

ILLINOIS STATE CAPITOL COMPLEX, WILLIAM G. STRATTON BUILDING

HABS No. IL-1283-B

401 South Spring Street
Springfield
Sangamon County
Illinois

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED & INTERPRETIVE DRAWINGS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

ILLINOIS STATE CAPITOL COMPLEX, WILLIAM G. STRATTON BUILDING

HABS No. IL-1283-B

- Location:** 401 South Spring Street, Springfield, Sangamon County, Illinois
- Present Owner:** State of Illinois
- Present Use:** State offices
- Significance:** The William G. Stratton Building, completed in 1955, is distinctive as the first modernist building added to the Illinois State Capitol Complex in the post-World War II era. It served the expanding needs of state government for modern office space, as government agencies outgrew the Capitol, completed in 1888, and the adjacent Centennial Building (now the Michael J. Howlett Building). The design of the Stratton Building is typical of architectural design trends in the mid-1950s, in which the design of government and institutional buildings moved away from the simplified Classical designs popular in the 1930s and 1940s and instead adopted a modernist approach, free of traditional ornament. The building was determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places by the Illinois State Historic Preservation Office in 2009.
- Historians:** Kenneth Itle and Deborah Slaton, Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc.
- Project Information:** The present Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) documentation for the Stratton Building has been prepared concurrently with HABS documentation of the Capitol. In 2022, a major renovation and restoration project began at the North Wing of the Capitol. The project also includes changes to the Capitol grounds and the north entrance of the Stratton Building. In accordance with a Memorandum of Agreement among the Illinois Capital Development Board, the Architect of the Capitol, and the Illinois State Historic Preservation Officer, Level II HABS recordation of the North Wing of the Capitol and the north facade and entrance area of the Stratton Building has been prepared.
- This historical narrative was prepared by WJE, based on reference materials provided by the Architect of the Capitol, limited research in the Sangamon Valley Collection in the Lincoln Library of the City of Springfield, and online resources. A site visit was made on June 12, 2022, to review existing conditions at the north entrance and main corridor.

PART I: HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Date of erection: 1954–1955
2. Architect: J. Fletcher Lankton–John N. Ziegele & Associates; Louis H. Gerding, State Supervising Architect.
3. Original and subsequent owners, occupants, uses: State of Illinois, government agency offices.
4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: W. E. O’Neil of Chicago was the General Contractor. Demolition and land clearing work was performed by Stehman Wrecking Co. of Springfield. Electrical work was performed by Cunningham Electric Co. of Anna, Illinois. Plumbing, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning work was performed by Economy Heating & Plumbing Co. of Chicago. Elevators were provided by Long Elevator & Equipment Co. of Springfield. Pipe insulation was provided by Paul J. Krez of Chicago. Landscaping was provided by Fred Phillips, of Springfield.
5. Original plans and construction: Construction for the Illinois State Capitol began in 1868 and was finally completed in 1888. As the state government expanded, various functions were relocated out of the Capitol, starting with the relocation of the Illinois State Museum to the new State Arsenal building in 1903 and the State Supreme Court to its own building in 1908. Office space expanded into new fifth and sixth floors in the attic of the Capitol’s north and south wings in 1915–1916. The construction of the Centennial Building (constructed beginning in the one-hundredth year of Illinois statehood and now known as the Michael J. Howlett Building) in 1918–1923 allowed many state offices to relocate out of the Capitol; an east wing was added to the Centennial Building in 1928. The Capitol Complex was further expanded by the construction of the State Archives (now known as the Margaret Cross Norton Building) in 1936–1938. The 1903 armory was destroyed by fire in 1934, and a replacement building was constructed in 1935–1937.

Additional office space for the Capitol Complex was again needed in the years following World War II. Planning for postwar expansion began as early as 1944. Early plans included expansion of the armory westward to First Street, expansion of the Centennial Building to form a complete square, extension of the State Archives southward to Edwards Street, and construction of a new state office building. State Senator Arnold P. Benson of Batavia even suggested replacing the Capitol itself with an entirely new building. The state began acquiring property in July 1946; however, a shortage of funds led Governor Dwight Green to suspend those plans in 1947.¹

When William Stratton was inaugurated as governor in 1953, planning for a new state office building resumed immediately. The goal for the project was to consolidate state agencies in a modern facility near the Capitol, vacating leased office spaces around Springfield. Three parcels had already been acquired along Monroe and Spring Streets in 1946–1947, so the site to the west of the Capitol was the focus of the renewed efforts, although locating the new building to the west of the armory on the north side of Monroe Street was also considered. A bill providing \$12.5 million for design and construction of the new building quickly passed both houses of the

1. “Huge Program Proposed for Springfield,” March 21, 1944; “Green Says Funds Not Available,” April 30, 1947, clippings in Sangamon Valley Collection, Lincoln Library, City of Springfield.

legislature with large majorities, and was signed into law by Governor Stratton on March 25, 1953. Of the total funding, \$1.5 million was set aside for design fees and property acquisition.²

The Peoria-based partnership of J. Fletcher Lankton and John N. Ziegele was selected to design the building, in association with the state supervising architect, Louis H. Gerding. The designers visited recently completed state office buildings in California, Pennsylvania, New York, and Kentucky to gather ideas for the design and modern governmental office planning. Design work for the new building was completed in October 1953.

Construction bids were received in December 1953, and the low bids totaled only \$8,963,000. W. E. O'Neil Construction of Chicago was selected as general contractor for a bid of \$5,718,000. Major subcontractors included electrical work by Cunningham Electric Co. for \$1,110,000 and plumbing and HVAC work by Economy Heating & Plumbing Co. for \$2,430,000.³

Demolition of the existing residential buildings on the site and land clearing proceeded in January–February 1954. A ceremonial groundbreaking was held on site on February 15, 1954. Construction proceeded rapidly through 1954 and 1955, and the still-incomplete building was dedicated on April 27, 1955. State employees began moving into the building in October 1955.⁴

In 1977, the building was named in honor of former Governor William G. Stratton (1914–2001), who held office during its construction, serving from 1953 to 1961.⁵

6. Alterations and additions: The original stone masonry veneer apparently provided unsatisfactory performance. The stone facades were sandblasted, repointed, and “waterproofed” (likely coated with a water repellent sealer) in 1961, only six years after the building was completed.⁶ A small fire occurred in a supply room on the fourth floor of the building in November 1962. The ceiling in the adjacent office space had to be replaced, as well as eight windows.⁷

Since original construction, numerous projects have been implemented to renovate office spaces within the building. A detailed discussion of interior alterations is beyond the scope of this report, which is focused on the north entrance area of the building.

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2. “Will Seek Big State Building,” *Illinois State Journal*, January 13, 1953; “Introduces Bill to Erect \$12,500,000 Building,” *Illinois State Journal*, February 12, 1953; “Approve Governor’s Bill For New \$12,500,000 Building,” *State Journal-Register*, March 19, 1953; “Signs Bill for State Building,” *Illinois State Journal*, March 25, 1953; “Major Addition to Capitol Group Will Cost \$12,500,000,” *Illinois State Journal*, March 26, 1953, clippings in Sangamon Valley Collection, Lincoln Library, City of Springfield.
 3. “Bids Opened On New State Office Building; Figures Under Estimates,” *State Register*, December 16, 1953; Kenneth Watson, “Open Bids on State Building: Cost Two Millions Under Estimate; To Begin Work Soon,” December 16, 1953, clippings in Sangamon Valley Collection, Lincoln Library, City of Springfield
 4. “Start Big Job of Moving,” *Journal*, October 15, 1955, clipping in Sangamon Valley Collection, Lincoln Library, City of Springfield.
 5. Mike Kienzler, “Quick! Name this building,” *Journal Register*, June 30, 1977. Senate voted Wednesday [June 29] to name the structure the “William G. Stratton Building,” clipping in Sangamon Valley Collection, Lincoln Library, City of Springfield.
 6. “Will Sandblast State Building,” August 9, 1961, clipping in Sangamon Valley Collection, Lincoln Library, City of Springfield.
 7. Roy Ruyle, “Fire Hits State Office Building,” *Register*, November 13, 1962, clipping in Sangamon Valley Collection, Lincoln Library, City of Springfield.

One change has occurred at the information desk near the north entrance: a portion of the service counter has been lowered to provide an accessible position. The date of this modification is not known. The primary public corridors are otherwise essentially unchanged since the building was completed in 1955.

B. Historical context

The Stratton Building exemplifies the move away from traditional Classical-inspired architecture in the post-World War II era. While the symmetrical massing of the building, its axial placement on the site, and the use of natural stone cladding are related to the historic Capitol, the architectural detailing of the Stratton Building is simple and modernist, without Classical ornament or articulation. Its design is a turning point in the development of the Capitol Complex. Earlier buildings such as the Centennial (Howlett) Building (1923, 1928) and the State Archives (1938) used traditional Classical architecture to frame the environment of the Capitol. Subsequent to the Stratton Building, structures such as the Illinois State Museum (1962) and Attorney General Building (Perkins and Will, 1971) used a modernist architectural style without traditional Classical ornament.

The Stratton Building was designed with consideration of the relationship of this new building to the adjacent Capitol. It is symmetrical on an east-west axis that it shares with the east-west axis of the Capitol. The H-shaped plan is slightly asymmetrical about its north-south axis, so that the approach walk and lawn facing the Capitol is slightly larger than the similar approach on the west side. The dimensions of the east lawn are similar to the dimensions of the projecting west wing of the Capitol, creating a clear relationship of mass to void in the siting of the two buildings.

The exterior design of the Stratton Building is distinctly modernist. At the north and south wings, continuous window groups wrap around the facades, separated by limestone-clad spandrels, giving the facade a distinct horizontal expression. At the central wing, continuous aluminum clad mullions run from second floor to the eighth floor, with aluminum spandrels at each floor line, giving this portion of the building a more grid-like appearance and referencing the Classical columns and pilasters of the Capitol. The ground floor is clad in black granite, creating a distinct base to the building. At the east and west entrances between the wings, granite-clad piers define an entrance porch, called a “portico” on the original drawings.

During the design process, the architects are known to have visited other state capitol complexes to view recently completed office buildings. Two of these examples are more traditional “stripped Classical” designs, including the East Annex to the California State Capitol in Sacramento, constructed 1949–1952 as an addition to the historic capitol, and the Annex Building adjacent to the Kentucky State Capitol in Frankfort, completed in 1950 and located south and on axis with the historic capitol. Near the Pennsylvania State Capitol in Harrisburg, four structures designed in a simplified Classical architectural style had been completed between 1921 and 1939: the Irvis Office Building, North Office Building, Forum Building, and Finance Building. These four buildings are arranged to frame a symmetrical plaza east of the historic capitol. Contemporary with the Stratton Building, the State of Pennsylvania was planning for two new structures, the Labor and Industry Building (completed in 1956) and the Health and Welfare Building (completed in 1957). Similar to the Stratton Building, these two mid-1950s structures have a clearly expressed ground level clad with dark-colored marble, and upper floors clad with light-colored limestone and aluminum windows in a regular grid arrangement. Unlike the Stratton Building, these Pennsylvania structures are two blocks from the historic capitol and oriented along a city street, without reference to the axis of the capitol complex.

The Stratton Building is therefore typical of architectural design trends in the mid-1950s, in which government and institutional buildings moved away from the simplified Classical designs popular in the 1930s and 1940s and instead adopted a modernist approach, free of traditional ornament.

The Stratton Building was designed by the Peoria-based architectural firm of J. Fletcher Lankton, John N. Ziegele & Associates. **Joel Fletcher Lankton** (1902–1971) was born in Waverly, Illinois (southwest of Springfield in Morgan County). He was educated at Millikin University, Chicago Technical College (from which he received a degree in architectural engineering in 1925), and La Salle Extension University. After several years as a draftsman in other firms, he opened his own firm in 1931. His work in the 1930s included two theaters in Peoria, the Beverly (1934, demolished 1990s) and the Varsity (1935, demolished circa 1990). In 1941, he formed a partnership with John N. Ziegele. **John Nicholas Ziegele** (1913–1977) was born in Peoria, Illinois. He was educated at Bradley University and the University of Illinois in Architectural Engineering. He joined Lankton's office as a draftsman in 1935 before becoming a partner in 1941. Among the firm's notable works were a building at Anna State Hospital in Anna, Illinois (1948, now the Choate Mental Health and Developmental Center), Apostolic Christian Church in Peoria (1954), the Peoria Newspaper Building in Peoria (1955), Proctor Hospital in Peoria (1958), Peoria County Courthouse (1961), and the Bradley University Science Building (1967, now called Morgan Hall). The firm was also known for public housing design. Under contract to the government of Haiti, the firm completed the Magloire City housing development on the edge of Port-au-Prince.⁸

During design of the Stratton Building, Louis H. Gerding served as State Supervising Architect. **Louis Henry Gerding** (1902–1968) was born in Ottawa, Illinois, and educated at the Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago. He organized his own firm in 1930, and designed a number of school buildings as well as the Ottawa & La Salle County Tuberculosis Sanitarium (demolished 2012, now the site of the Ottawa Pavilion rehabilitation facility). He became Supervising Architect for the State of Illinois in 1953. In that capacity, he consulted on the design of new state buildings (such as the Stratton Building). He also designed the new Illinois State Museum on the Capitol Complex, constructed in 1961–1962.⁹

PART II: ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. Architectural character: The Stratton Building has an H-shaped plan and is symmetrical about an east-west axis. It is sited due west of the state Capitol and aligns with the Capitol's east-west axis. The building is nearly symmetrical on a north-south axis as well; however, the central wing of the H-shaped plan is positioned slightly west of center, creating a larger front courtyard lawn on the east side, facing the Capitol. The dimensions of the east lawn, 100 feet deep from east to west and 180 feet wide from north to south, are close to the 100 feet deep and 130 feet wide dimensions of the projecting west wing of the Capitol, creating a clear relationship of mass to void in the siting of the two buildings. The overall length of the Stratton Building from north to south is also very

8. George S. Koyl, ed. *American Architects Directory* (New York: R.R. Bowker Company and American Institute of Architects, 1955, 1st ed.; 1962, 2nd ed.; 1970, 3rd ed.).

9. *Ibid.*

similar to the north to south dimensions of the Capitol (exclusive of the north portico), creating a continuity of massing on the site.

2. Condition of fabric: The Stratton Building is generally in fair condition. The main public corridors have been retained in nearly original condition. Office suites throughout the building have been remodeled over time and currently vary in condition. As part of the rehabilitation of the north wing of the Capitol, the north entrance area of the building is undergoing modification.
- B. Description of Exterior: The Stratton Building is generally H-shaped, with a central wing rising eight stories plus penthouses; seven-story north and south wings that extend to the east and west; and small two-story extensions on the north and south facades.
1. Overall dimensions: 250 feet east to west maximum, 380 feet north to south, 125 feet from first floor level to the top of the mechanical penthouse. The north wing is 250 feet from east to west and 77 feet wide; it extends 100 feet east of the center wing but only 75 feet west of the center wing. The two-story entrance wing on the north facade is 77 feet wide and extends 26 feet north from the north facade.
 2. Foundations: The foundation is reinforced structural concrete. An underground pedestrian tunnel provides a walkway from the basement level of the Stratton Building to the basement of the Capitol.
 3. Walls: The exterior walls are primarily clad with limestone masonry. The limestone veneer units are arranged in a stacked bond pattern. At the typical spandrel zone at the north and south wings, the spandrel is divided into six limestone units at each window bay. The top and bottom courses are relatively short, while the middle course is composed of nearly square limestone panels. The ground floor, as well as the two-story north and south entrance wings, are clad with black granite. The granite panels at the majority of the building are relatively large, with a single panel in each window bay extending from the first floor window sill to grade. The granite facades of the north and south entrance wings are divided by recessed joints to create a grid pattern. Exterior aluminum cladding is present above the entrance doors on the north and south sides, where an aluminum spandrel extends from the second floor sill down to the entrance canopy. Aluminum cladding is also present at the east and west facades at the center wing. On these facades, continuous aluminum-clad mullions extend from the second to eighth floor, and the spandrels at each window bay are clad with aluminum sheet metal. At the top of the east and west facades, rooftop mechanical equipment is screened by corrugated aluminum.
 4. Structural system, framing: The building has a reinforced concrete structural frame. At exterior walls, concrete masonry units are used to infill the frame and provide a backup for the exterior stone veneer.
 5. Porches, stoops, balconies, porticoes, bulkheads: The original architectural drawings define four entrance porticoes for the building. At the north facade and south facade, the portico consists of a simple cantilever roof canopy, approximately 28 feet wide by 8 feet deep. (The north entrance canopy was removed in 2022.) Under the canopy, the south entrance doors are directly at grade. At the north entrance, a shallow concrete stoop with steel railings was present (until its demolition in 2022), with stairs on the east and west ends descending to grade. The east and west porticoes are more elaborate. On these two facades, the projecting canopy extends the entire width of the facade between the projecting north and south wings. The outer edge of the canopy is

supported by granite-clad rectangular piers. The site sidewalks and granite-clad planters direct pedestrian traffic to the north and south ends of each portico, and the northeast, northwest, southeast, and southwest entrances are accessed from the porticoes. The original exterior door hardware includes cast metal semicircular pulls and push plates mounted to each door depicting half of the state seal; when closed, each pair of doors thus featured the complete state seal on both the exterior and interior faces. Some doors have been modified to include new closers, powered operators, or panic-type exit hardware.

6. Chimneys: None. Since original construction, heat for the building has been provided by steam generated in boilers located off-site.

7. Openings

- a. Doorways and doors: There are six exterior entrances to the building, all at the first floor. At the north and south facades, the entrances comprise a three-bay wide storefront assembly. The center bay has paired aluminum-framed glazed entrance doors with a two-light transom above, and the side bays have a fixed four-light storefront generally matching the arrangement of the doors and transoms. At the south entrance, one of the side bays has been modified to include power-operated accessible entrance doors with a transom.

As noted above, there are four similar entrances at the center wing, accessed from the north and south ends of the east and west porticoes. At each of these entrances, there are two pairs of aluminum-framed glazed entrance doors with single-light transoms at the exterior; an adjacent window bay has a granite-clad wall and matching fixed transom window. Inside the vestibule, there is a similar storefront with two pairs of doors but a glazed fixed storefront with transom in lieu of the solid wall.

