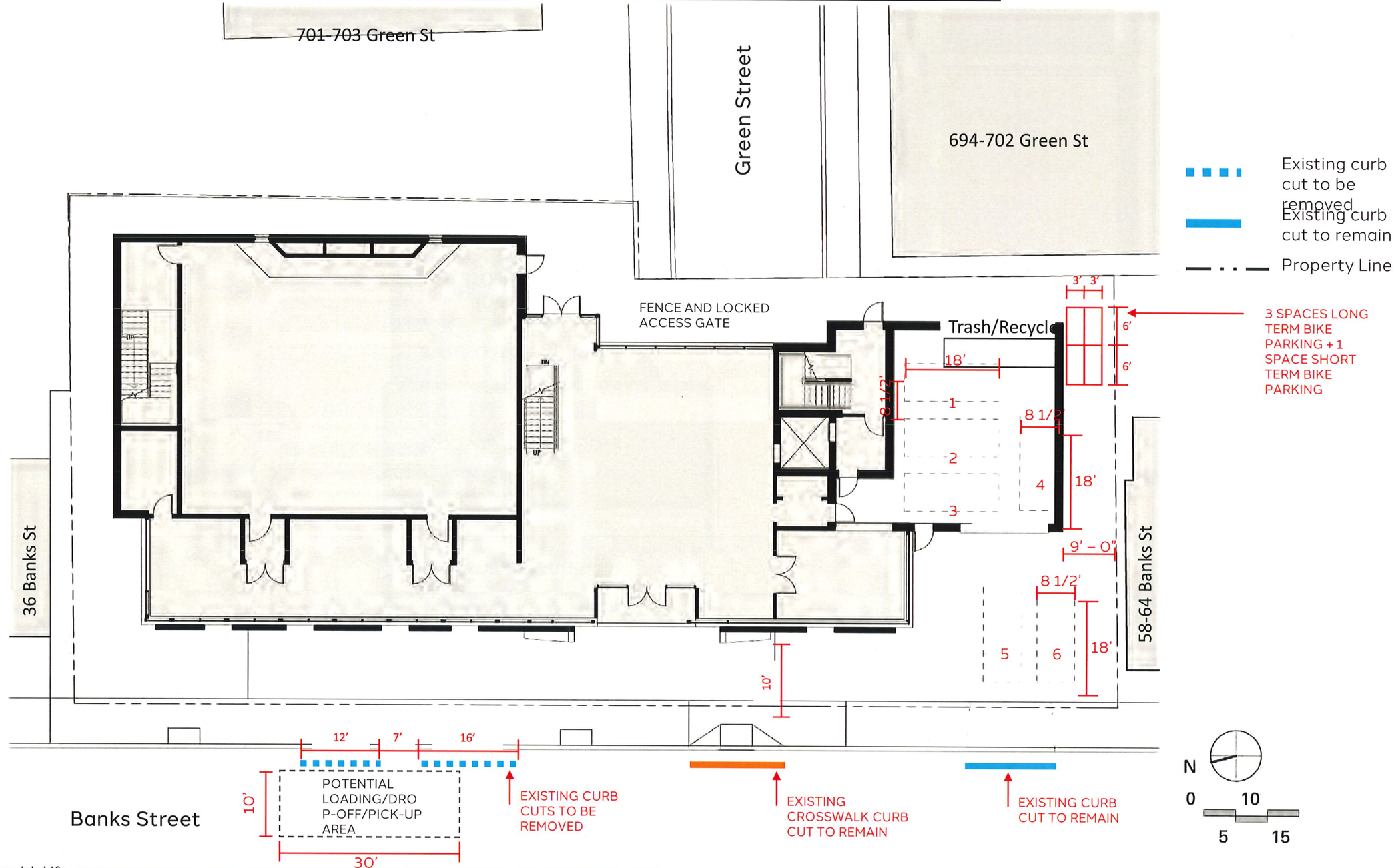
Site Diagram

Parking (Vehicles/Bikes)

Short Term Bike Parking – required and provided	
Religious Use	21
Total Required	21
Total Provided	1

Long Term Bike Parking – required and provided	
Religious Use	4
Total Required	4
Total Provided	3

Off Street Parking **Compliant** with section 6.42	
Religious Use	0
Total Required	0
Total Provided	6

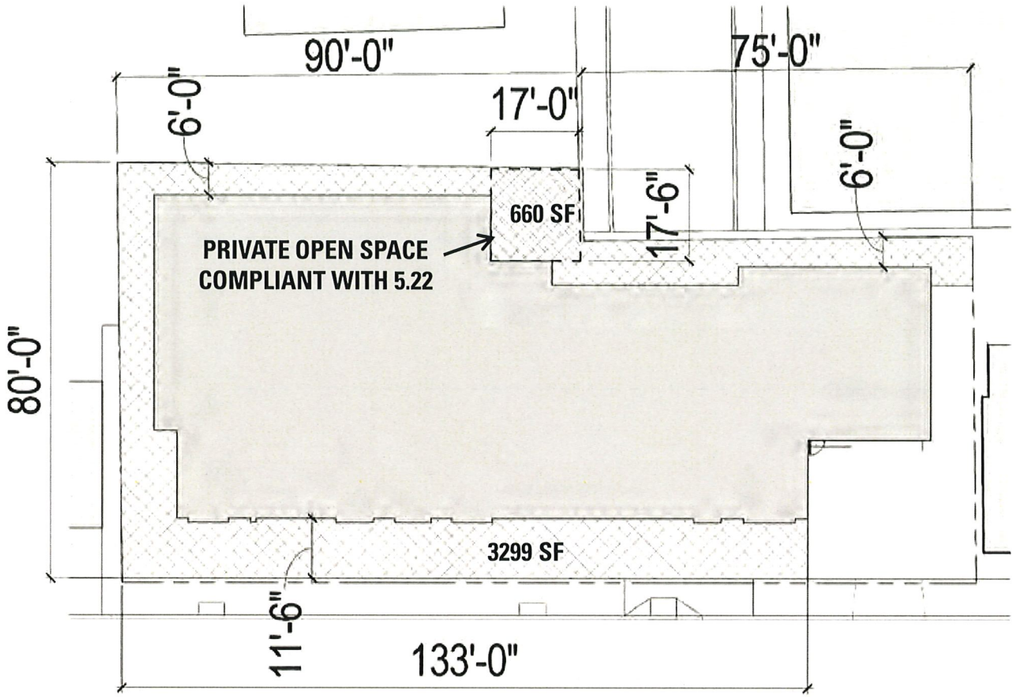


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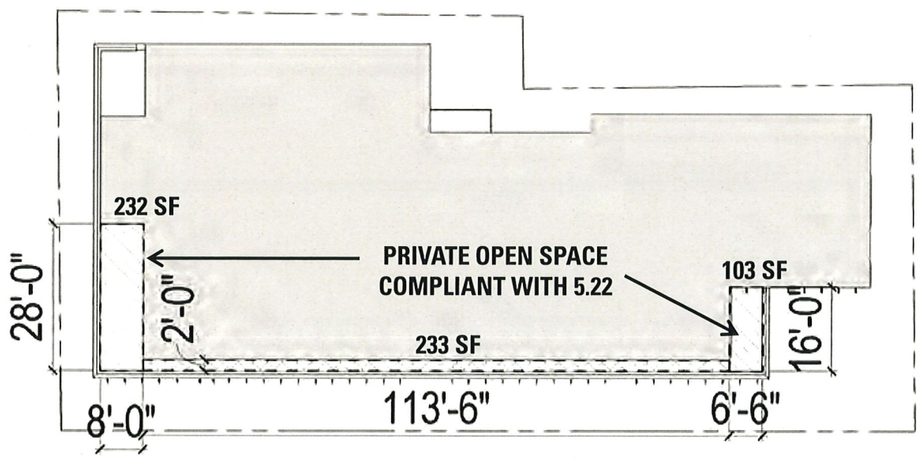
Open Space Calculations