- b. Windows: The upper levels of the building have aluminum windows. The typical window has two hopper sash at the bottom and a single large awning sash above. The typical window bay is 8 feet 4 inches wide. At the north and south wings, the windows are arranged as a continuous horizontal strip, with aluminum-clad mullions and continuous limestone sills and heads. At the east and west facades, the center wing windows are divided by continuous aluminum-clad mullions, which project from the facade, and aluminum-clad spandrels.

The first floor windows are typically somewhat smaller and set high on the wall as a clerestory. Some bays have fixed single-light windows, while other bays have similar awning windows, and other bays are divided into a three-part window with a central awning sash flanked by fixed sash.

8. Roof

- a. Shape, covering: The building has a flat membrane roof. The perimeter parapet walls have limestone copings.
- b. Flashings and gutters: The main roof is drained by inset drains and internal piping. Penthouse roofs drain to scuppers and wall-mounted downspouts that discharge onto the main roof.

C. Description of Interior: The following interior description is focused on the main public ground floor corridor. A detailed discussion of all interior spaces is beyond the scope of this project.

1. Floor plans: The first floor has a regular plan defined by a central corridor extending through the building from the north entrance to the south entrance. The northeast, southeast, southwest, and northwest entrances lead to larger lobby areas in the central wing that connect with the central corridor. Just to the north of the central wing north lobby, and just south of the south lobby, are the two stair and elevator cores. Three passenger elevators (on the west side) and one staircase (on the east side) lead directly into the main corridor at the core. An east-west connecting corridor adjacent to the elevators and stair provides access to a freight elevator and men's and women's restrooms. Office suites and similar spaces are double-loaded along the corridors.

A notable feature is the original information desk, located at the northeast corner where the main corridor is intersected by the east-west connecting corridor in the north wing. The information desk is clad with marble matching the corridor walls, including the top surface of the desk and the soffit above. The back walls behind the desk are also clad with marble. The word "INFORMATION" is spelled out by individual aluminum letters mounted to the north wall and east wall of the corridors above the desk opening. The east and north ends of the opening are partially enclosed by four or five closely spaced aluminum-clad fins, extending from the desk up to the ceiling soffit. At the north wall behind the desk, a non-original clock is integrated into the marble wall cladding, with simple aluminum tick marks for the hours. Contemporary fire alarm control panels have also been installed behind the desk.

2. Stairways: There are two stairwells in the building, one in the north wing core and one in the south wing core. The stairs are utilitarian concrete structures. At the first floor lobby, three original aluminum doors, each with three square windows, open from the stairwell into the main corridor.
3. Flooring: The first floor corridor flooring is terrazzo. White metal divider strips define a square grid pattern for the flooring. A darker-colored terrazzo band defines the perimeter of the floor and forms a continuous terrazzo base on the walls. A decorative terrazzo detail is present where the main corridor intersects the connecting corridors in the north and south wings, as well as where the center wing entrance lobbies intersect the main corridor. This detail consists of four abstract leaf or feather shapes, oriented to the four cardinal directions, with contrasting color terrazzo in a chevron pattern. A square of light-colored terrazzo is present at the center of the design. Added divider strips define a square around the decoration. Additionally, extra divider strips define square patterns in the main corridor at the elevator and stair cores.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: The first floor corridor walls are clad with a beige-pink marble. At major corners, center wing door openings, and the elevator/stair lobbies, the corridor walls have a bullnose corner with an 18-inch radius. The first floor ceilings are concealed spline suspended acoustical tile.

At the elevator/stair lobbies, there is a limited area of aluminum wall and ceiling cladding. The marble cladding defines a relatively large opening in the corridor wall; aluminum cladding at a 45 degree angle extends back from the opening to create a chamfered frame at the wall and ceiling; and the elevator or stairwell doors are set within the back wall, with marble cladding between door openings.

5. Openings

- a. Doorways and doors: Interior doors at the corridor are typically aluminum-framed. Most doors have a single large light of glazing. At the stairwells, the doors are flat-panel aluminum with three square lights of glass.
- b. Windows: The first floor corridor has interior storefront-style aluminum-framed display case glazing at the center wing, where state agencies can provide public information.

6. Decorative features and trim: At the elevator/stair lobbies, aluminum-framed directory cases are mounted to the wall adjacent to the stairwell doors. White plastic letters are arranged on the black felt background of each case listing agencies and office numbers in the building.

7. Hardware: Door hardware is typically stainless steel or aluminum, including simple pulls, push bars, and butt hinges.

8. Mechanical Equipment

- a. Heating, air conditioning, ventilation: The Stratton Building has had central heating and air conditioning from the time of its initial construction. A centralized chilled water production and distribution loop was installed for the Capitol Complex in 1998. Under this design, new efficient electric centrifugal chillers were installed in the Stratton and Howlett buildings, designated to become the centralized chilled water plants for the Capitol Complex. At the Stratton building, the chillers are located atop the roof, in the original cooling equipment location, concealed by the original aluminum screen walls. A complex-wide chilled water distribution system is located in the existing steam distribution tunnels.

All heat for the Capitol Complex is produced in the power plant located at 315 North Klein Street, three blocks north of the Capitol using coal-fired boilers and two dual fuel natural gas and No. 2 fuel oil boilers. Steam is routed into the Stratton Building basement via piping located in a reinforced concrete tunnel.

Within the main corridor, metal registers provide ventilation and conditioning. Some registers are wall-mounted in the marble-clad walls, generally near the ceiling. A row of circular vents is located at the centerline of the main corridor ceiling.

- b. Lighting Fixtures: The main corridor light fixtures are original. The typical ceiling-mounted fixture consists of a suspended circular fixture with a perforated metallic globe. Most of the light is directed upwards to a concave circular recess finished with white-painted plaster. The plaster soffit has metal trim where it meets the acoustic tile ceiling. Fixtures of this pattern are arranged in two parallel rows down the length of the main corridor.
- c. Plumbing: Men's and women's restrooms are located adjacent to the stair and elevator cores in the north and south wings. At both the center wing north and south entrance lobbies, two original drinking fountains are integrated into the marble wall cladding. The fountain basin is marble and is set within a large circular marble frame.

D. Site

The city blocks between Spring Street and College Street developed as a residential neighborhood in the latter part of the nineteenth century, after the Capitol was constructed east of Spring Street. West Capitol Avenue and West Jackson Street extended west from Spring Street, and each block was bisected by an alley running east-west. In preparation for construction of the Stratton Building, the buildings on both sides of West Capitol Avenue up to the mid-block alleys were acquired and demolished, and the street was removed. The buildings on the south half of the block up to Jackson Street and the north half of the block up to Monroe Street were demolished shortly after the Stratton Building was completed to create parking lots, except for St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church located at the southeast corner of Monroe Street and College Street. The 1912 church structure was purchased by the State of Illinois in December 1981 and demolished in 1983 for additional parking.

The original site design for the Stratton Building was defined by driveways that ran east-west from Spring Street to College Street, following the footprint of the former public alleyways. On the south side, the former alley remained as an access drive for the parking lot developed to the south of the building; when Spring Street was closed to through-traffic circa 1980, this alley was removed and replaced with a pedestrian walk and additional turf grass. On the north side, ramps branched off the alley to provide access down to basement-level loading docks on the east and west faces of the two-story north entrance wing; these service drives remained in place and the former alley right-of-way remained in use as the primary access to the north parking lot, up to the start of construction in 2022 for the Capitol north wing rehabilitation and expansion project.

Within the limits of the street and driveway paving, the Stratton Building site was planted as a turf grass lawn, with scattered shade trees. At the east and west central approach between the projecting north and south wings, a double sidewalk separated by a panel of grass lawn led to a curved sidewalk that directed pedestrians to the entrances at the inside corners of the plan. The edges of the curved sidewalks were lined with evergreen shrubs, and ornamental plantings were located between the curved sidewalk and the face of the building. This basic site arrangement remains in place today, although some of the original shrub and ornamental plantings have been removed.

PART III: SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. Architectural drawings: Original drawings dated October 15, 1953, are in the collection of the Office of the Architect of the Capitol.
- B. Early Views: Historic photographs are in the collection of the Office of the Architect of the Capitol, the Illinois State Archives, and the Sangamon Valley Collection at the Lincoln Library of the City of Springfield.
- C. Interviews: No oral history interviews were performed for this project.

D. Selected Sources:

Sangamon Valley Collection, Lincoln Library, City of Springfield

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“At Work on State Building Plaque,” *Journal*, June 13, 1955.

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months ago,” newspaper clipping, September 9, 1977.

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Department supply room on the fourth floor.

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“Start Big Job of Moving,” *Journal*, October 15, 1955.

Walsh, Kenneth, “Governor, Coatless, Turns Earth for New Building,” *Journal*, February 16, 1954.

Watson, Kenneth, “Open Bids on State Building: Cost Two Millions Under Estimate; To Begin Work
Soon,” newspaper clipping, December 16, 1953.

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Archival photo: view of central section [from east] with swingstage on facade, October 13, 1961, file number VF 2007-212.

Archival photo: aerial view from southeast, circa 1960s, file number 2017-123.

Archival photos: two views, one from northeast and one of ground floor corridor, both likely September 1956, file number VF 98-66.

Archival photos: twelve images, under construction and newly completed interiors, file number VF 98-67.

Archival photo: Stratton Building under construction, exterior view, from southeast; and five views of elevator motor installation, file number VF 98-68.

Archival photos: six views, one exterior and newly completed interiors, file number VF 98-73.

Other Sources

Dedication booklet, "New Illinois State Office Building," including remarks by Governor Stratton. 1955.

Fletcher, J. Lankton, obituary, died April 16, 1971.

Kenney, David. *A Political Passage: The Career of Stratton of Illinois*. Carbondale, Illinois: Southern Illinois University Press, 1990.

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E. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated: None identified at this time.

F. Supplemental Material: Copies of selected historic photographs are provided as an appendix.

REPRODUCTIONS OF HISTORIC IMAGES

INTERIOR



Figure 1. First floor main corridor, looking north, circa 1956. Source: All images from Architect of the Capitol files unless noted otherwise.



Figure 2. Main corridor, looking east toward the northeast entrance, circa 1956.



Figure 3. Information desk in the main corridor, circa 1956.



Figure 4. Detail of building directory and stairwell door, circa 1956. Source: Sangamon Valley Collection, Lincoln Library, City of Springfield.



Figure 5. Drafting room, circa 1956. Source: Sangamon Valley Collection, Lincoln Library, City of Springfield.



Figure 6. Typical office space, circa 1956. Source: Sangamon Valley Collection, Lincoln Library, City of Springfield.



Figure 7. Conference room, circa 1956. Source: Sangamon Valley Collection, Lincoln Library, City of Springfield.



Figure 8. Highway department file room, circa 1956. Source: Sangamon Valley Collection, Lincoln Library, City of Springfield.



Figure 9. Basement-level cafeteria, circa 1956.

EXTERIOR

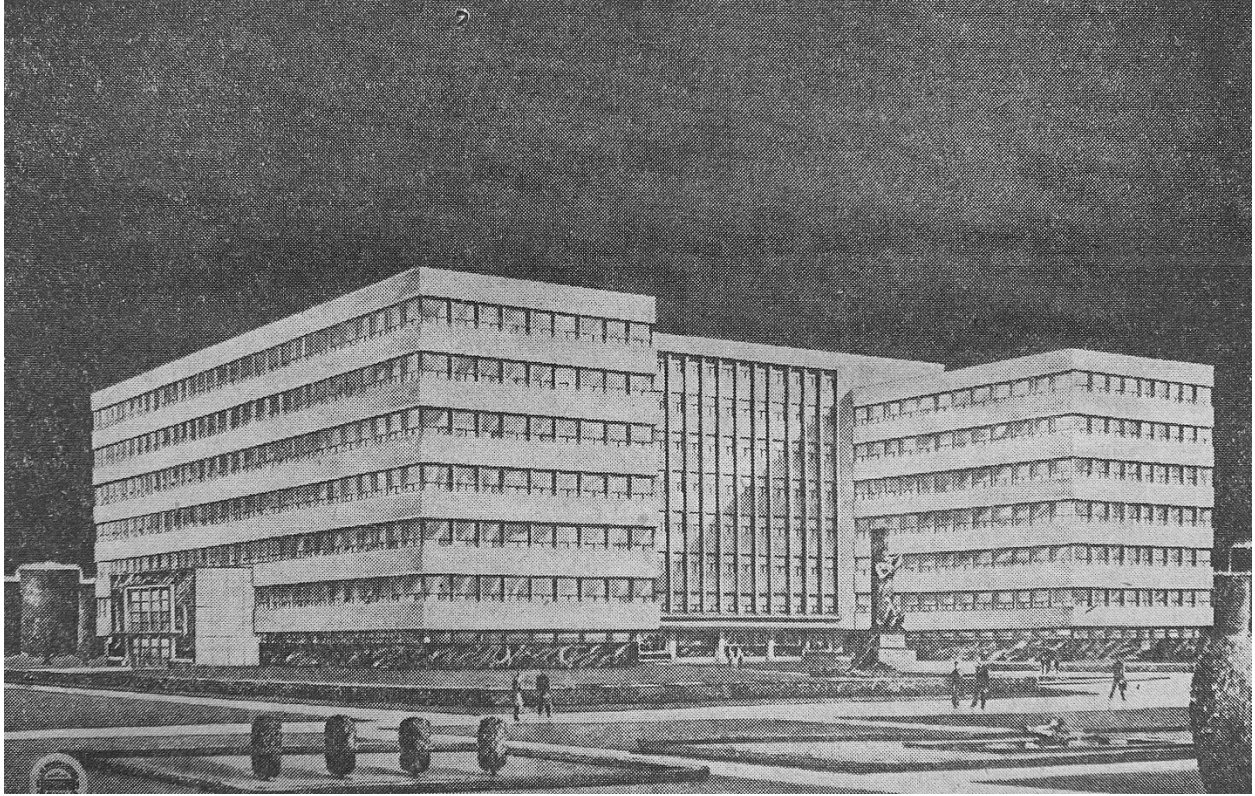


Figure 10. Architect's rendering, 1953, view from the southeast. Source: newspaper clipping, Sangamon Valley Collection, Lincoln Library, City of Springfield.



Figure 11. Groundbreaking ceremony, February 15, 1954, looking east toward the Capitol Complex, Howlett Building (at center background) and State Archives (at right background).



Figure 12. The site for the building is cleared, and construction of the tunnels connecting the capitol has begun, 1954 view from the northwest.



Figure 13. Excavation and construction of the foundation and basement, 1954, view from the east.



Figure 14. The concrete structural frame of the building takes shape, 1954, view from the southeast, with the corner of the Capitol Complex visible at right.



Figure 15. Construction in progress, 1954, view from the southeast. Also note houses and apartment buildings lining Spring Street to the north and south.



Figure 16. The structure is in progress, and installation of the limestone cladding has begun, 1954, view from the southeast with the corner of the Capitol Complex visible at right.



Figure 17. The building nears completion, 1955, view from the southeast. Source: Sangamon Valley Collection, Lincoln Library, City of Springfield.



Figure 18. The completed building, late 1955 or early 1956, view from the southeast. Source: Sangamon Valley Collection, Lincoln Library, City of Springfield.



Figure 19. The completed building, view from the northeast, September 1956. Source: Sangamon Valley Collection, Lincoln Library, City of Springfield.



Figure 20. Aerial view looking northwest of the completed building, circa late 1960s. Source: Sangamon Valley Collection, Lincoln Library, City of Springfield.

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

INDEX TO PHOTOGRAPHS

ILLINOIS STATE CAPITOL COMPLEX, WILLIAM G. STRATTON BUILDING

HABS No. IL-1283-B

401 South Spring Street
Springfield
Sangamon County
Illinois

INDEX TO BLACK AND WHITE PHOTOGRAPHS

Leslie Schwartz, photographer, June 2022.