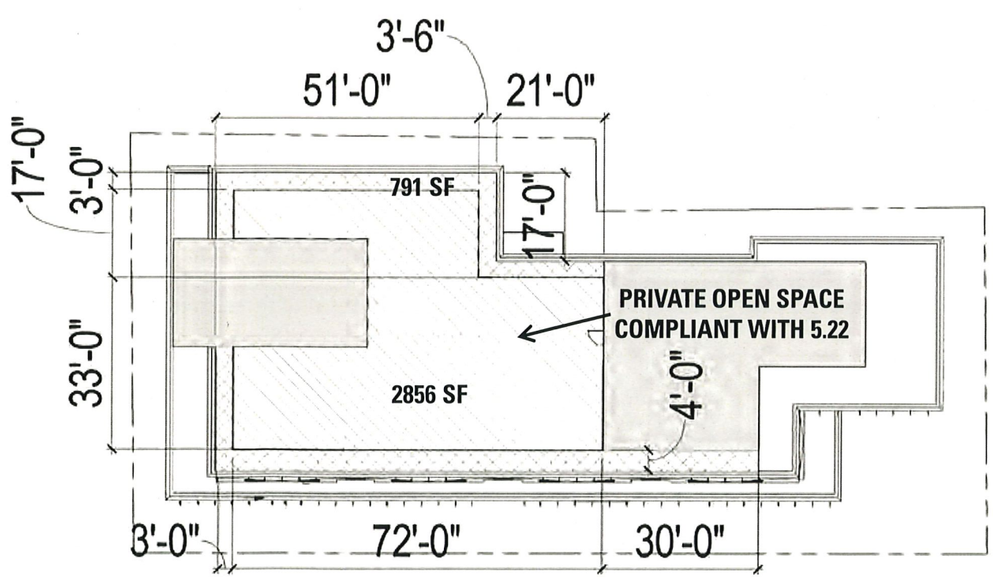
	Total Open Space SF	Private Open Space SF	Permeable Open Space SF
Ground Floor	3,299	660	3,299
3rd Floor Roof Deck	568	335	233
High Roof Deck	3,647	2,856	791
Total	7,514	3,851	4,323
% of Open Space SF	61.56%	51.3% of Total Open Space	57.5% of Total Open Space

Building is **compliant** with Cambridge Open Space requirements based on definitions in Section 5.22 of the March 28, 2025 version of Zoning Ordinance.

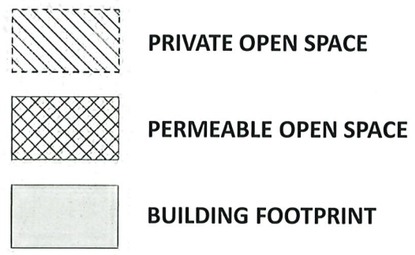
GROUND FLOOR



3RD FLOOR



ROOF LEVEL



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GFA Calculations

Proposed GFA	Non-Residential	Residential	Subtotal
Basement	8,283*	-	0
Ground Floor	7,528	-	7,528
Mezzanine	2,510	-	2,510
2nd Floor	7,886	-	7,886
3rd Floor	7,168	-	7,168
4th Floor	6,708	-	6,708
5th Floor	6,708	-	6,708
3rd Floor Roof Deck	335	-	335
High Roof Deck	1,446	-	1,746
Roof Access	2,110	-	2,110
Shade Canopy	800*	-	0
Total Gross Floor Area			42,699