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| IL-1283-B-1 | North facade, view from Monroe Street. |
| IL-1283-B-2 | North facade, view from the north. |
| IL-1283-B-3 | South facade, view from the southwest. |
| IL-1283-B-4 | West facade, from the northwest. |
| IL-1283-B-5 | Site to the north of the building, looking east, with the north facade at the right side of the view. |
| IL-1283-B-6 | Entrance porch at the east facade, looking southwest. |
| IL-1283-B-7 | First floor lobby, north end, looking northeast toward information desk. |
| IL-1283-B-8 | First floor lobby, north end, looking southwest toward elevators and corridor. |
| IL-1283-B-9 | First floor lobby, looking northwest from southwest entrance toward corridor. |
| IL-1283-B-10 | First floor lobby, south end, looking northeast toward stairwell and southeast entrance. |













of Representatives

Senate
Information

INFORMATION

A1

EXIT

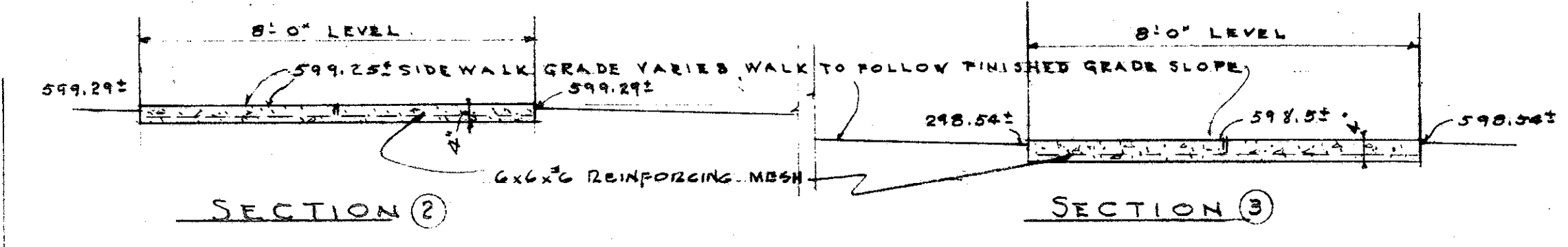
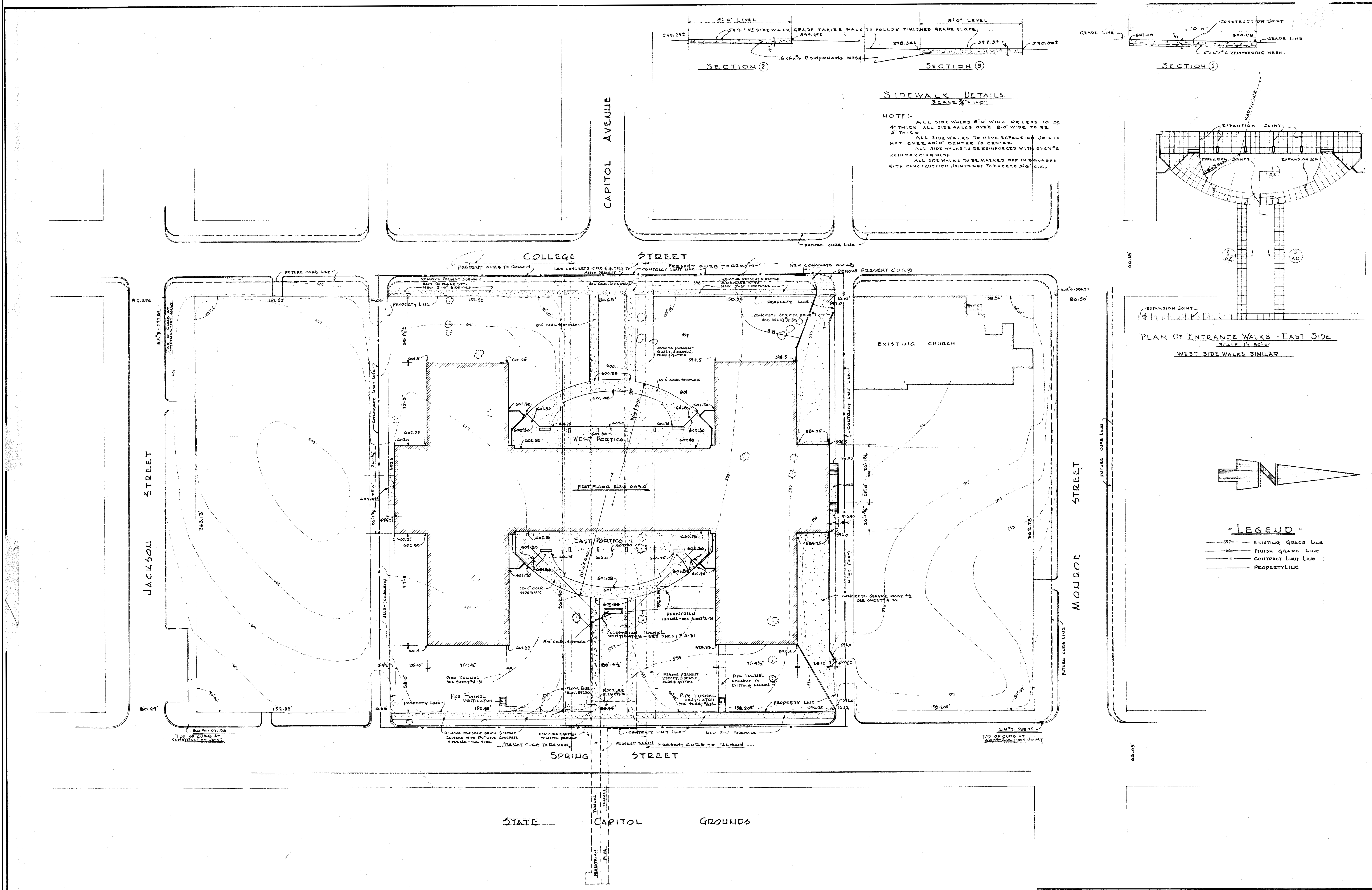
Informational board or directory listing names and contact information.





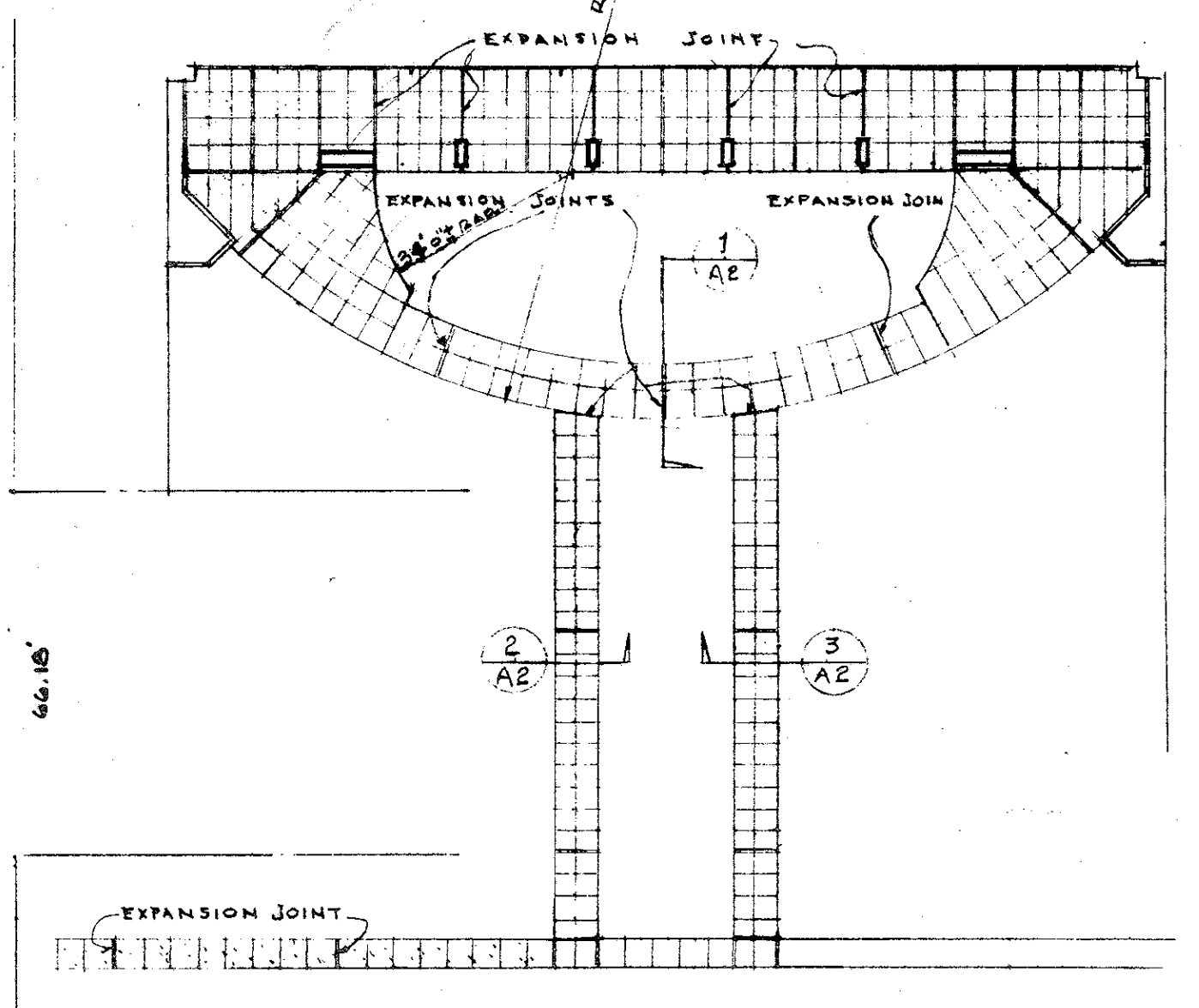
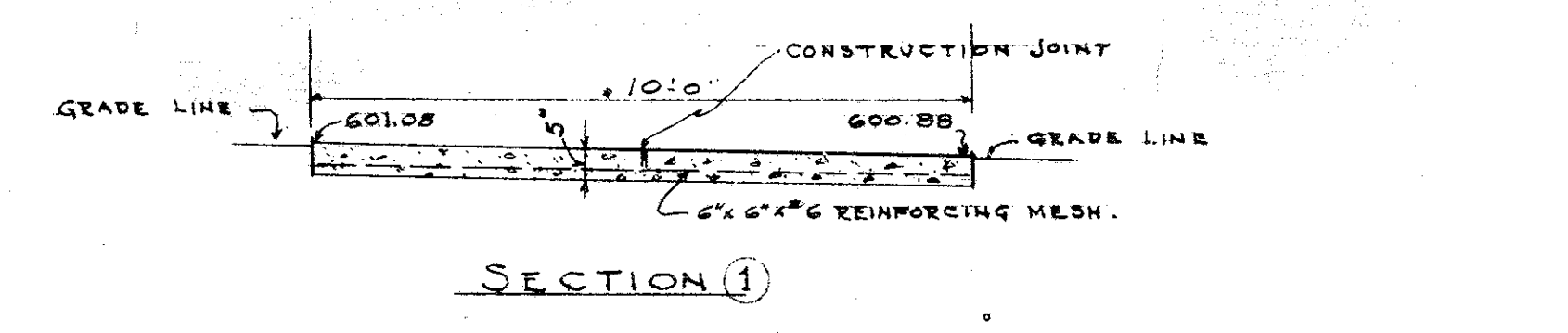






SIDEWALK DETAILS
SCALE 1/2" = 1'-0"

NOTE: ALL SIDE WALKS 8'-0" WIDE OR LESS TO BE 4" THICK. ALL SIDE WALKS OVER 8'-0" WIDE TO BE 3" THICK. ALL SIDE WALKS TO HAVE EXPANSION JOINTS NOT OVER 40'-0" CENTER TO CENTER. ALL SIDE WALKS TO BE REINFORCED WITH 6"x6"x6" REINFORCING MESH. ALL SIDE WALKS TO BE MARKED OFF IN SQUARES WITH CONSTRUCTION JOINTS NOT TO EXCEED 30' S.C.

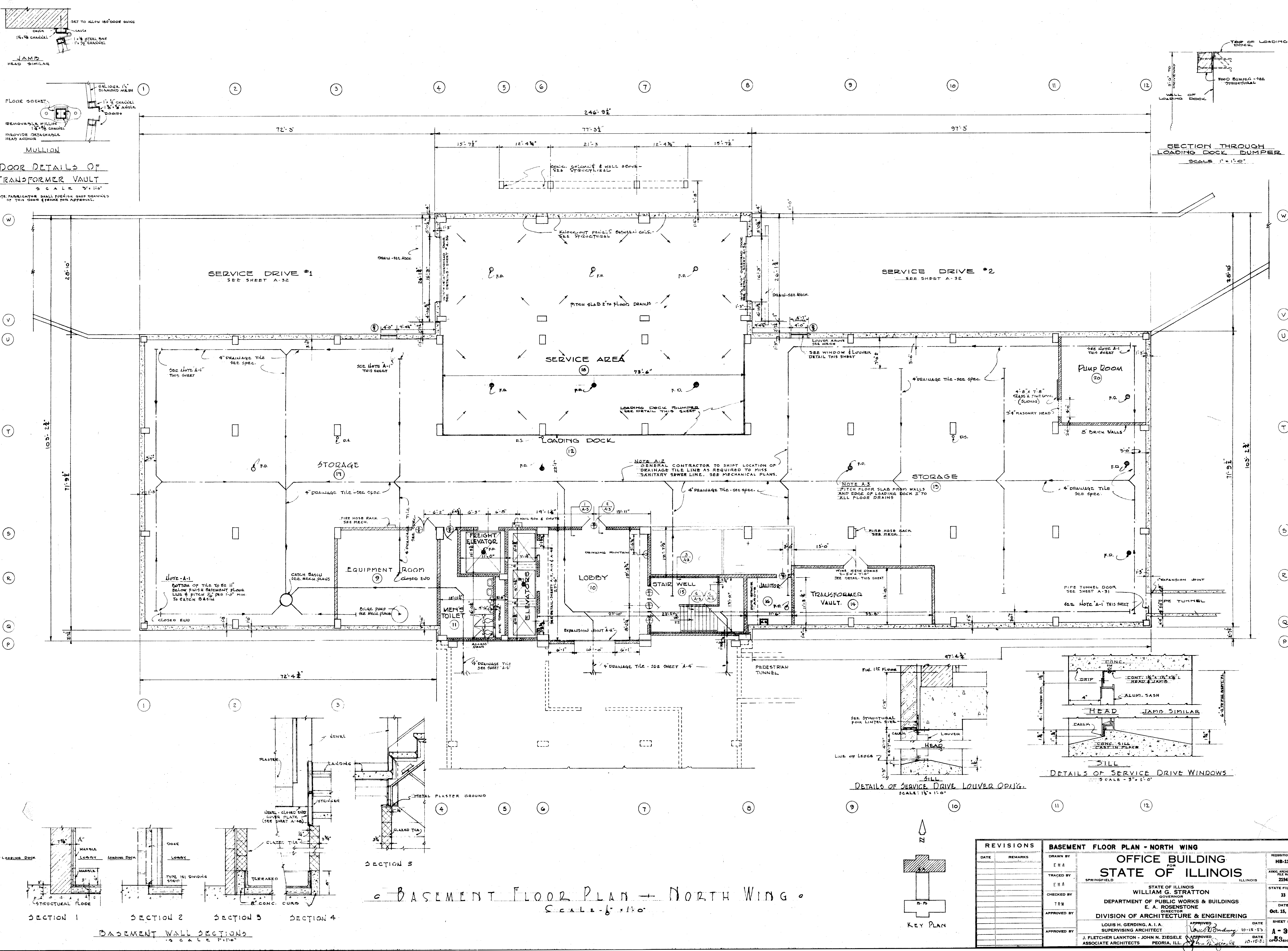


- "LEGEND"**
- 87 --- EXISTING GRADE LINE
 - 80 --- FINISH GRADE LINE
 - 81 --- CONTRACT LIMIT LINE
 - 82 --- PROPERTY LINE

SITE PLAN
SCALE 1" = 50'-0"

REVISIONS		SITE PLAN - WALK DETAILS	
DATE	REMARKS	DRAWN BY	REVISION NO.
		J. H. B.	HB-119
		TRACED BY	DATE
		J. H. B.	10-15-53
		CHECKED BY	DATE
		T. R. M.	10-15-53
		APPROVED BY	DATE
		J. FLETCHER LANKTON - JOHN N. ZIEGEL	10-15-53
		ASSOCIATE ARCHITECTS	PERDIA, ILL.

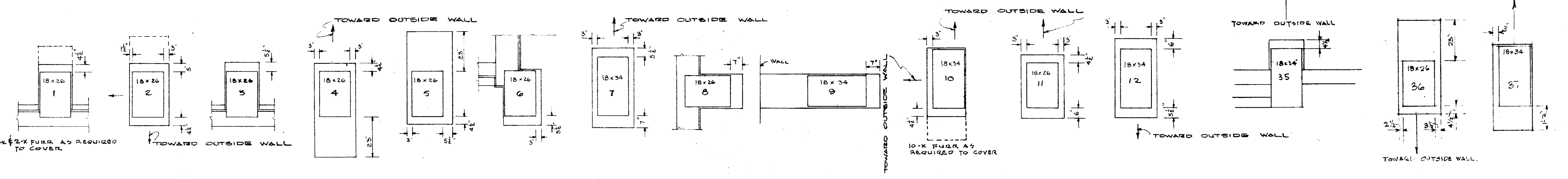
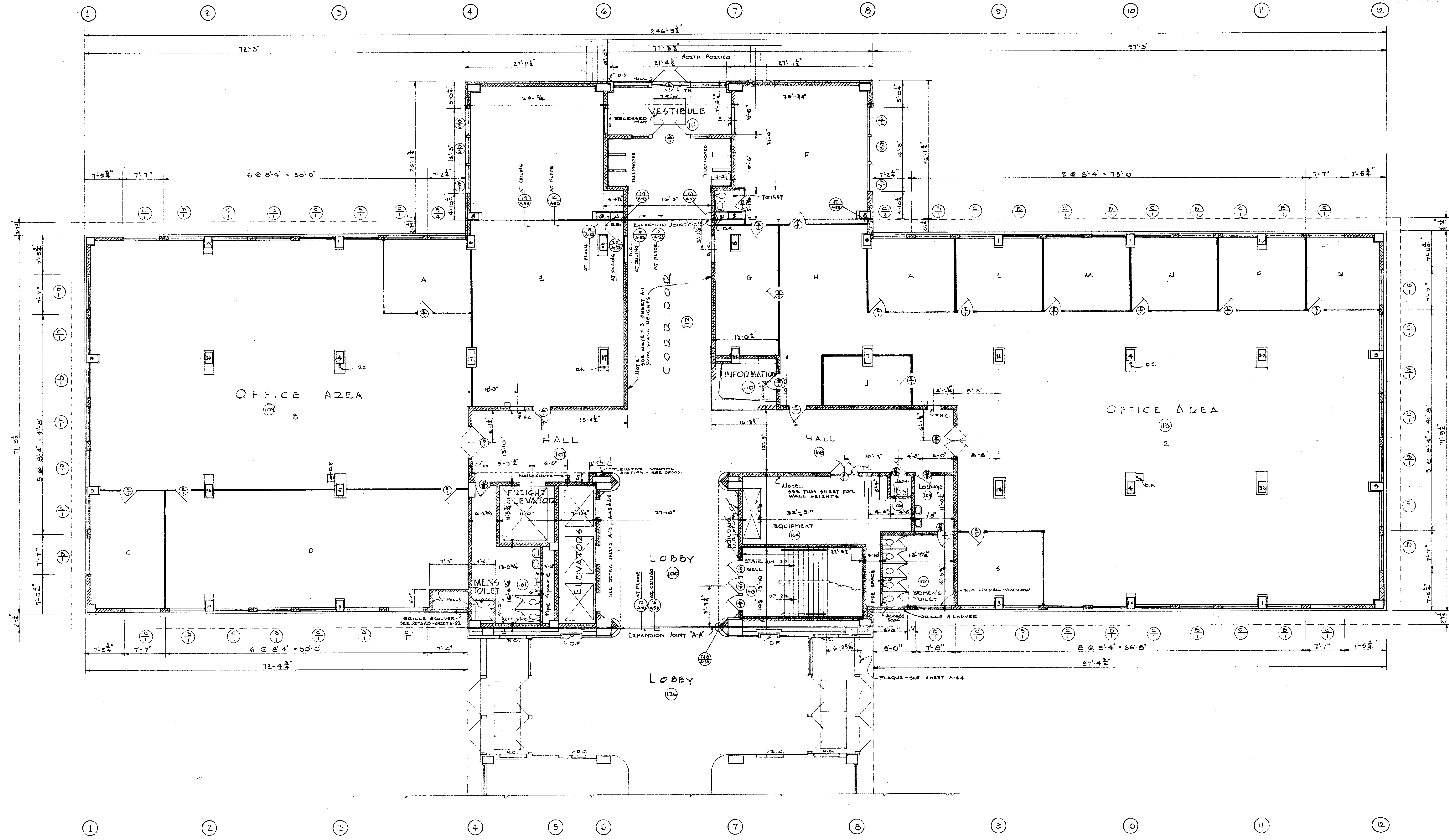
THIS DRAWING IS A SCANNED REPRODUCTION OF AN ORIGINAL (1953) CONSTRUCTION DRAWING. IT HAS NOT BEEN FIELD VERIFIED FOR ACCURACY.



Basement Floor Plan - North Wing
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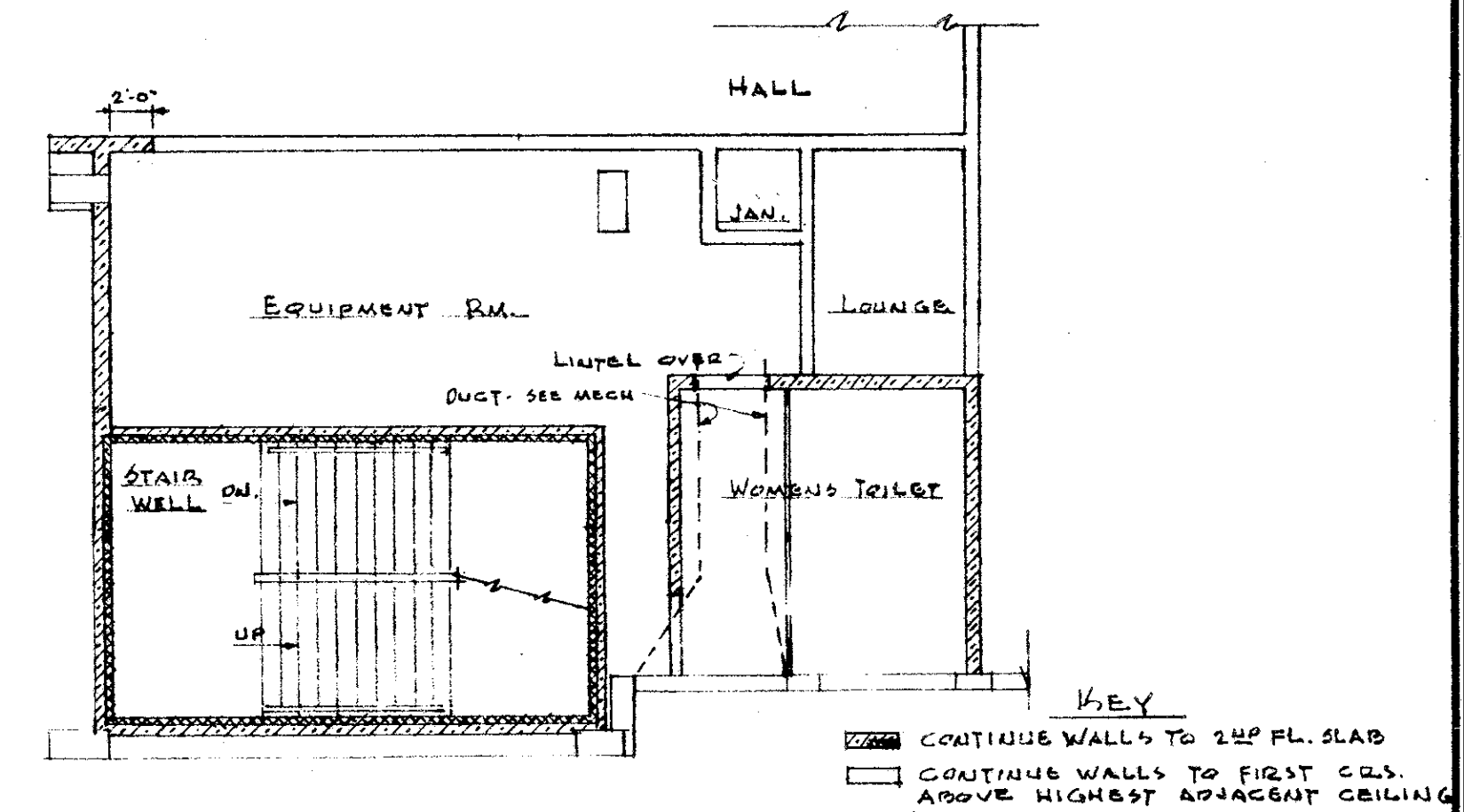
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DATE	REMARKS	DRAWN BY	PROJECT NO.
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		TRACED BY	ARCHITECTS FILE NO.
		E.M.A.	2254
		CHECKED BY	STATE FILE NO.
		T.R.H.	33
		APPROVED BY	DATE
			Oct. 15, 1953
			SHEET NO.
			A-3
			OF 50 SHEETS

THIS DRAWING IS A SCANNED REPRODUCTION OF AN ORIGINAL (1953) CONSTRUCTION DRAWING. IT HAS NOT BEEN FIELD VERIFIED FOR ACCURACY.

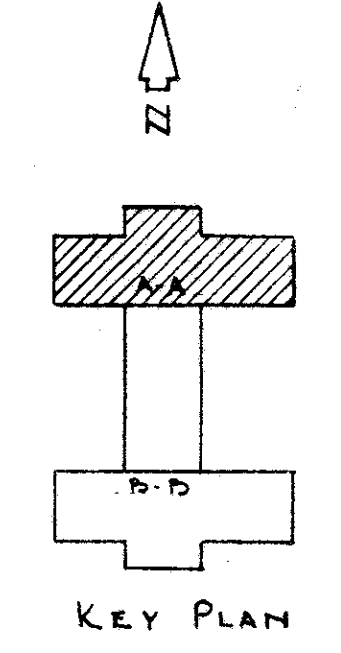


COLUMN FURRING DETAILS
 NOTE: ALL DIMENSIONS SHOWN ARE FROM COLUMN TO EXTERIOR FINISH
 NOTE: SEE SHEET A-19 FOR DETAIL OF TURNING & PLASTERING FOR COLUMNS.

FIRST FLOOR PLAN - NORTH WING
 SCALE - 1/8" = 1'-0"



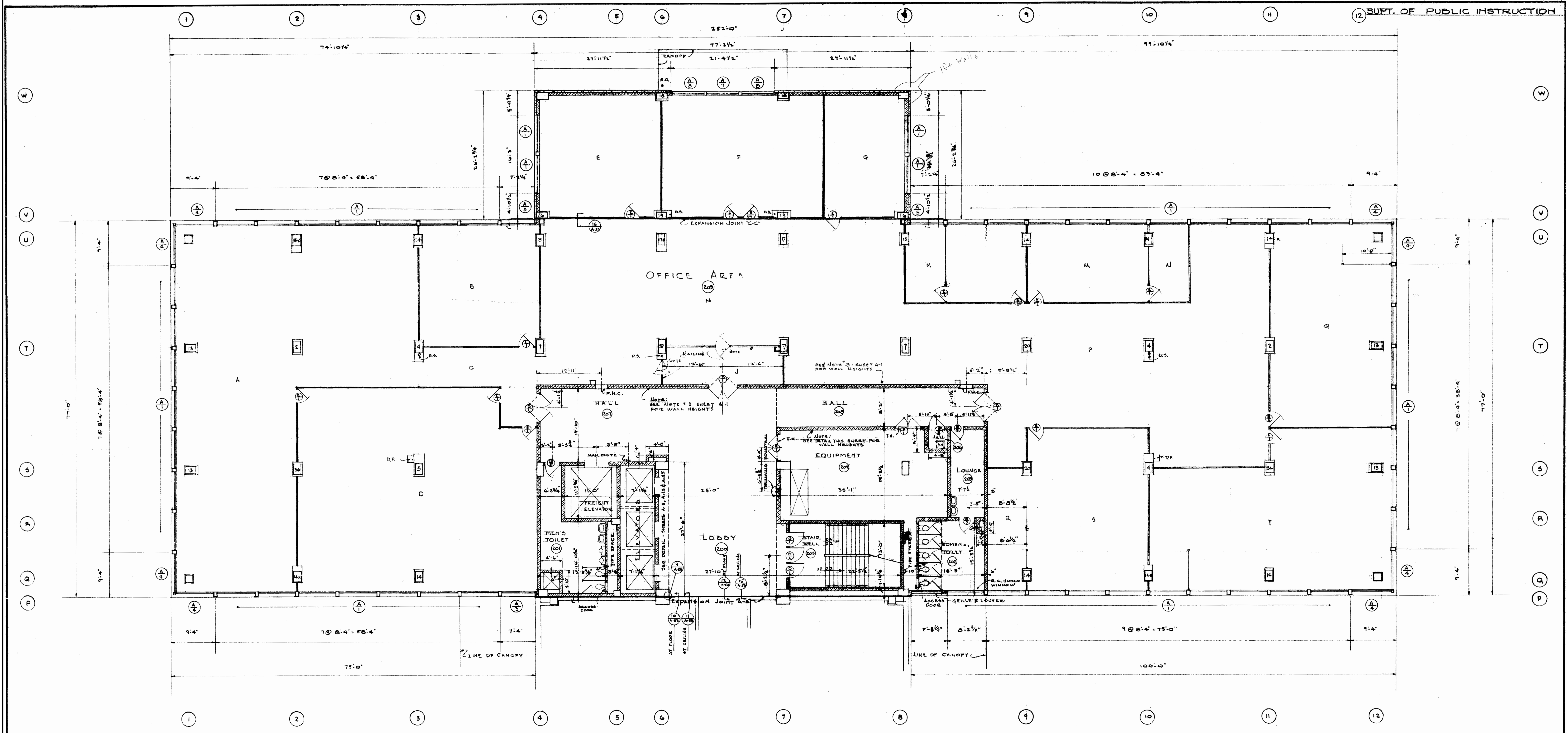
PLAN ABOVE CEILING OF 1ST FLOOR EQUIPMENT ROOM & ADJACENT ROOM WALLS
 SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



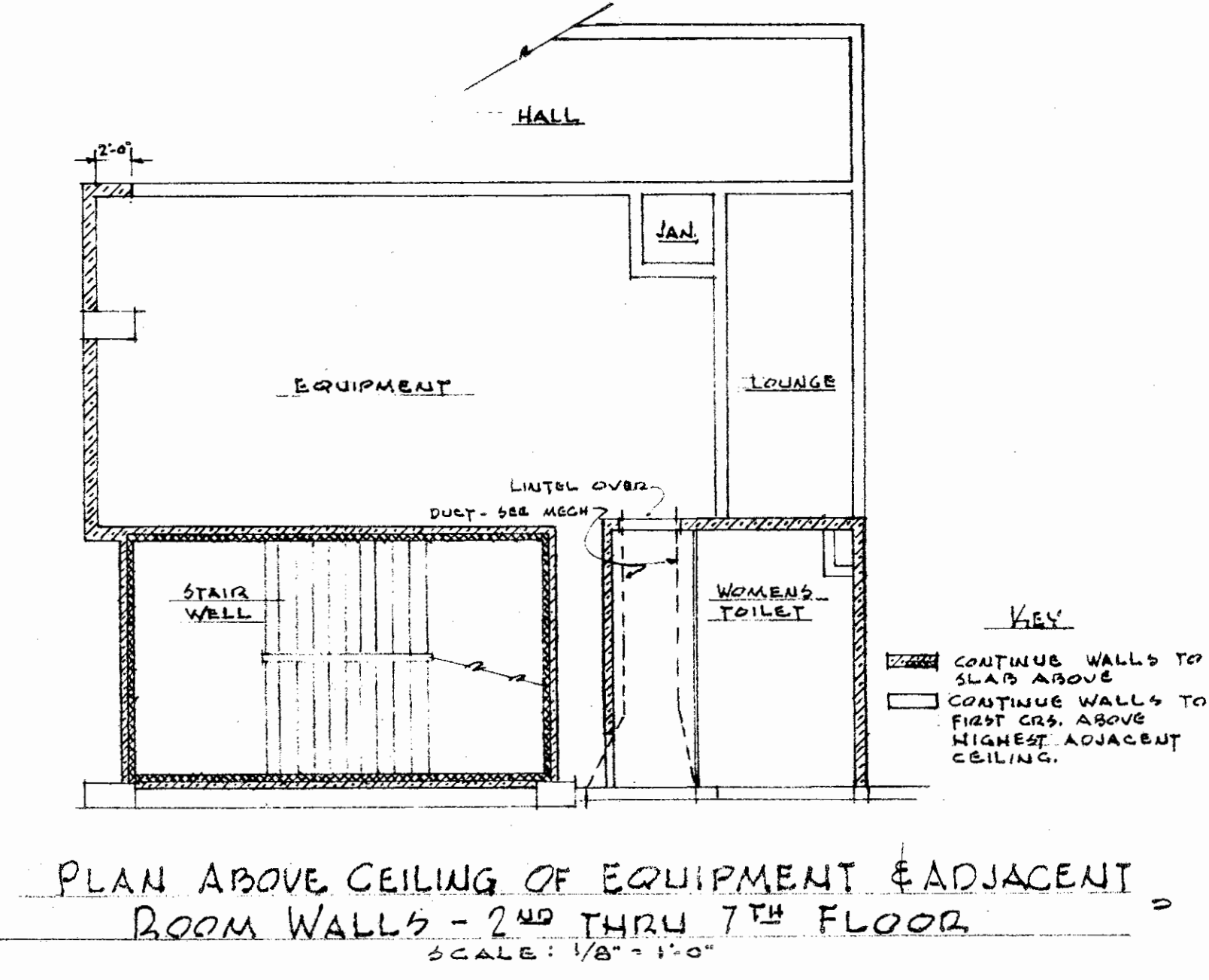
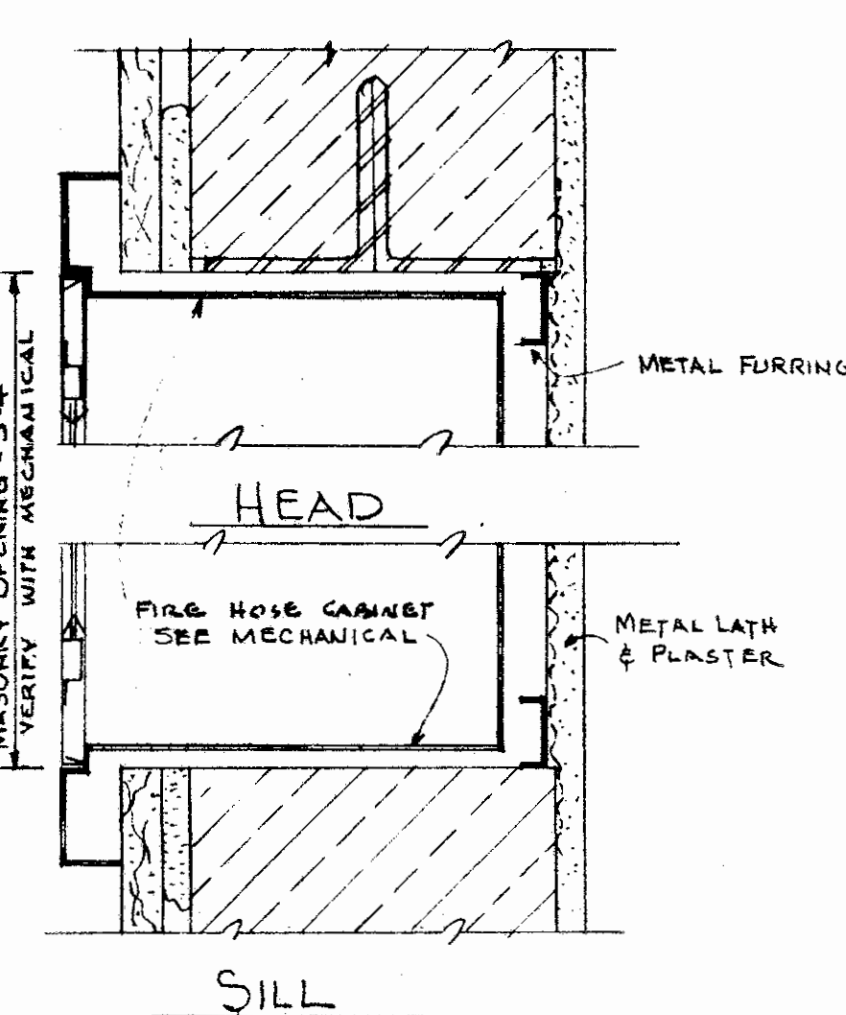
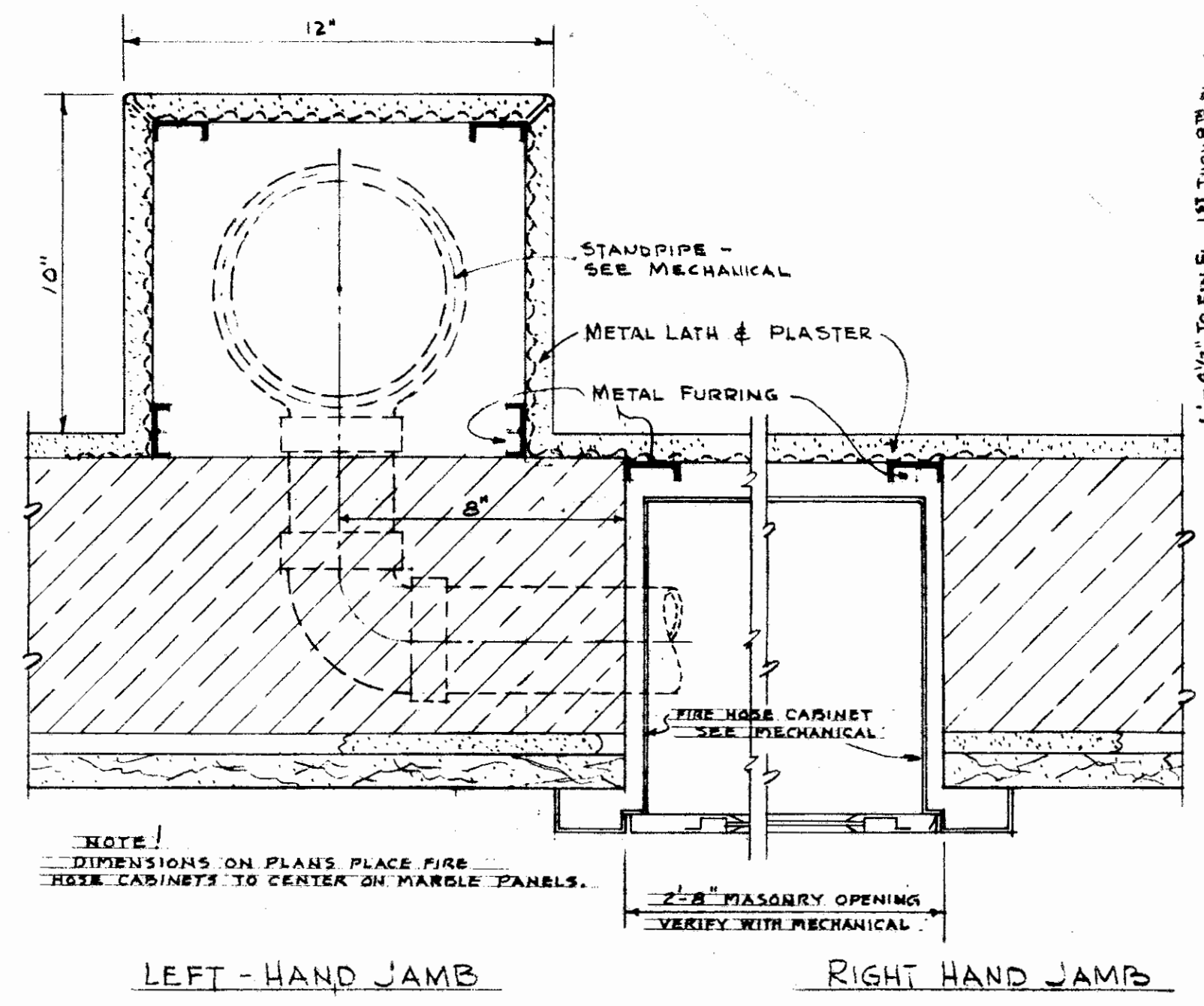
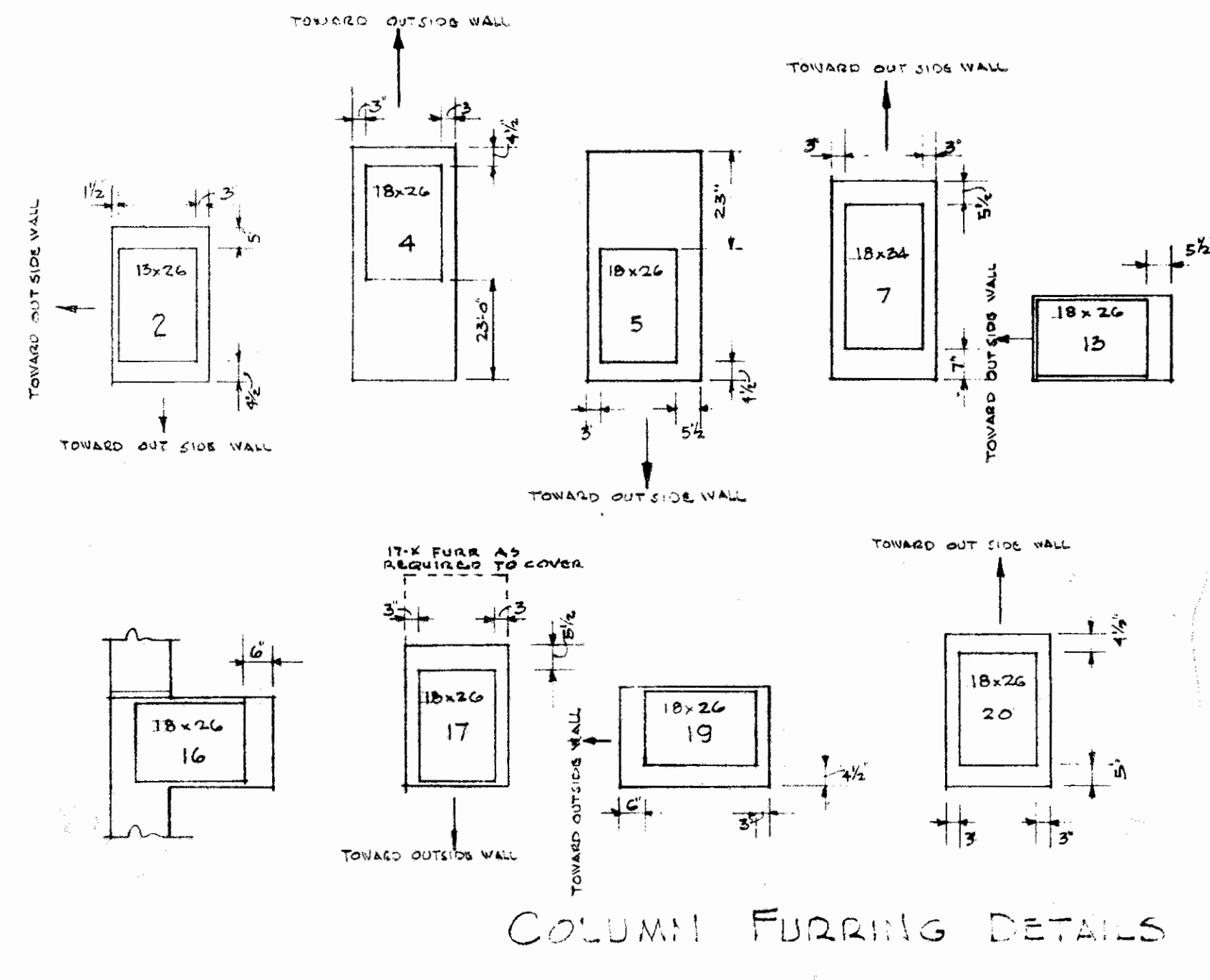
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DATE	REMARKS	DRAWN BY	REVISION NO.
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		TRACED BY	
		TSR	
		CHECKED BY	
		TRM	
		APPROVED BY	
		APPROVED BY	