* Exempt SF from GFA calculation

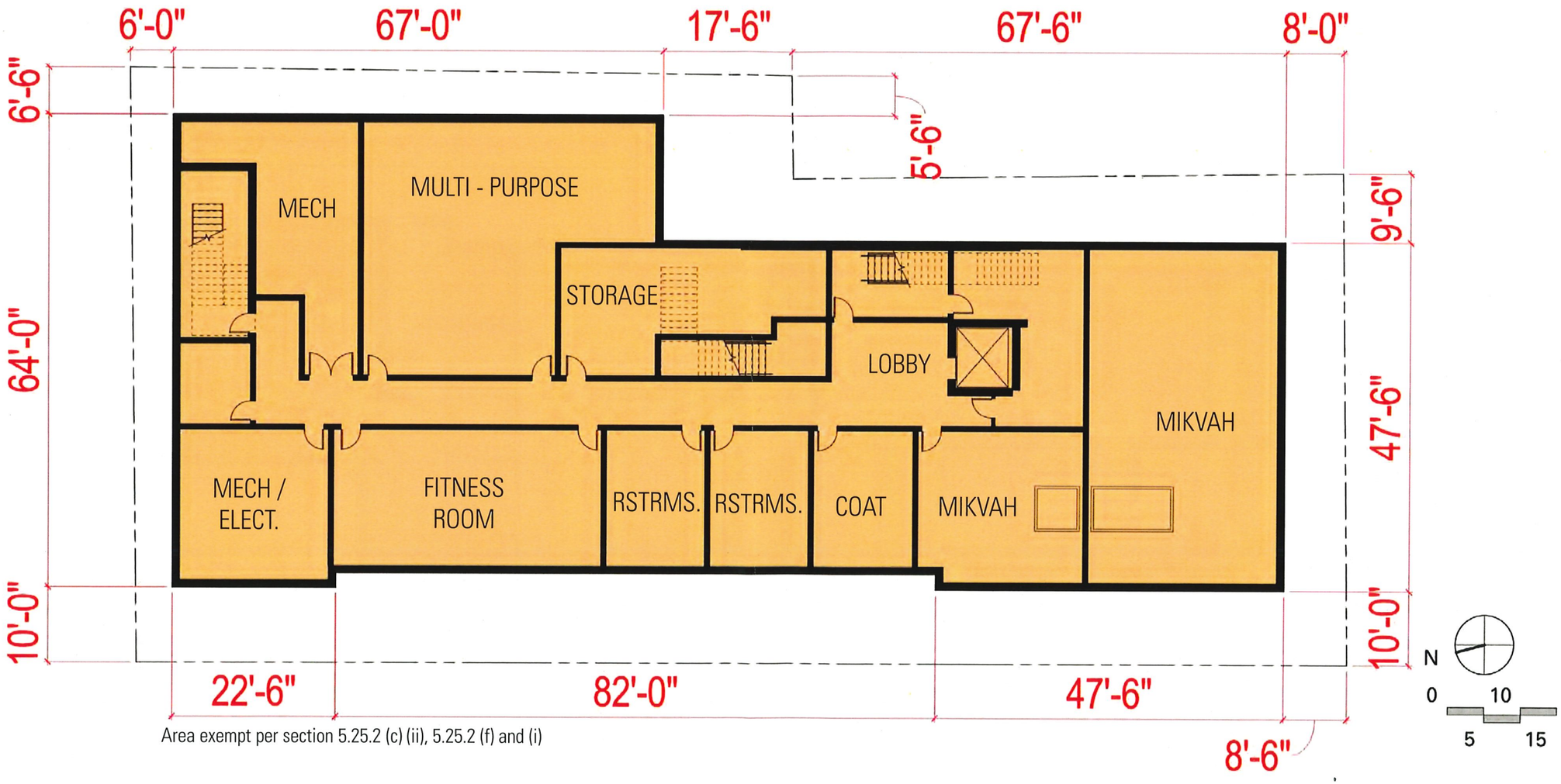
Site GSF	12,206
FAR	3.50

Proposed Plans

Basement Level

GROSS FLOOR AREA
GFA included per Zoning Section 5.25.1

EXEMPT FLOOR AREA
GFA not included per Zoning Section 5.25.2



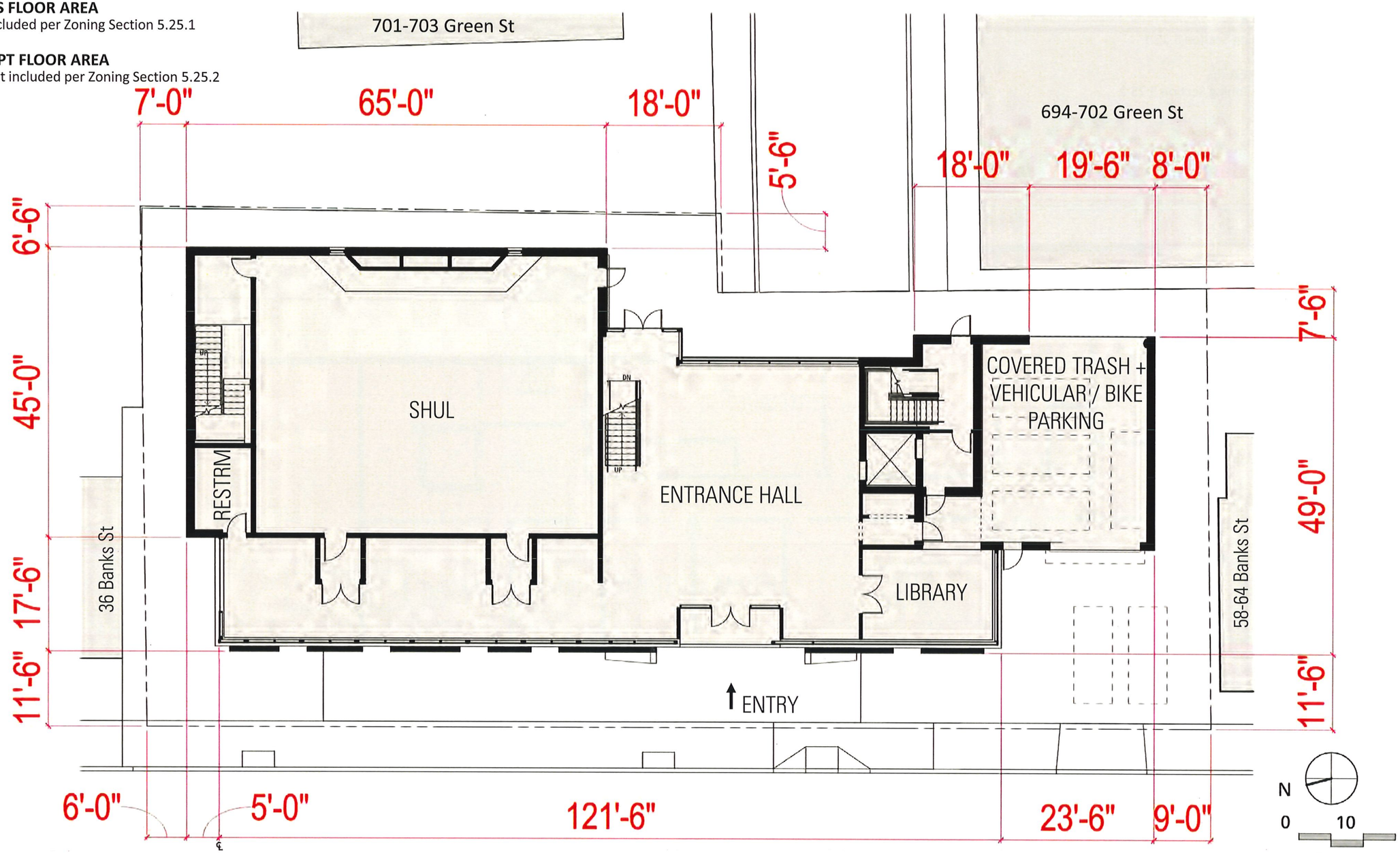
Area exempt per section 5.25.2 (c) (ii), 5.25.2 (f) and (i)