OFFICE BUILDING STATE OF ILLINOIS STATE OF ILLINOIS WILLIAM G. STRATTON GOVERNOR DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS & BUILDINGS E. A. ROSENSTONE DIRECTOR DIVISION OF ARCHITECTURE & ENGINEERING	REQUESTION NO. HB-119 ARCHITECTS 254 STATE FILE NO. 33 DATE Oct. 15, 1953 SHEET NO. A-6 OF 10 SHEETS
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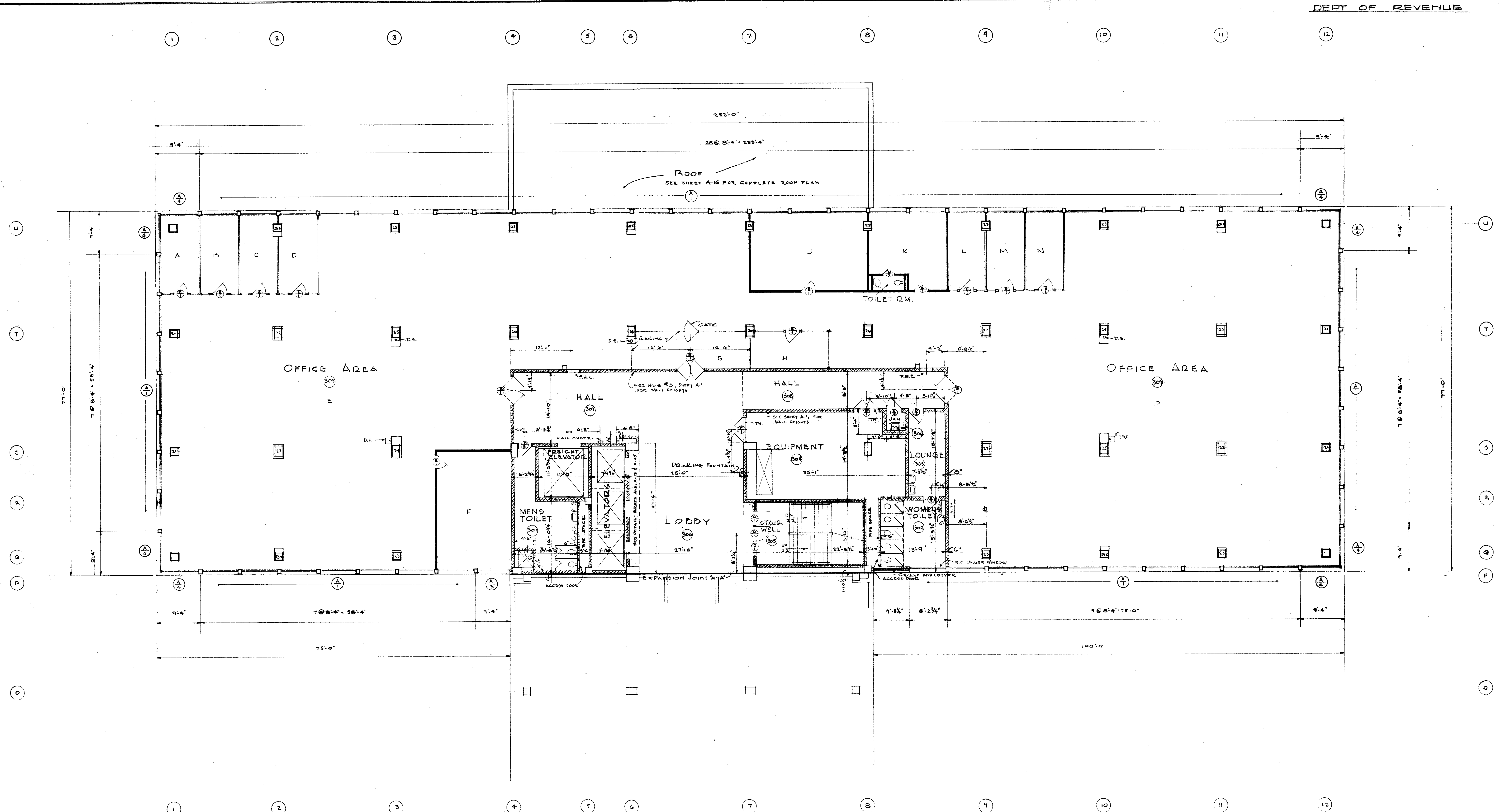
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SCALE: 3/8" = 1'-0"



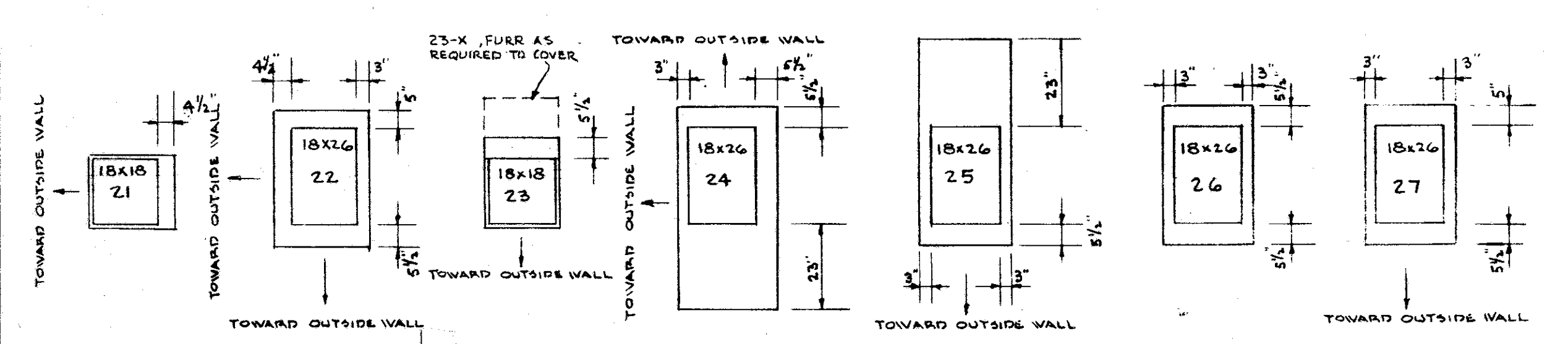
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DATE	REMARKS	DRAWN BY	REVISION NO.
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		WJS	2
		TRN	3
			4
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			12

OFFICE BUILDING STATE OF ILLINOIS SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS		REVISION NO. 118-119
STATE OF ILLINOIS WILLIAM G. STRATTON GOVERNOR DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS & BUILDINGS E. A. ROSENSTONE DIRECTOR DIVISION OF ARCHITECTURE & ENGINEERING		ASSOC. ARCHITECTS REG. NO. 2284
LOUIS H. GERDING, A.T.A. SUPERVISING ARCHITECT J. FLETCHER LANKTON - JOHN N. ZIEGEL ASSOCIATE ARCHITECTS PEORIA, ILL.		STATE FILE NO. 33
DATE Oct. 15, 1953		SHEET NO. A-9
APPROVED BY: <i>[Signature]</i>		DATE 10-15-53
APPROVED BY: <i>[Signature]</i>		DATE 10-16-53

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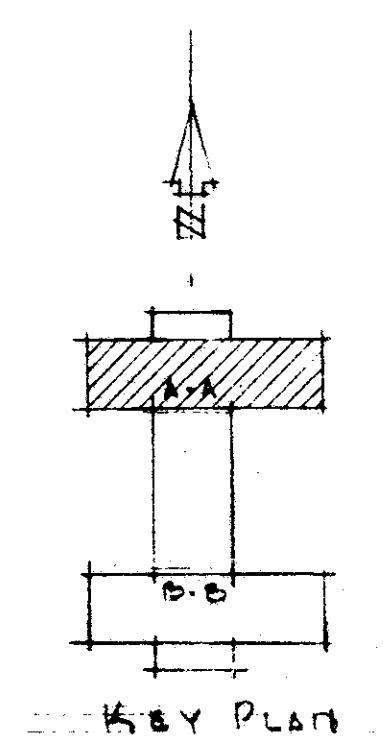


THIRD FLOOR PLAN - NORTH WING
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



MN FURRING DETAILS

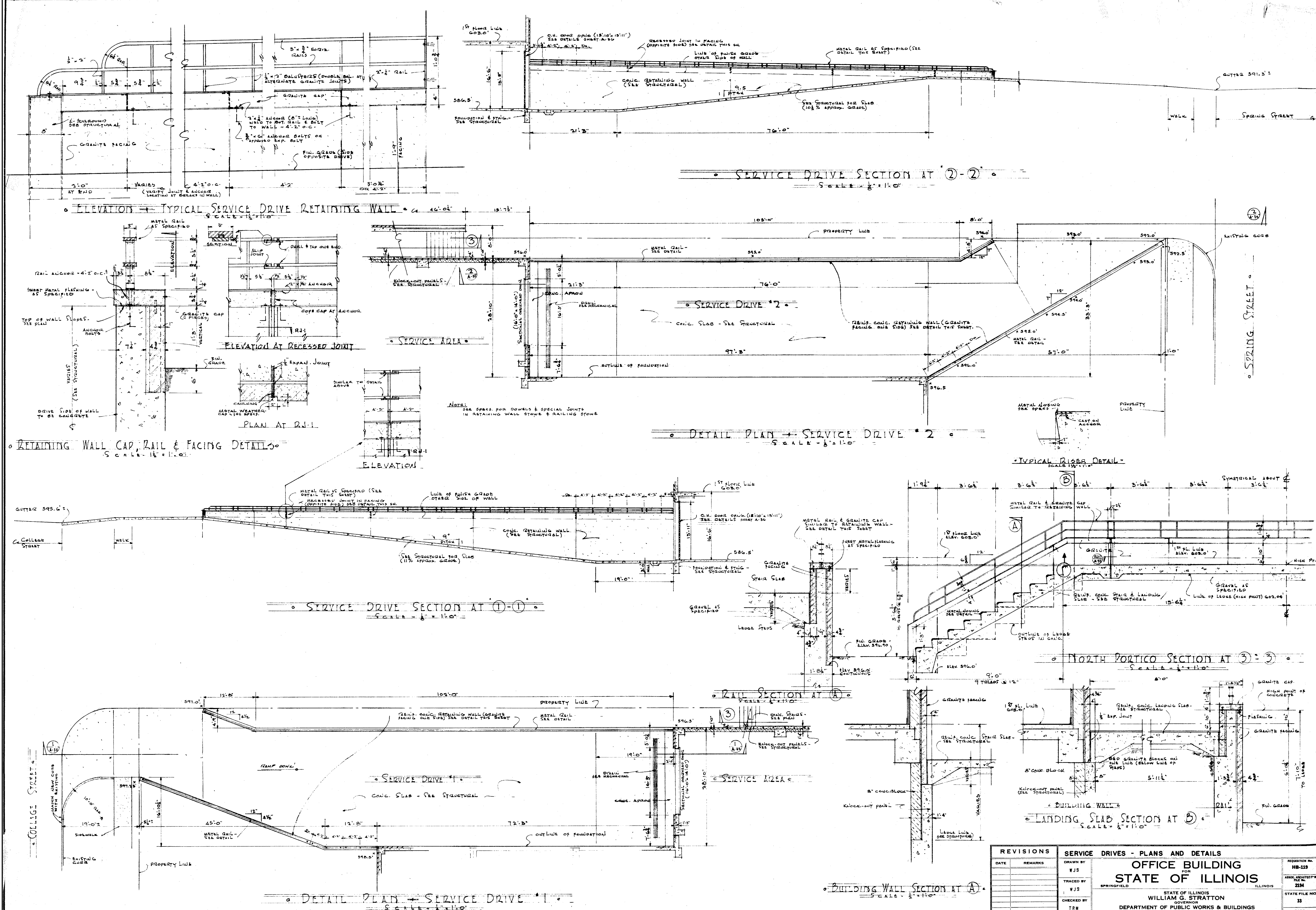
NOTE: ALL DIMENSIONS ARE FROM COLUMN TO EXTERIOR FINISH
1. FLOOR DETAIL OF FURRING & PLASTERING FOR COLUMNS.



REVISIONS		THIRD FLOOR PLAN - NORTH WING		
DATE	REMARKS	DATE	REVISION	BY

DRAWN BY R. F. C. TRACED BY R. F. C. CHECKED BY T. R. M. APPROVED BY APPROVED BY	STATE OF ILLINOIS OFFICE BUILDING STATE OF ILLINOIS WILLIAM G. STRATTON GOVERNOR DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS & BUILDINGS E. A. ROSENSTONE DIRECTOR DIVISION OF ARCHITECTURE & ENGINEERING LOUIS H. GERDING, A. I. A. SUPERVISING ARCHITECT J. FLETCHER LANKTON - JOHN H. ZIEGEL ASSOCIATE ARCHITECTS - PEORIA, ILL.	REVISION NO. HB-113 ASSOC. ARCHITECTS PAGE NO. 224 STATE FILE NO. 33 DATE Oct. 15, 1953 SHEET NO. A-32 OF 53 SHEETS
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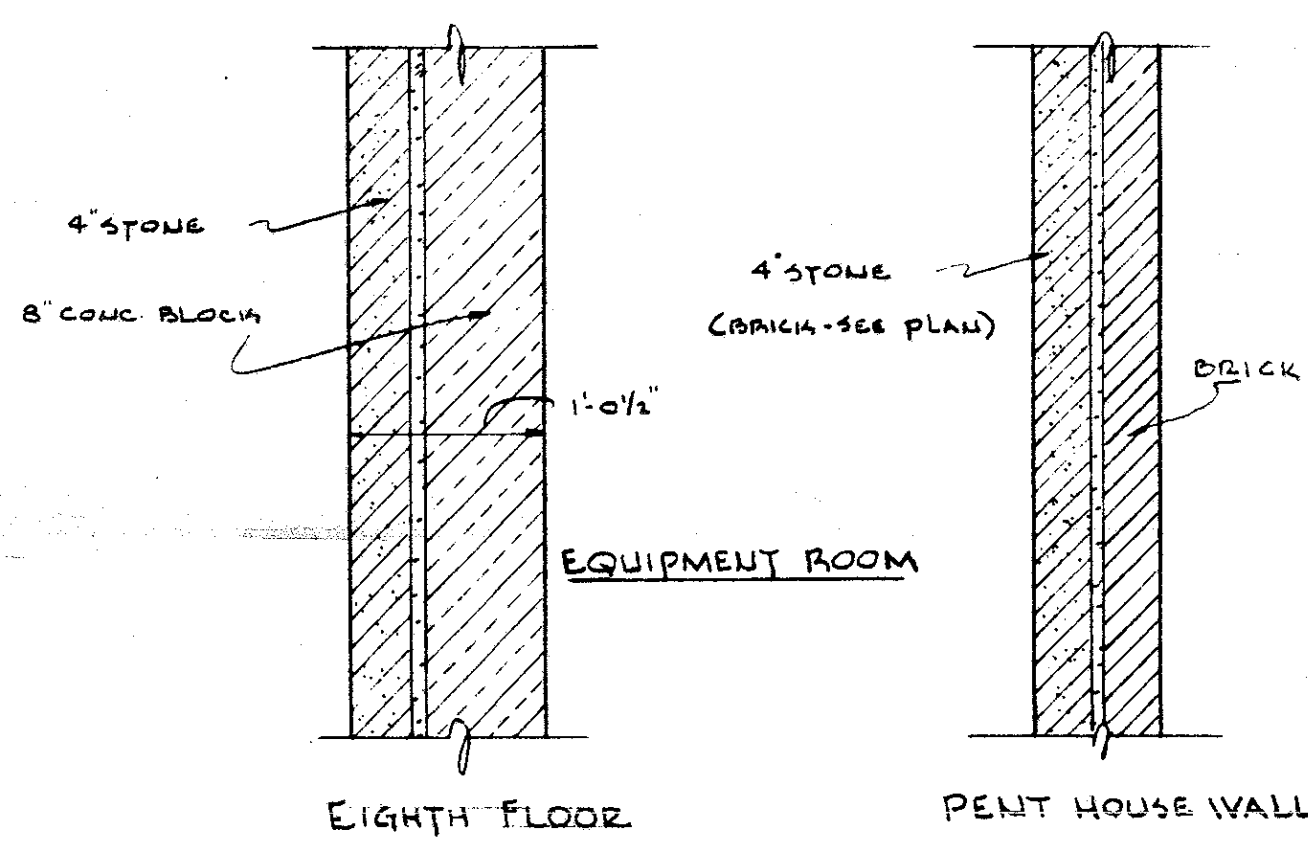
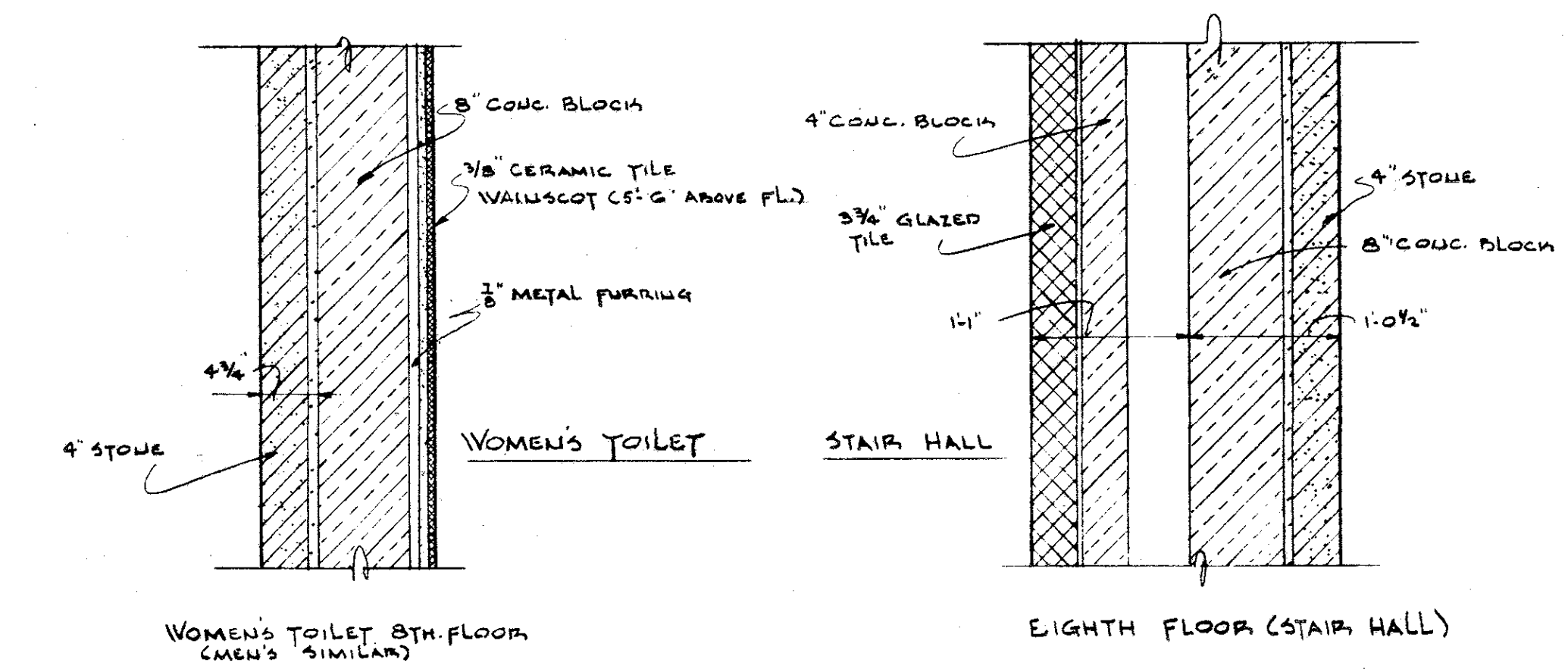
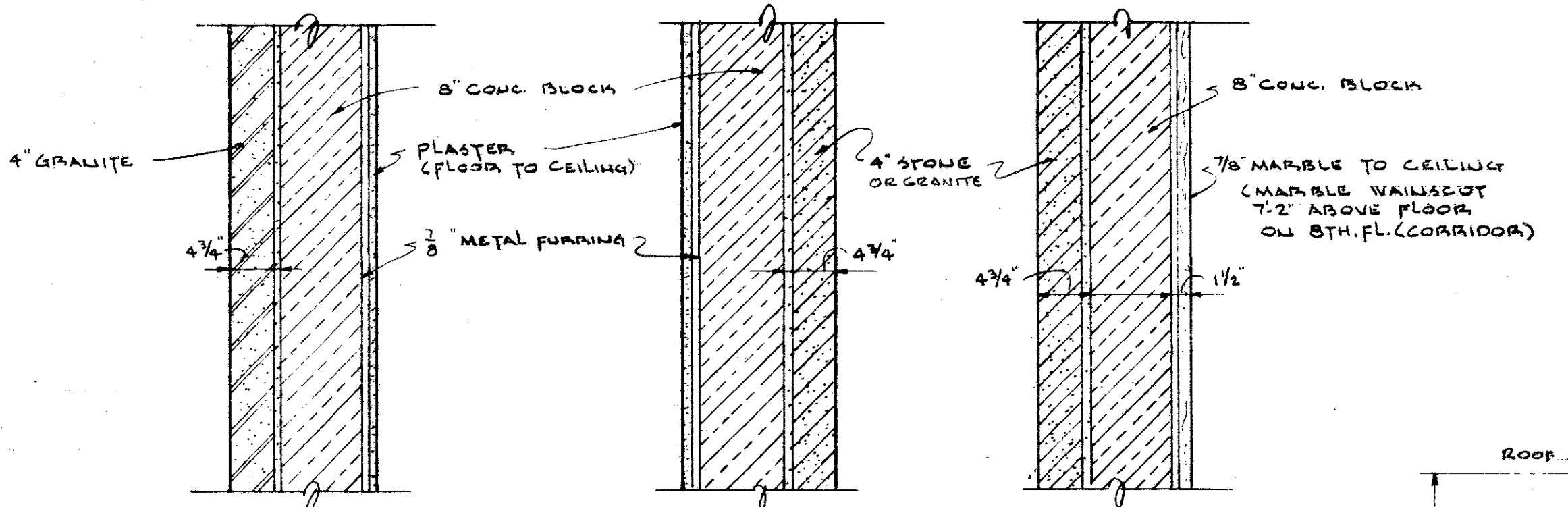
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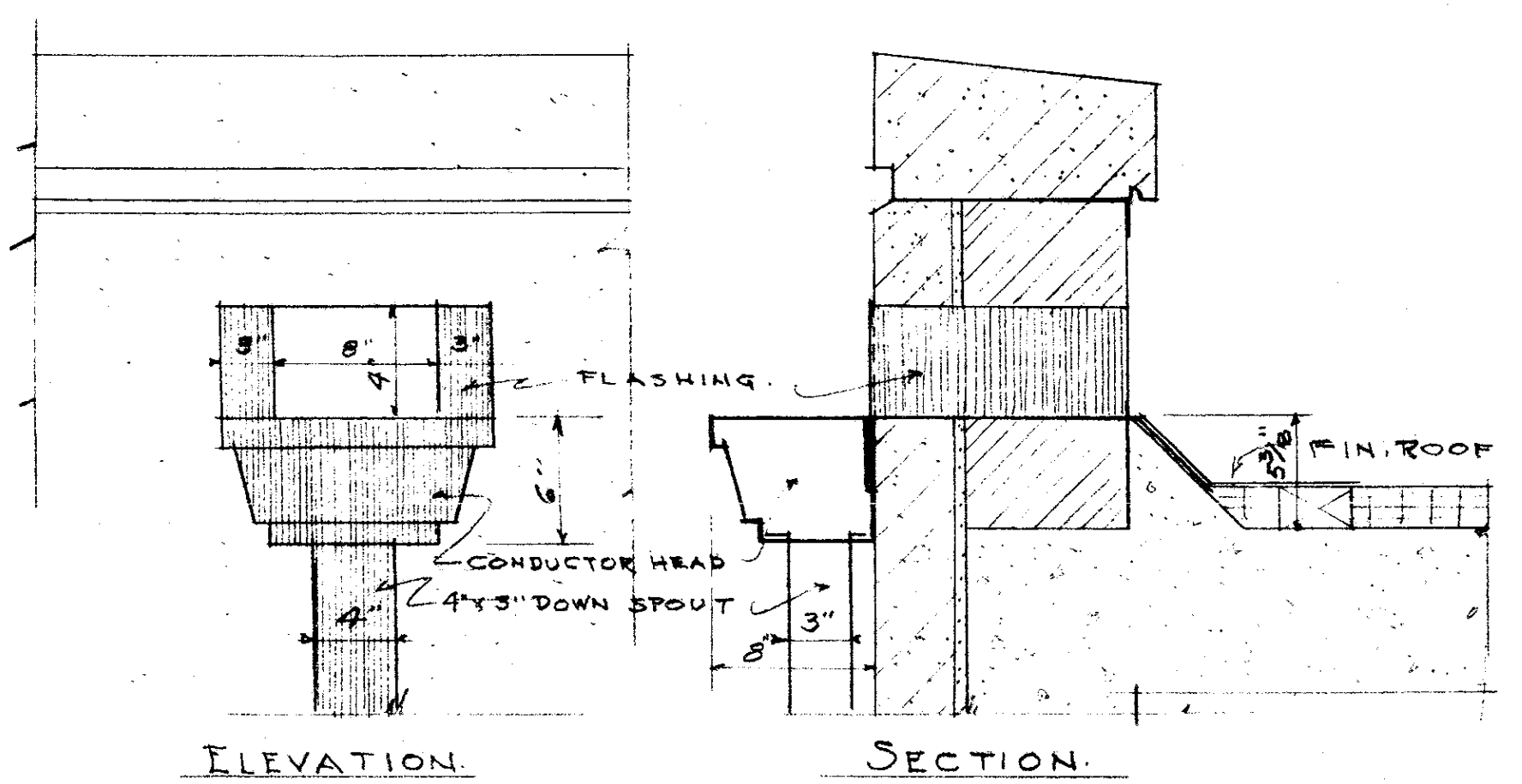
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		CHECKED BY	
		TRW	
		APPROVED BY	
		APPROVED BY	

STATE OF ILLINOIS WILLIAM G. STRATTON DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS & BUILDINGS E. A. ROSENSTONE DIVISION OF ARCHITECTURE & ENGINEERING		REVISION NO. HB-119 ARCHITECT'S FILE NO. 2134 STATE FILE NO. 33 DATE Oct. 15, 1953 SHEET NO. A-32 OF 33 SHEETS
LOUIS H. GERDING, A. I. A. SUPERVISING ARCHITECT		DATE 10-15-53
J. FLETCHER LANKTON - JOHN N. ZIEGEL ASSOCIATE ARCHITECTS PEORIA, ILL.		DATE 10-15-53