Proposed Plans

Ground Floor

GROSS FLOOR AREA
GFA included per Zoning Section 5.25.1

EXEMPT FLOOR AREA
GFA not included per Zoning Section 5.25.2



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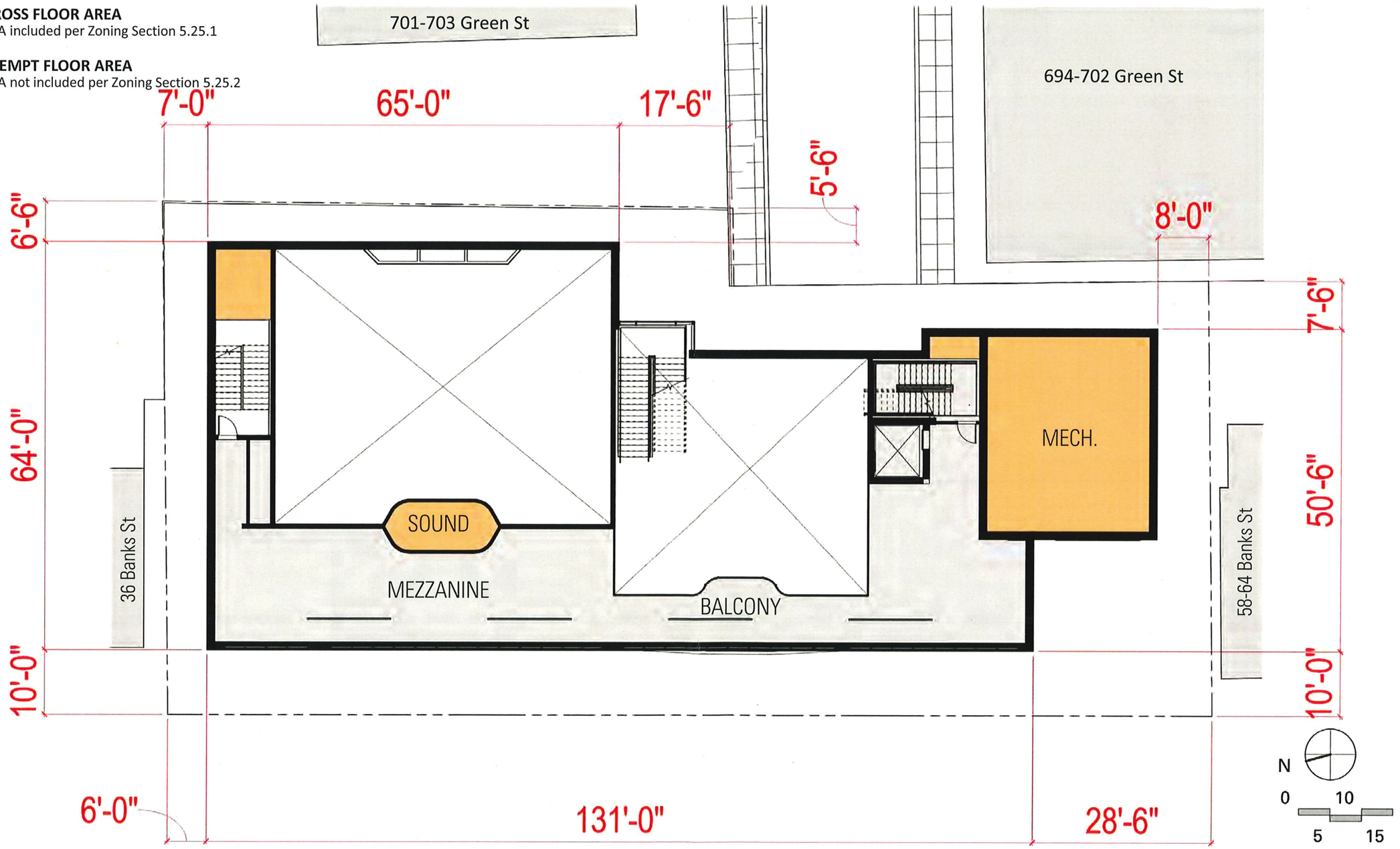
Proposed Plans

Mezzanine Level

GROSS FLOOR AREA
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EXEMPT FLOOR AREA
GFA not included per Zoning Section 5.25.2

2510 SF



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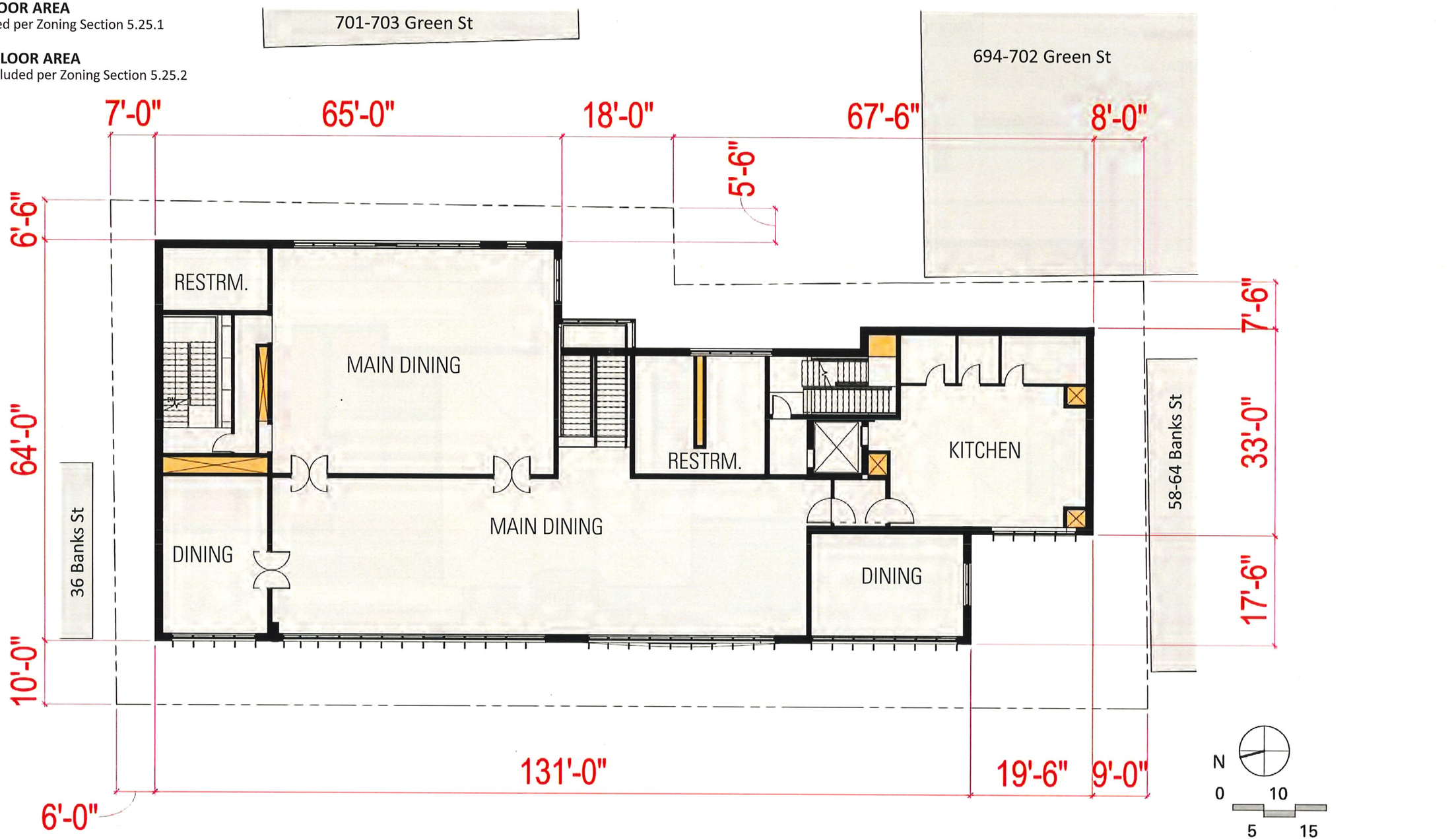
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Proposed Plans