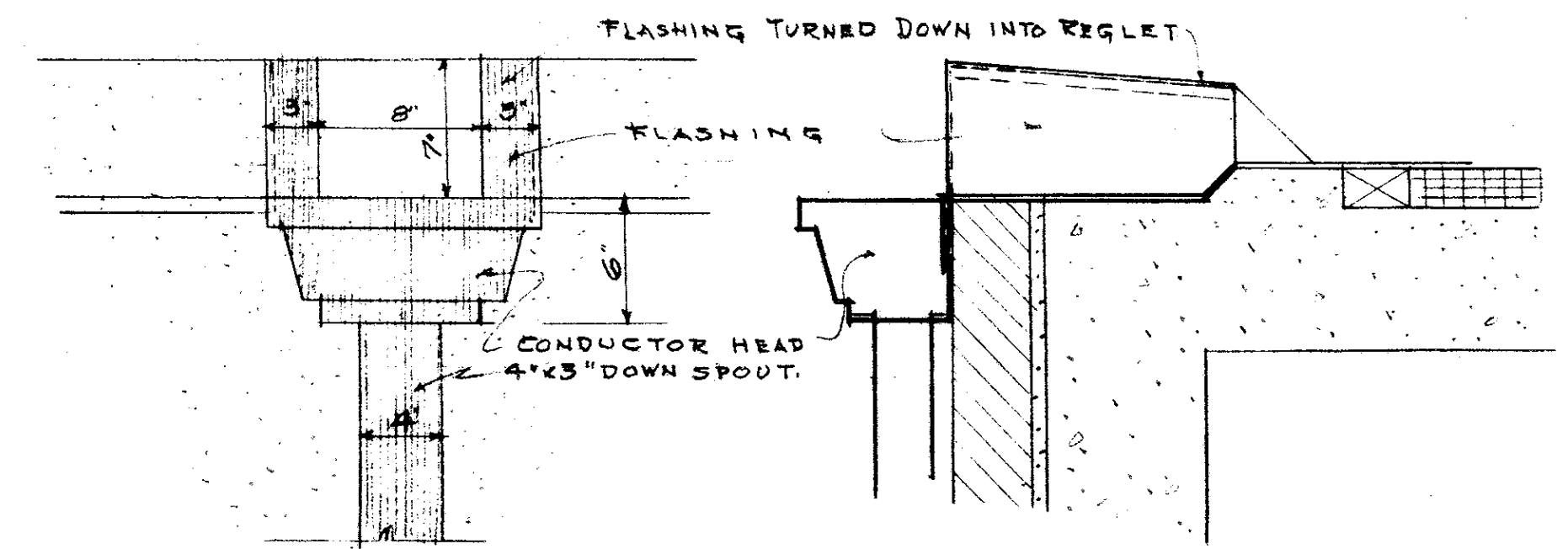
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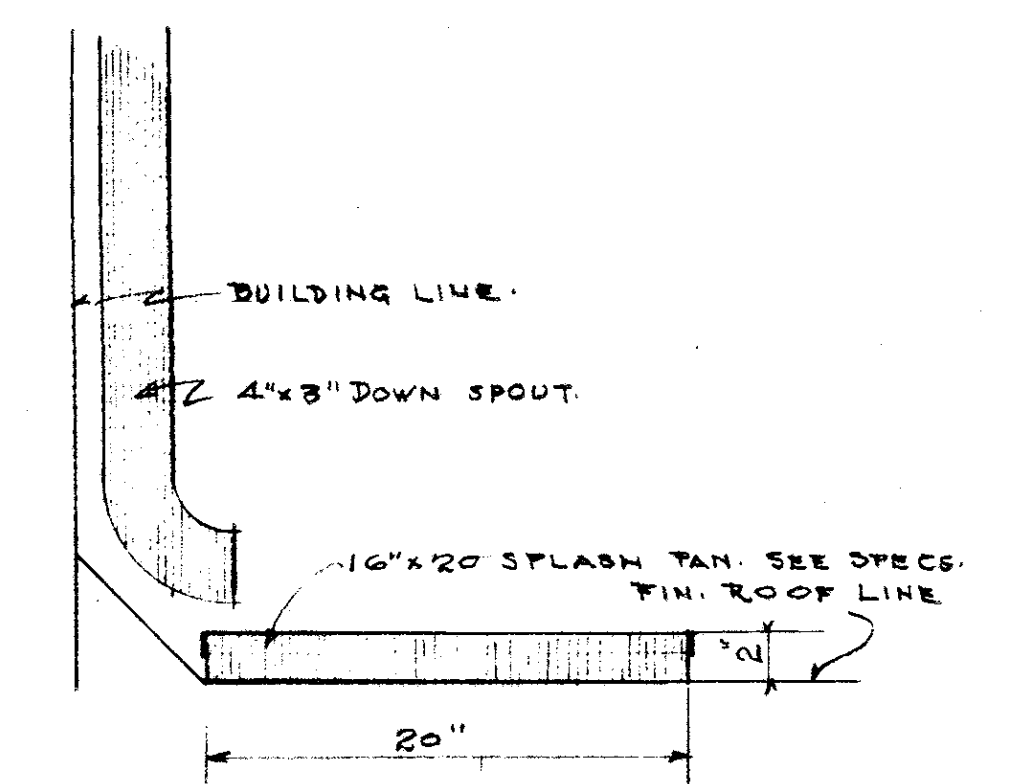
EXTERIOR WALLS
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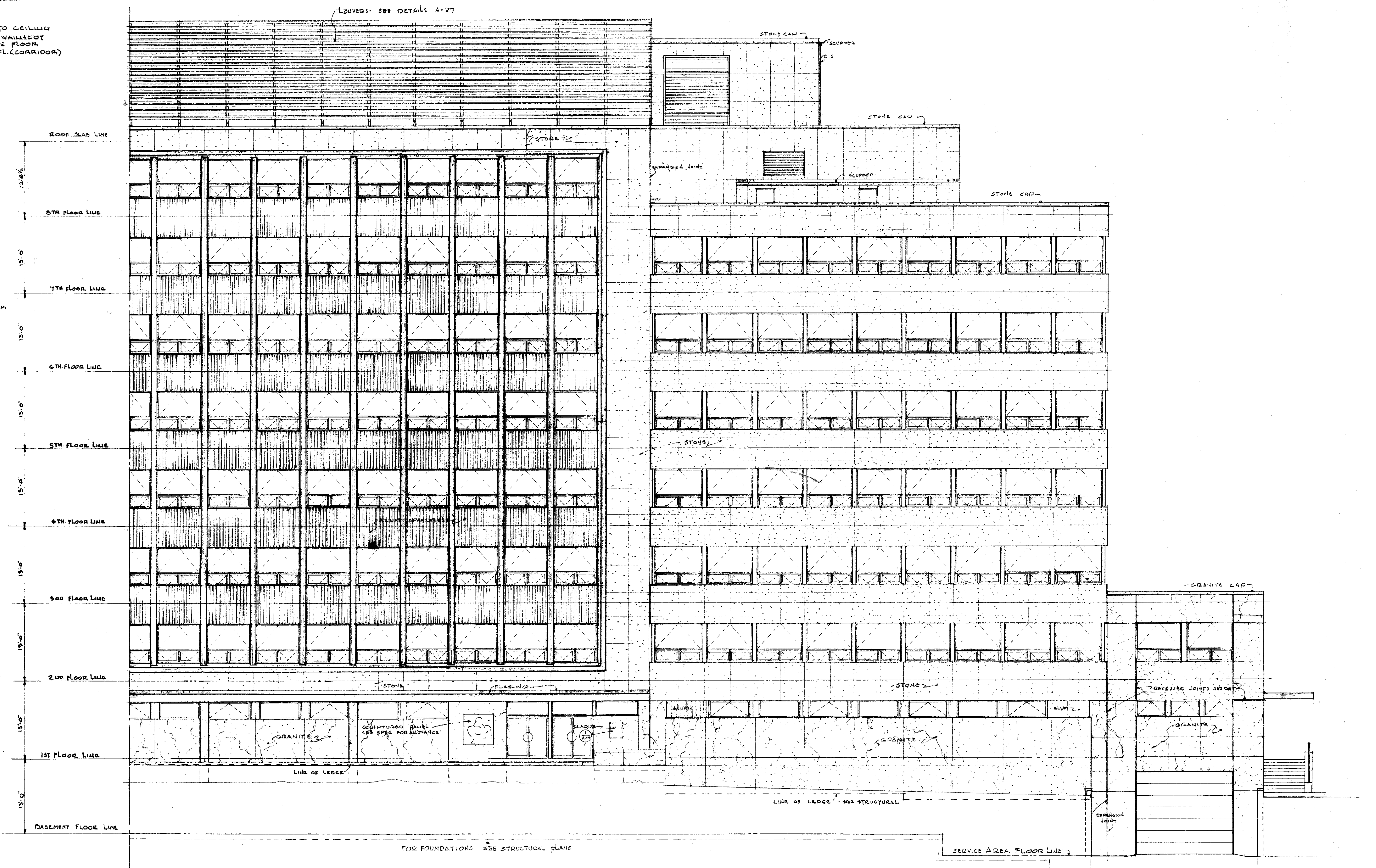
DETAIL OF SCUPPER AT EIGHTH FLOOR ROOF
SCALE 1/2" = 1'-0"



DETAIL OF SCUPPER AT PENT HOUSE
SCALE 1/2" = 1'-0"



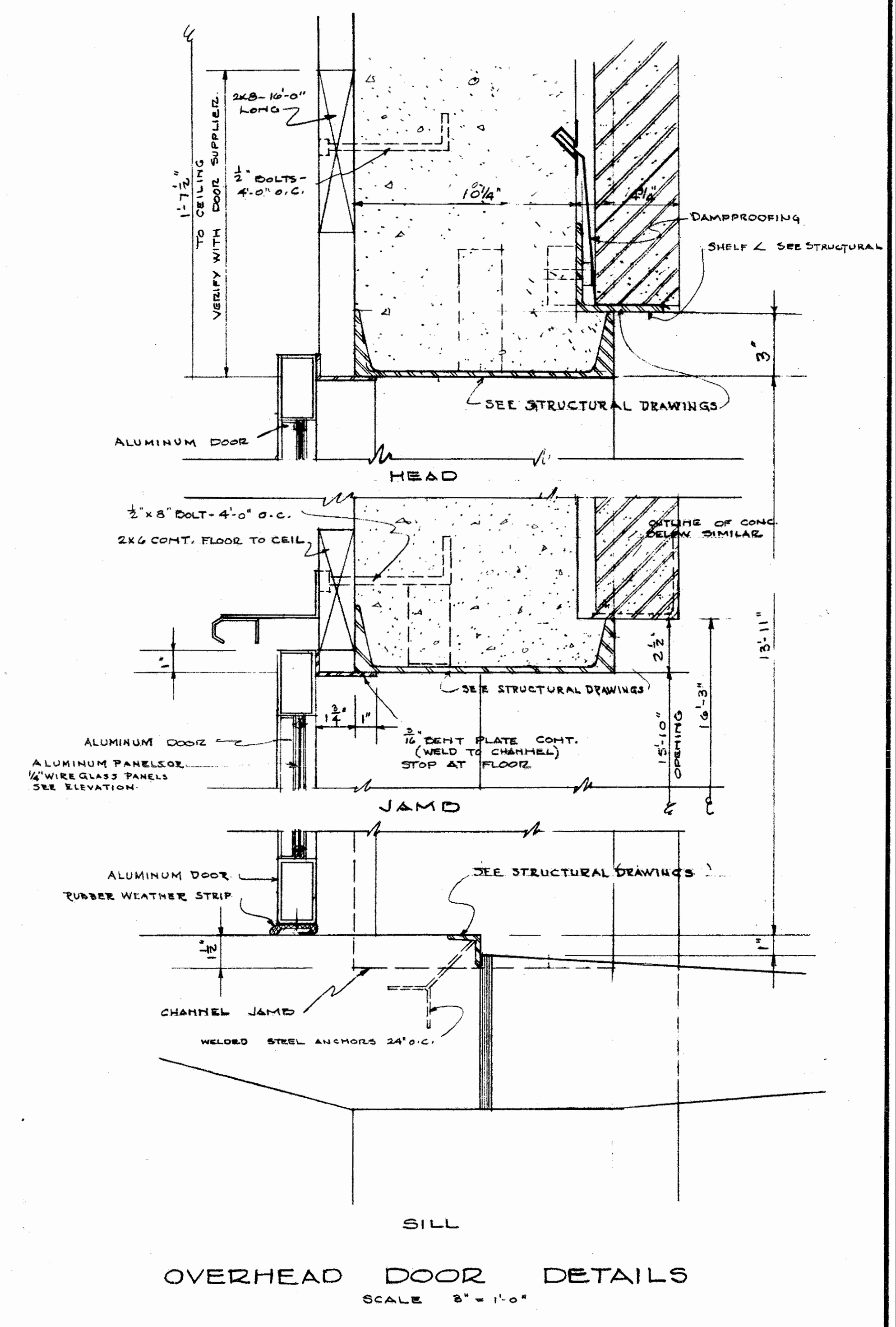
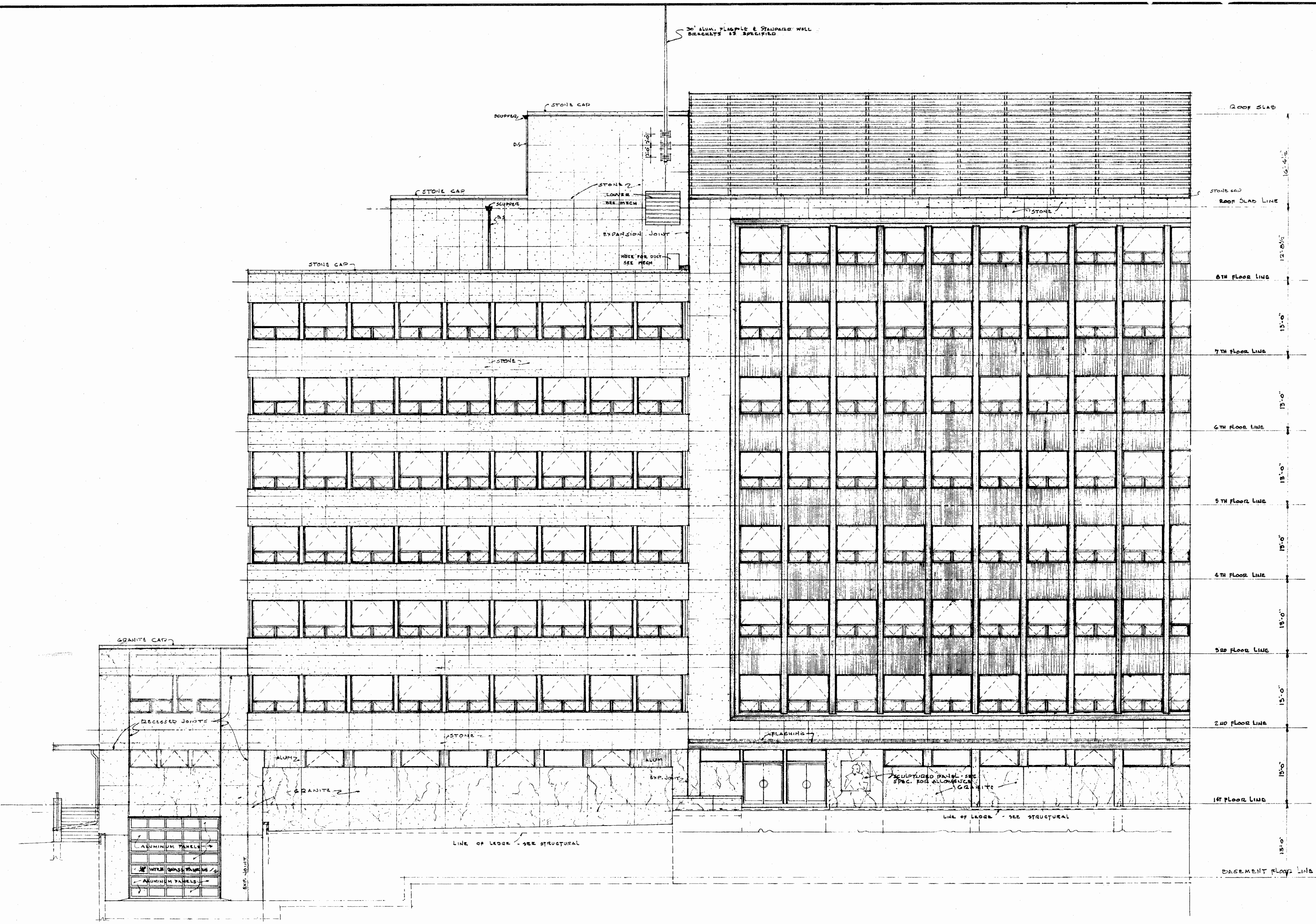
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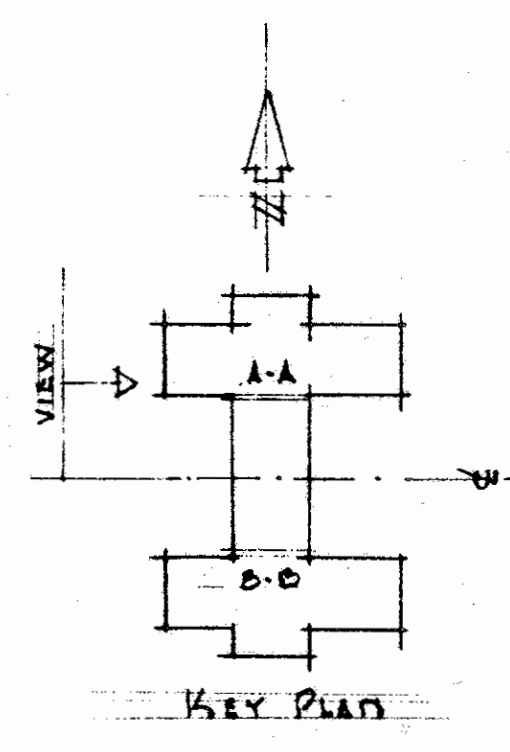
HALF ELEVATION OF EAST SIDE
SCALE 3/8" = 1'-0"

REVISIONS		HALF ELEVATION OF EAST SIDE		
DATE	REMARKS	DRAWN BY	DATE	REVISION NO.
		CFR		
		TRACED BY		
		CFR		
		CHECKED BY		
		TRM		
		APPROVED BY		

STATE OF ILLINOIS WILLIAM G. STRATTON GOVERNOR DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS & BUILDINGS E. A. ROSENSTONE DIRECTOR DIVISION OF ARCHITECTURE & ENGINEERING		REQUISITION NO. HB-119 ASSOC. SHEETS SEE A-1 STATE FILE NO. 33 DATE Oct. 15, 1953
LOUIS H. GERDING, A. I. A. SUPERVISING ARCHITECT	J. FLETCHER LANKTON - JOHN N. ZIEGELE ASSOCIATE ARCHITECTS PLOMBA, ILL.	SHEET NO. A-38 OF 53 SHEETS DATE 10-15-53