Second Floor

GROSS FLOOR AREA
GFA included per Zoning Section 5.25.1

EXEMPT FLOOR AREA
GFA not included per Zoning Section 5.25.2



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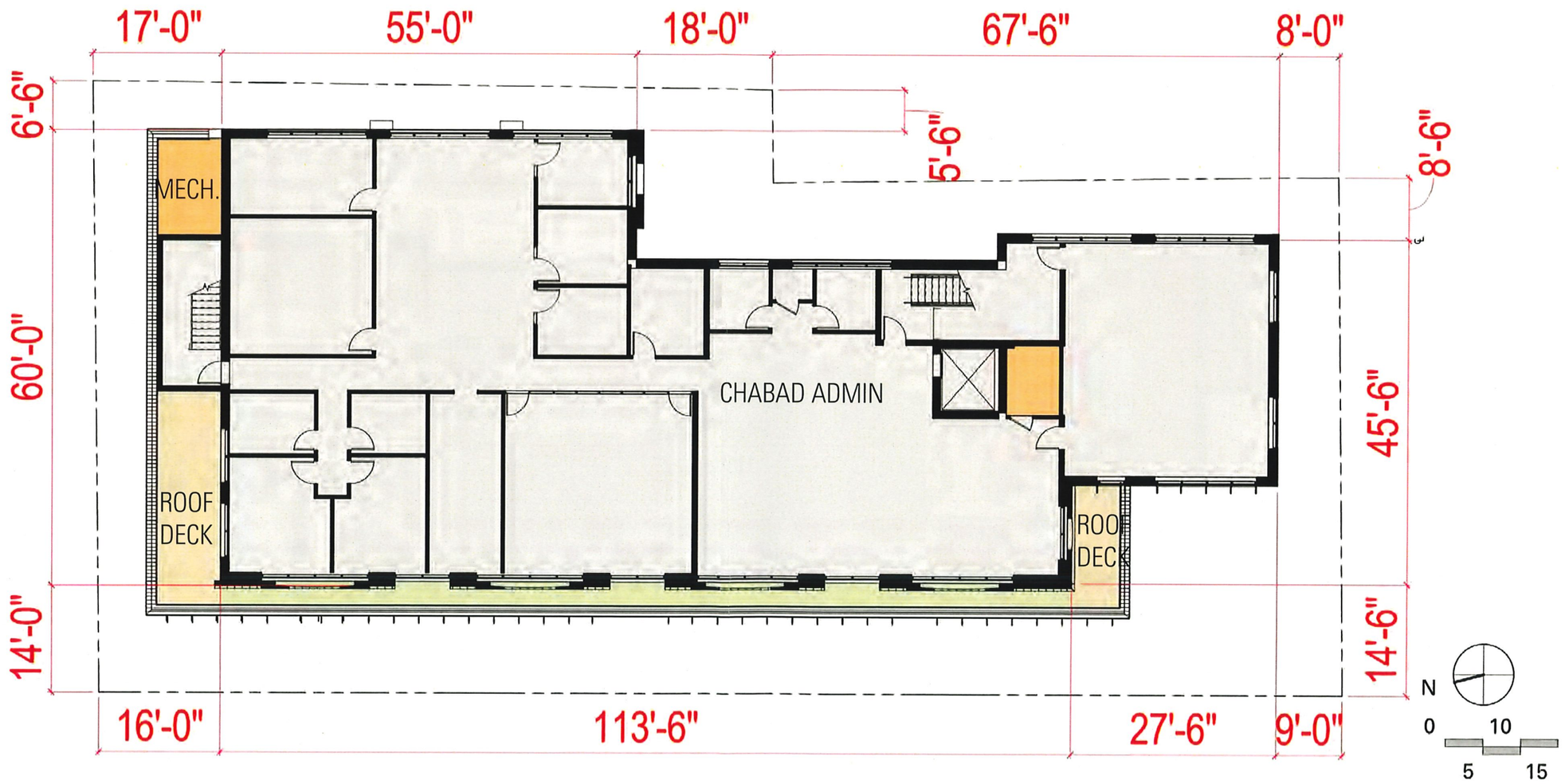
Proposed Plans

Third Floor

GROSS FLOOR AREA
GFA included per Zoning Section 5.25.1

EXEMPT EQUIPMENT AREA
GFA not included per Zoning Section 5.25.2

ROOF DECK



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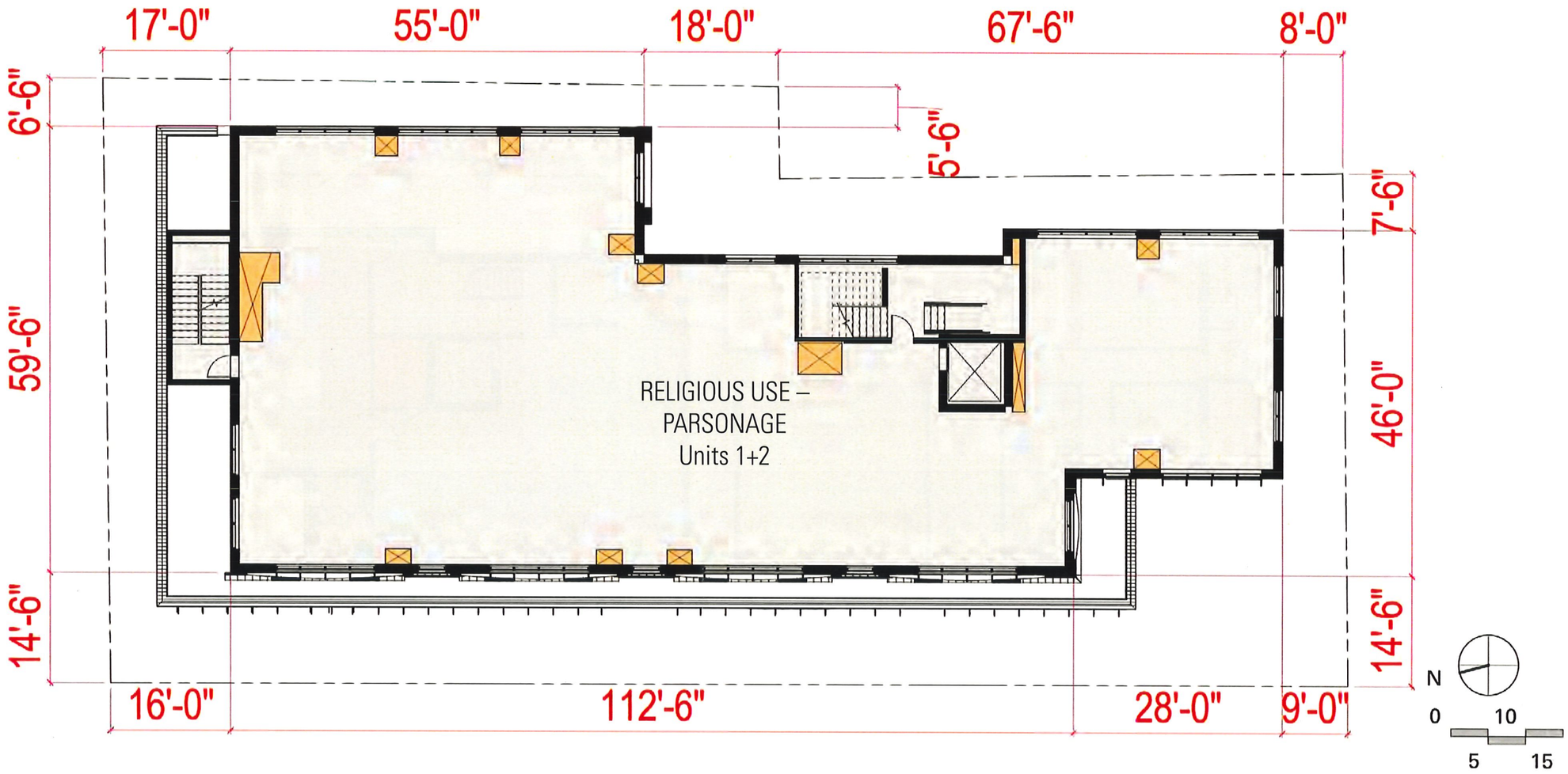
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Proposed Plans

Fourth Floor

GROSS FLOOR AREA
GFA included per Zoning Section 5.25.1

EXEMPT FLOOR AREA
GFA not included per Zoning Section 5.25.2



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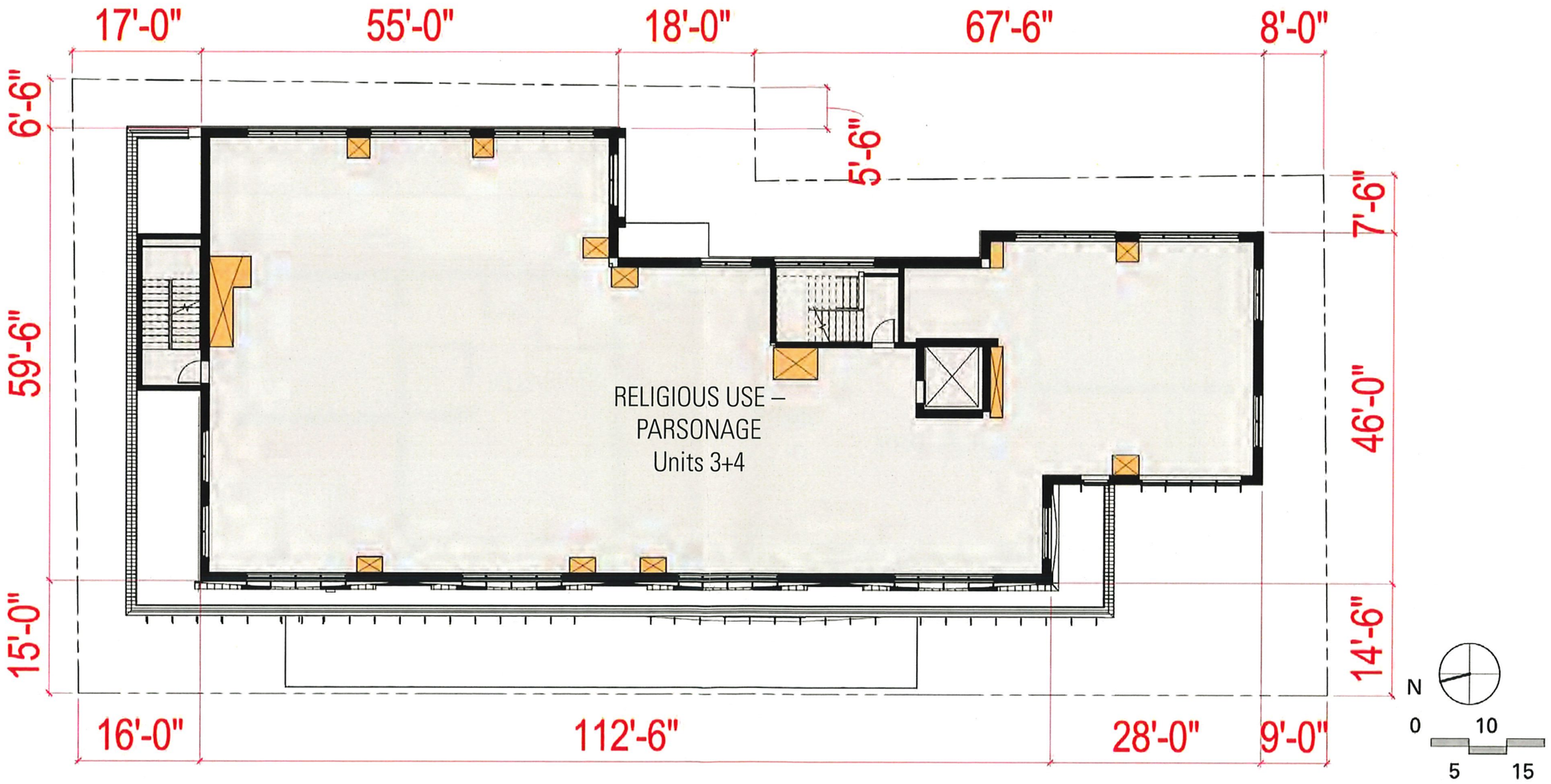
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Proposed Plans

Fifth Floor

GROSS FLOOR AREA
GFA included per Zoning Section 5.25.1

EXEMPT FLOOR AREA
GFA not included per Zoning Section 5.25.2



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Proposed Plans

Roof Level

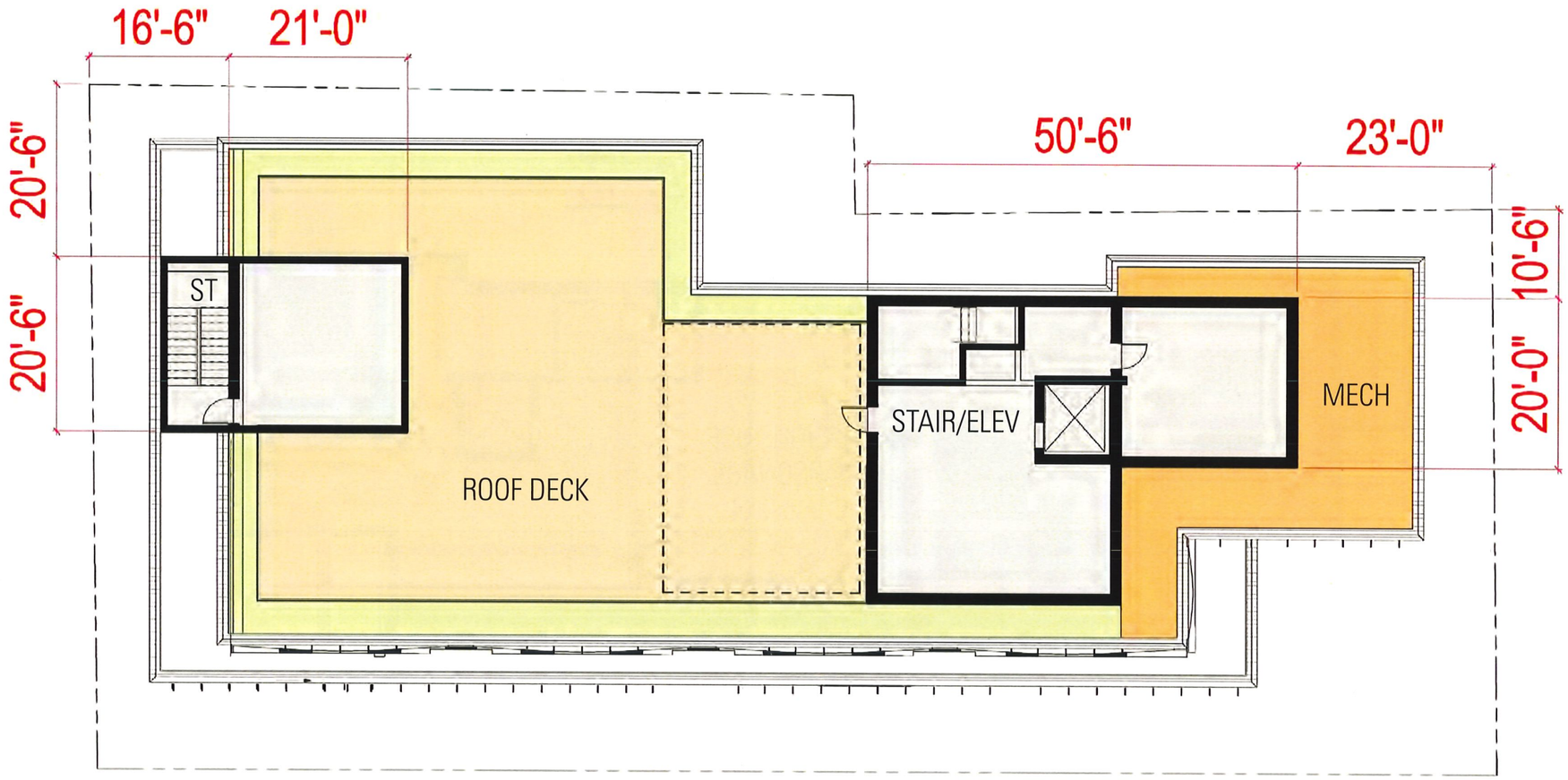
GROSS FLOOR AREA
GFA included per Zoning Section 5.25.1

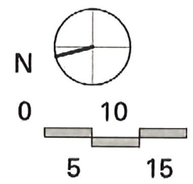
EXEMPT EQUIPMENT AREA
GFA not included per Zoning Section 5.25.2

VEGETATED GREEN ROOF
GFA not included per Zoning Section 5.25.2

ROOF DECK

SHADE CANOPY
GFA not included per Zoning Section 5.25.2





West Elevation

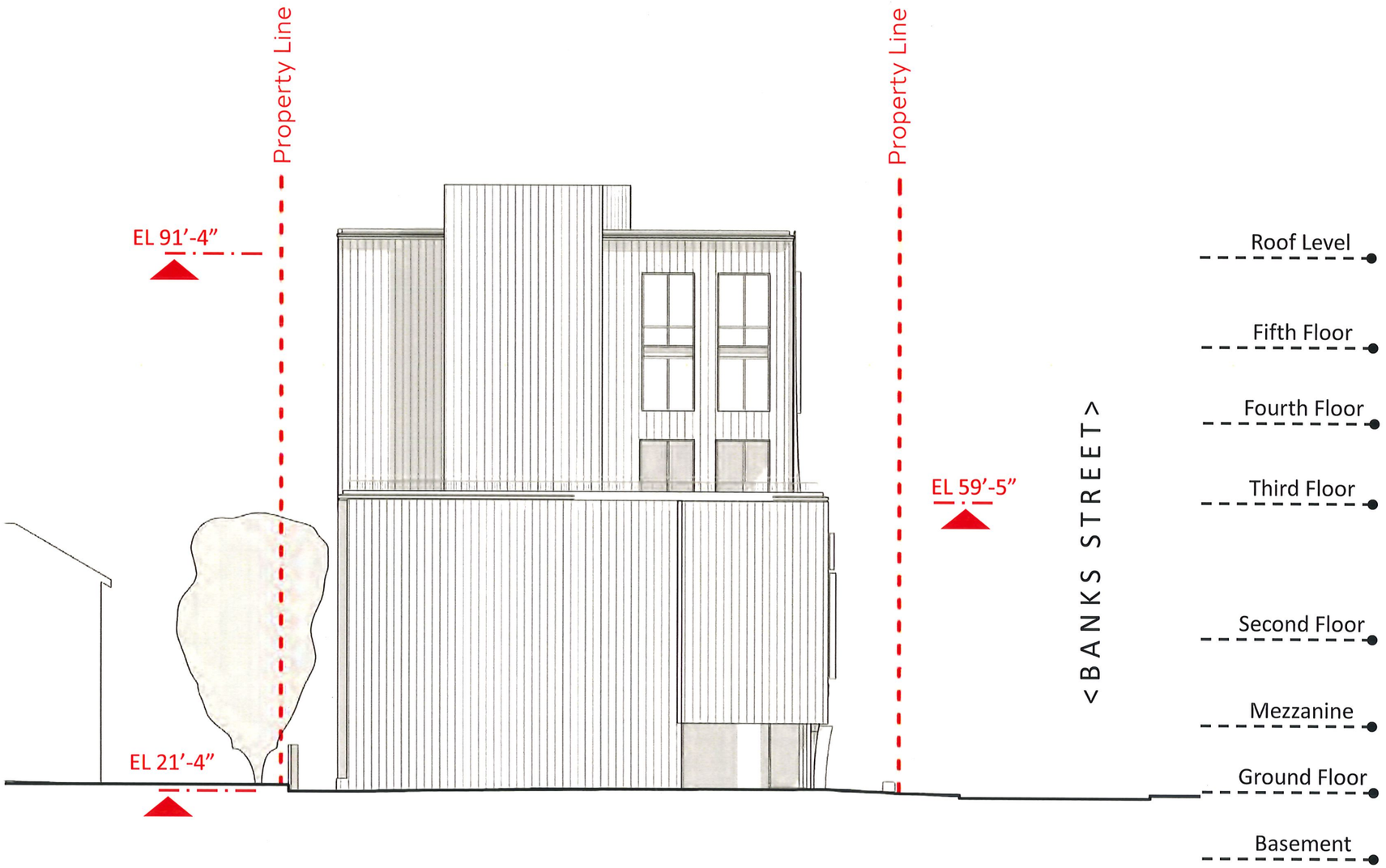


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North Elevation



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East Elevation



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South Elevation



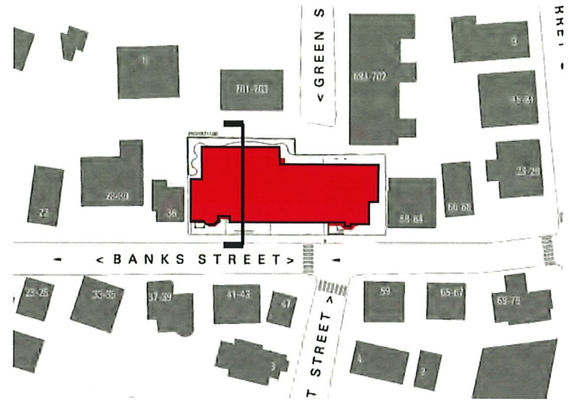
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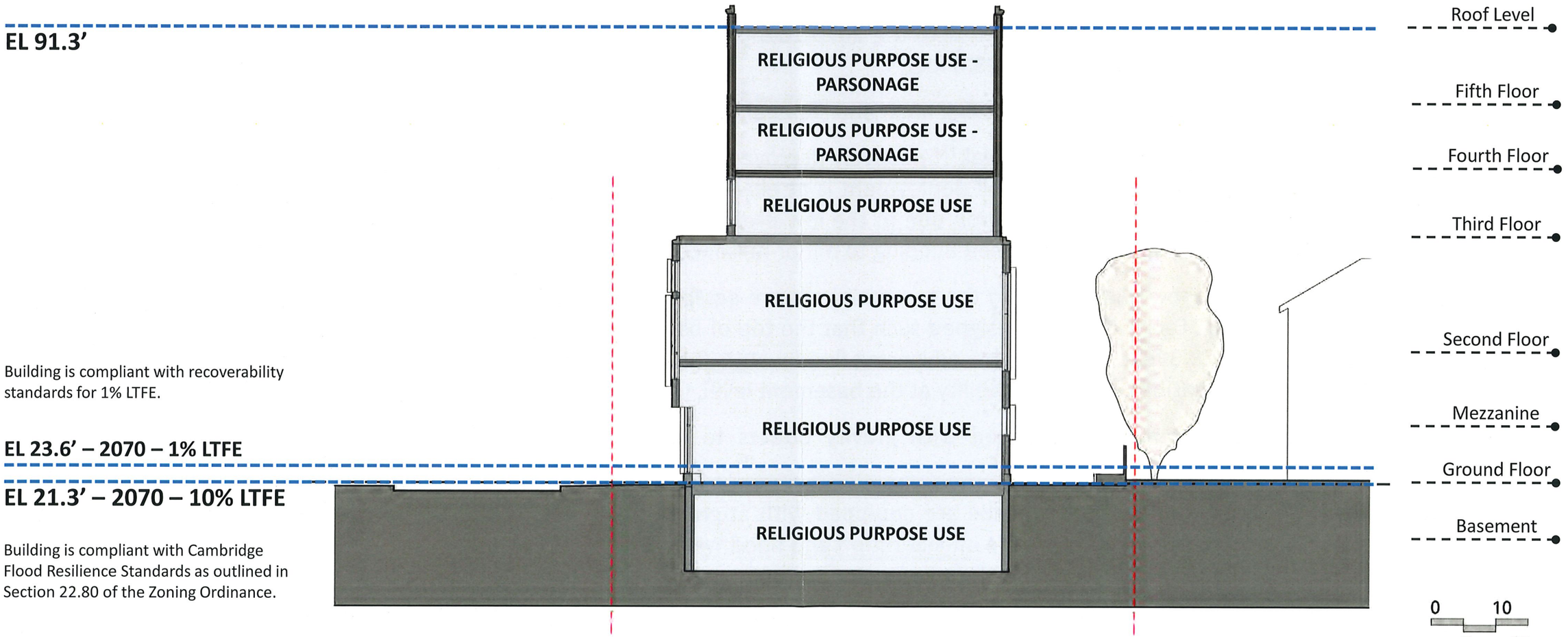
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Flood Resilience

Site + Building Section





Building is compliant with recoverability standards for 1% LTFE.

EL 23.6' – 2070 – 1% LTFE

EL 21.3' – 2070 – 10% LTFE

Building is compliant with Cambridge Flood Resilience Standards as outlined in Section 22.80 of the Zoning Ordinance.

Flood Resiliency

Project Narrative – Mitigation Measures

HIGHPOINT
Civil Engineering

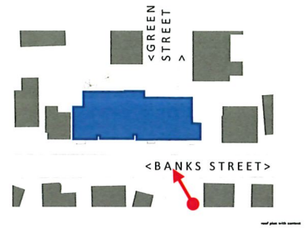
This document outlines efforts in considering and implementing sustainable and resilient measures to mitigate the impacts related to climate change in the design, construction, and operation of the Proposed Building.

The Proposed Building and site design addresses climate change impacts via the following:

- In accordance with the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Cambridge Section 22.80 "Flood Resilience Standards," the Project is designed to protect against flooding events associated with the 2070 10% Long-Term Flood Elevation (10% LTFE) of 21.3 feet and to recover from flooding events associated with the 2070 1% LTFE of 23.6 feet.
- The ground floor elevations of the synagogue, lobby/living area, and stairwell entrances are set above the 2070 10% LTFE of 21.3 feet.
- The front entry vestibule is equipped with a Floodbreak™ passively deployed, hydraulically activated flood prevention barrier. The Floodbreak™ is designed such that the top of barrier elevation at full deployment is at elevation 23.8 feet, or 0.2 feet above the 2070 1% LTFE of 23.6 feet. The Floodbreak™ system was selected for this door location due to the low profile of installation to accommodate vertical clearance provisions at the basement level. This limits flooding within the Proposed Building to minor nuisance flooding within the vestibule.
- The rear door entrances to the lobby/living area and the two stairwells are equipped with Self Activating Flood Barrier™ (SAFB™) systems at the exterior of the Proposed Building. Each SAFB™ is designed such that the top of barrier elevation at full deployment is at elevation 23.8 feet, or 0.2 feet above the 2070 1% LTFE of 23.6 feet. This prevents advancing flood waters from entering the lobby/living area and protects the basement level from the 2070 1% LTFE due to infeasibility of recoverability at the basement level.
- All Floodbreak™ and SAFB™ systems are designed with gravity outlets to convey flood waters to new on-site stormwater management infrastructure as flood stage recedes.
- Exterior areas from which flood waters cannot recede are equipped with at-grade drain inlets connected to new on-site subsurface stormwater management infrastructure which retain and infiltrate on-site runoff and flood waters.
- Piped stormwater discharge connections to off-site combined sewer infrastructure are equipped with shut-off valving and backflow prevention devices to prevent combined sewer overflows from entering the on-site stormwater management system.
- Regular monitoring and management of the Floodbreak™ and SAFB™ systems and all valving and backflow prevention devices will be incorporated into the Long-Term Operation and Maintenance Plan for the stormwater management system.

Proposed

Banks Street, Looking Northeast





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