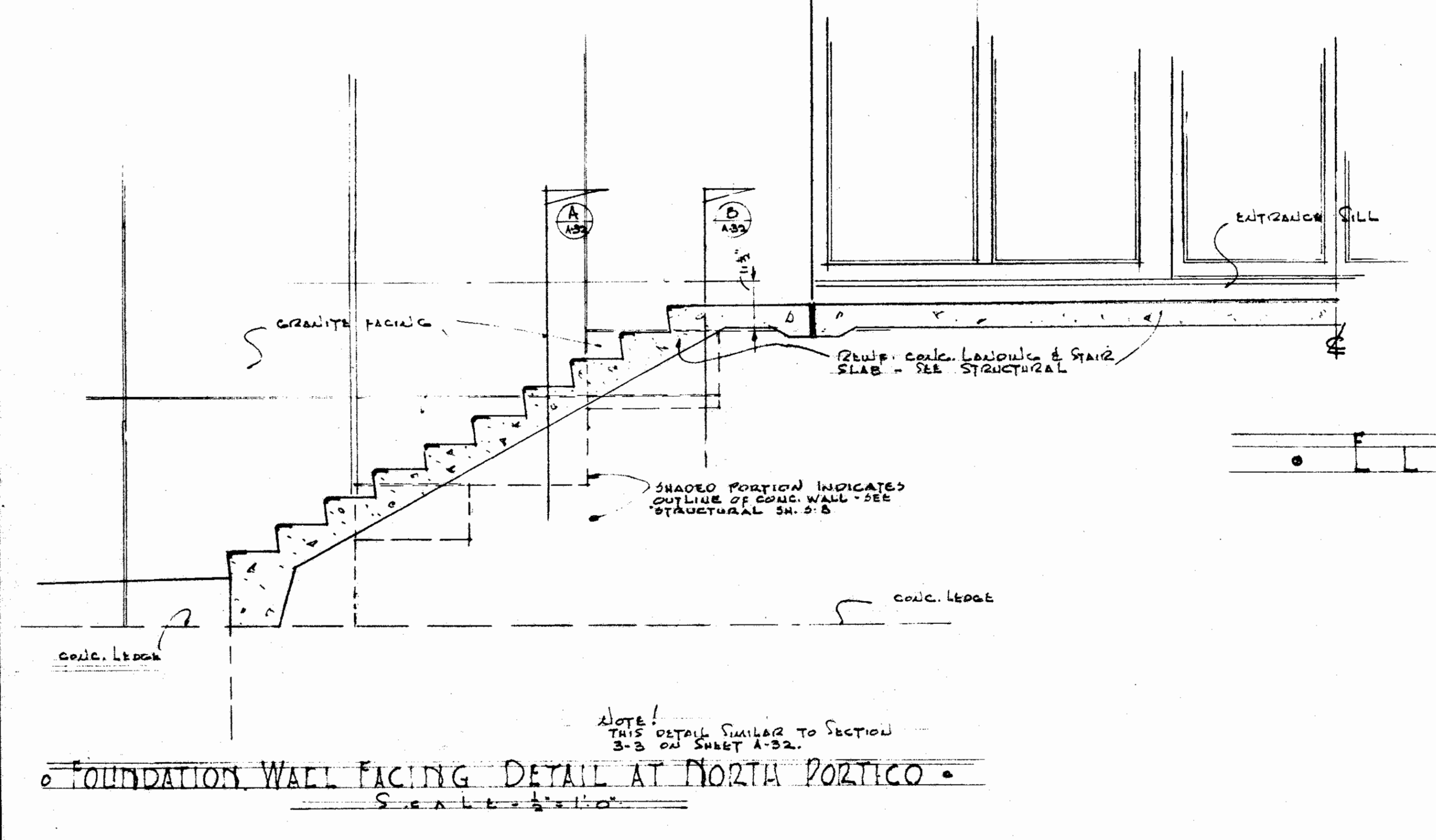
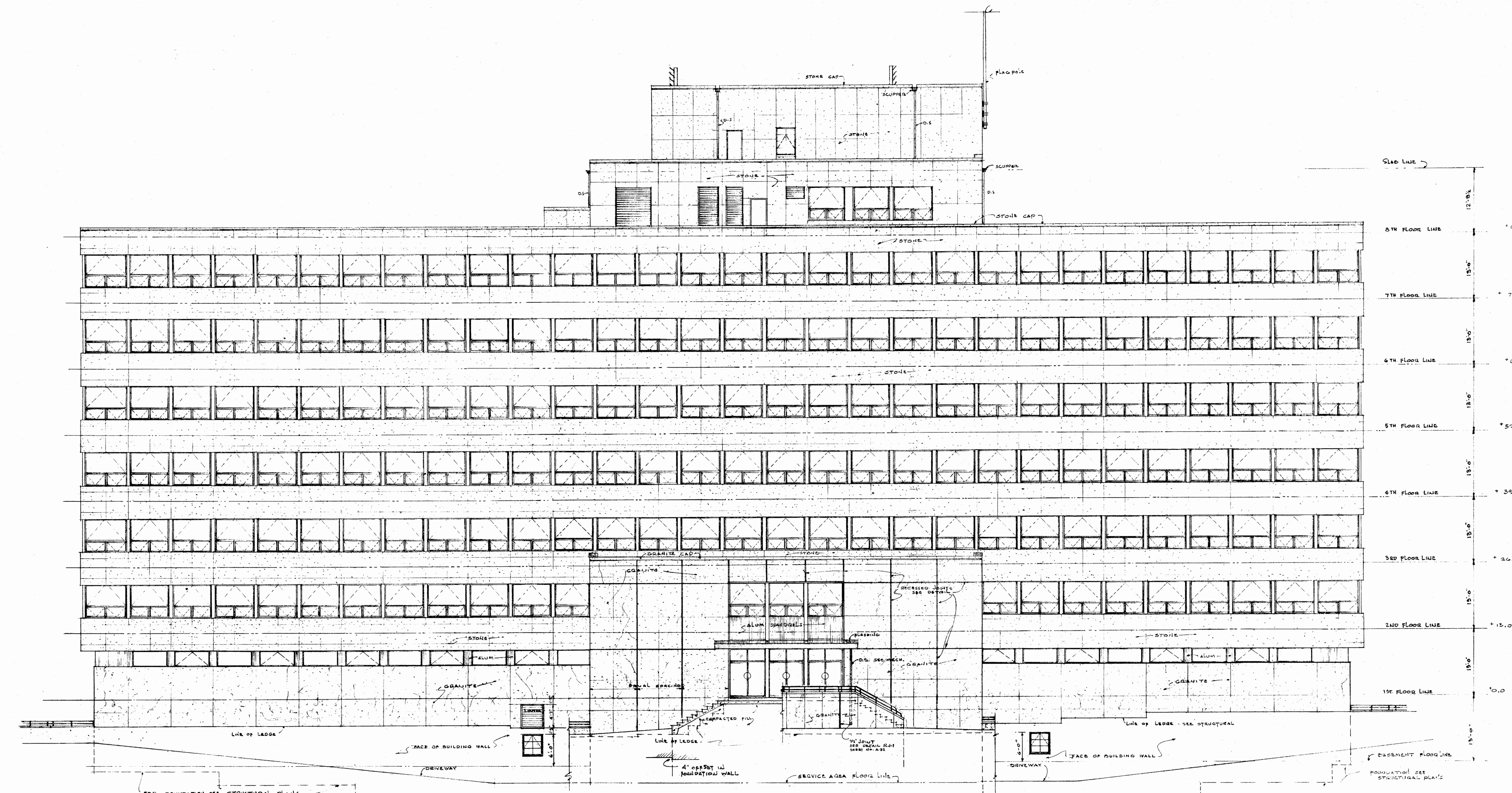


• HALF ELEVATION OF WEST SIDE •
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"

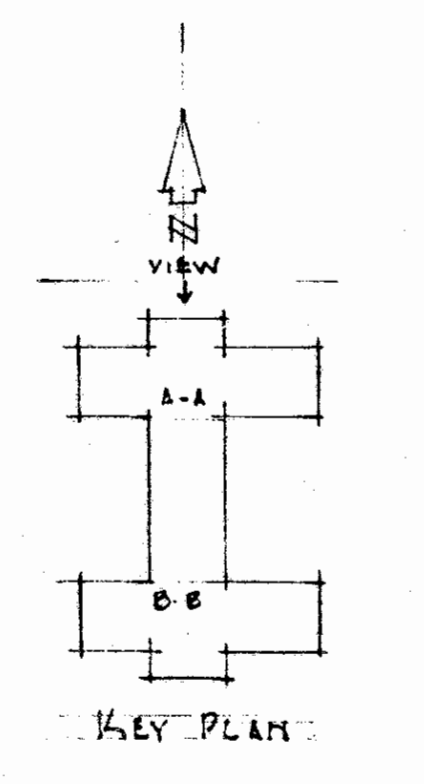
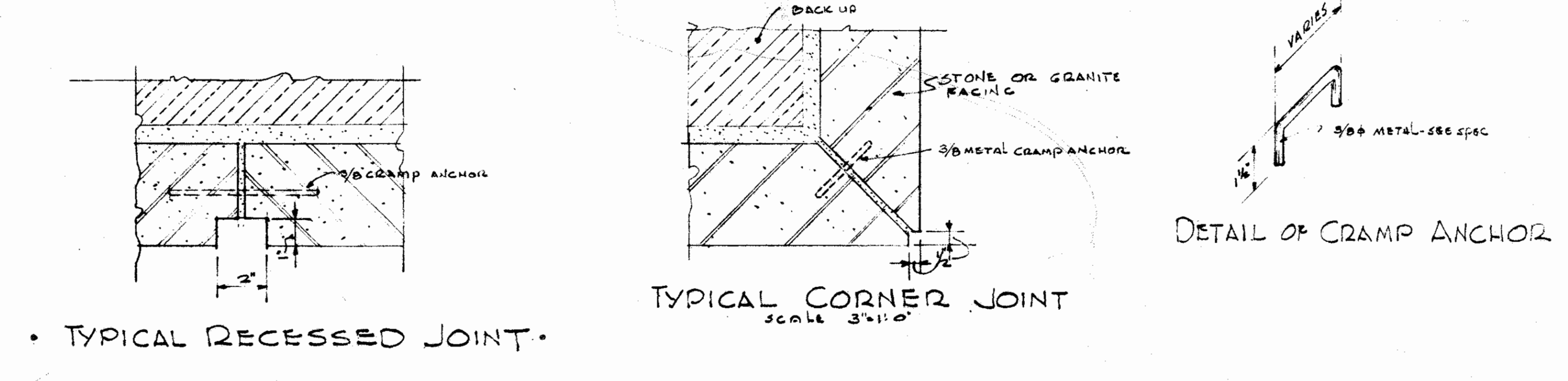


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DATE	REMARKS	DRAWN BY	REVISION NO.
		CFH	18-113
		CFH	2194
		TRW	33
			DATE
			Oct. 15, 1953
			SHEET NO.
			A-36
			OF 38 SHEETS

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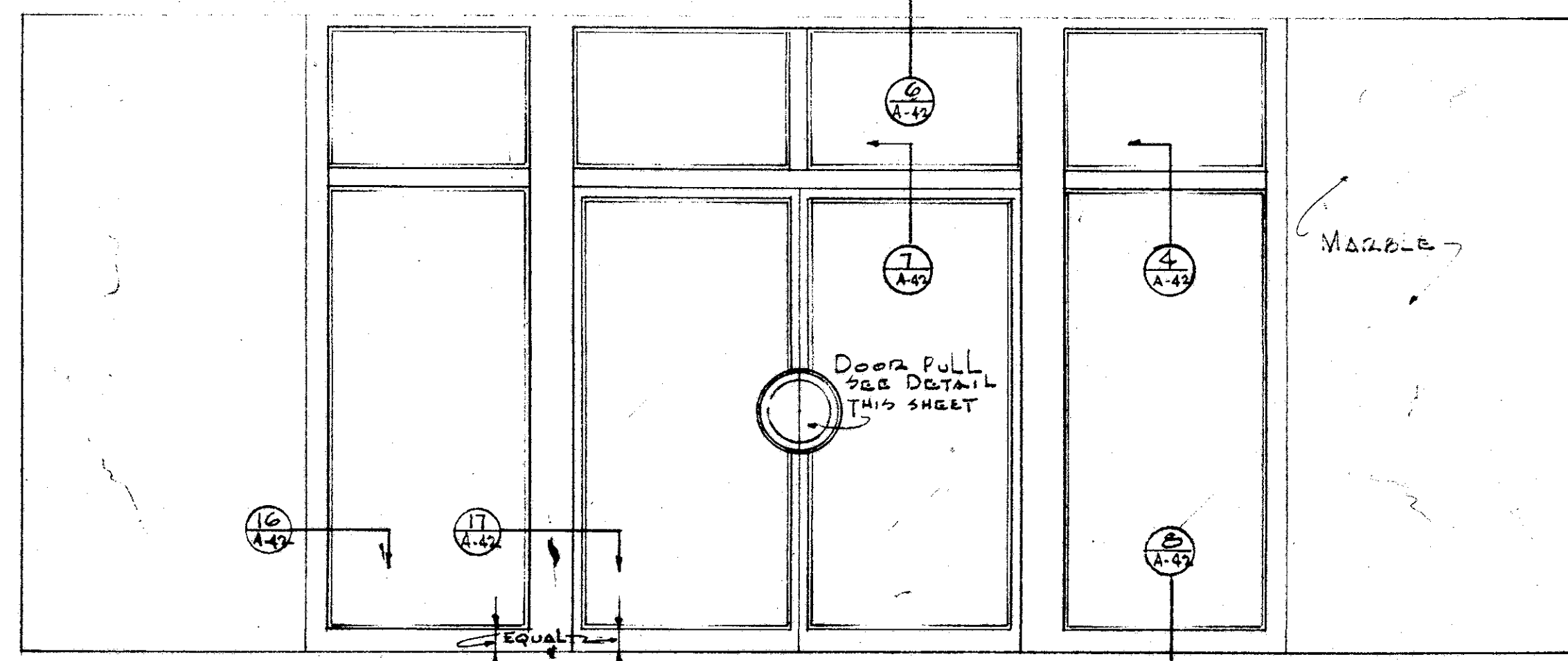
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 SCALE - 1/8" = 1'-0"



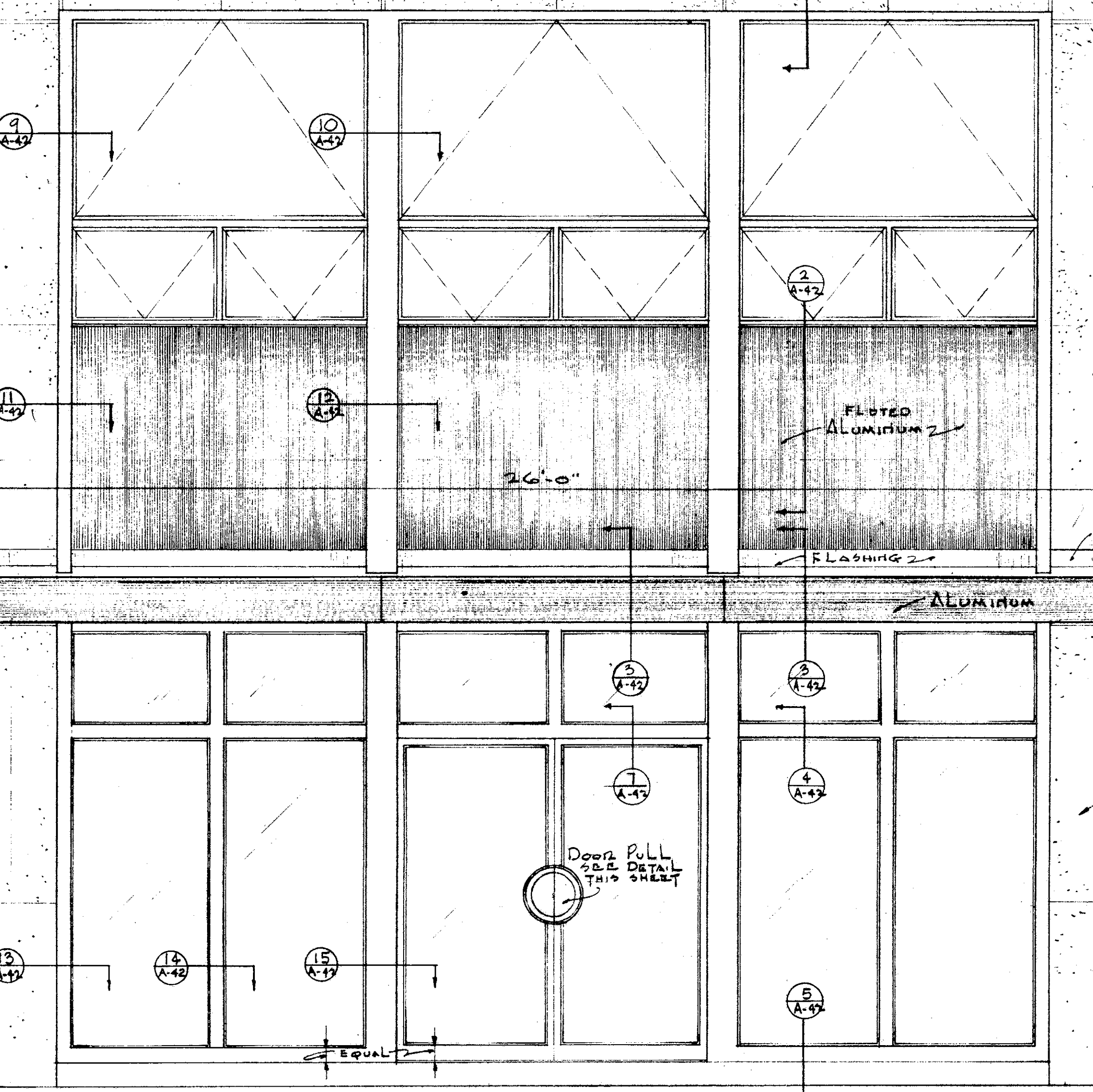
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DATE	REMARKS	DRAWN BY	REVISION NO.
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		CFH	
		CHECKED BY	
		TRH	
		APPROVED BY	
		APPROVED BY	

STATE OF ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS & BUILDINGS E. A. ROSENSTONE DIRECTOR		REVISION NO. HB-113
DIVISION OF ARCHITECTURE & ENGINEERING LOUIS H. GERDING, A.I.A. SUPERVISING ARCHITECT J. FLETCHER LANFORD - JOHN N. ZIEGLE ASSOCIATE ARCHITECTS		STATE FILE NO. 33
DATE 10-15-53		SHEET NO. 9
DATE 10-15-53		OF 10 SHEETS

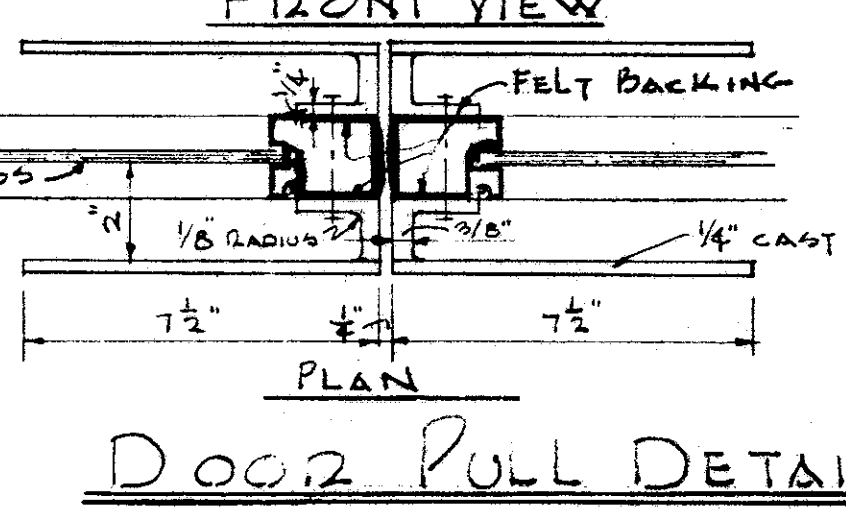
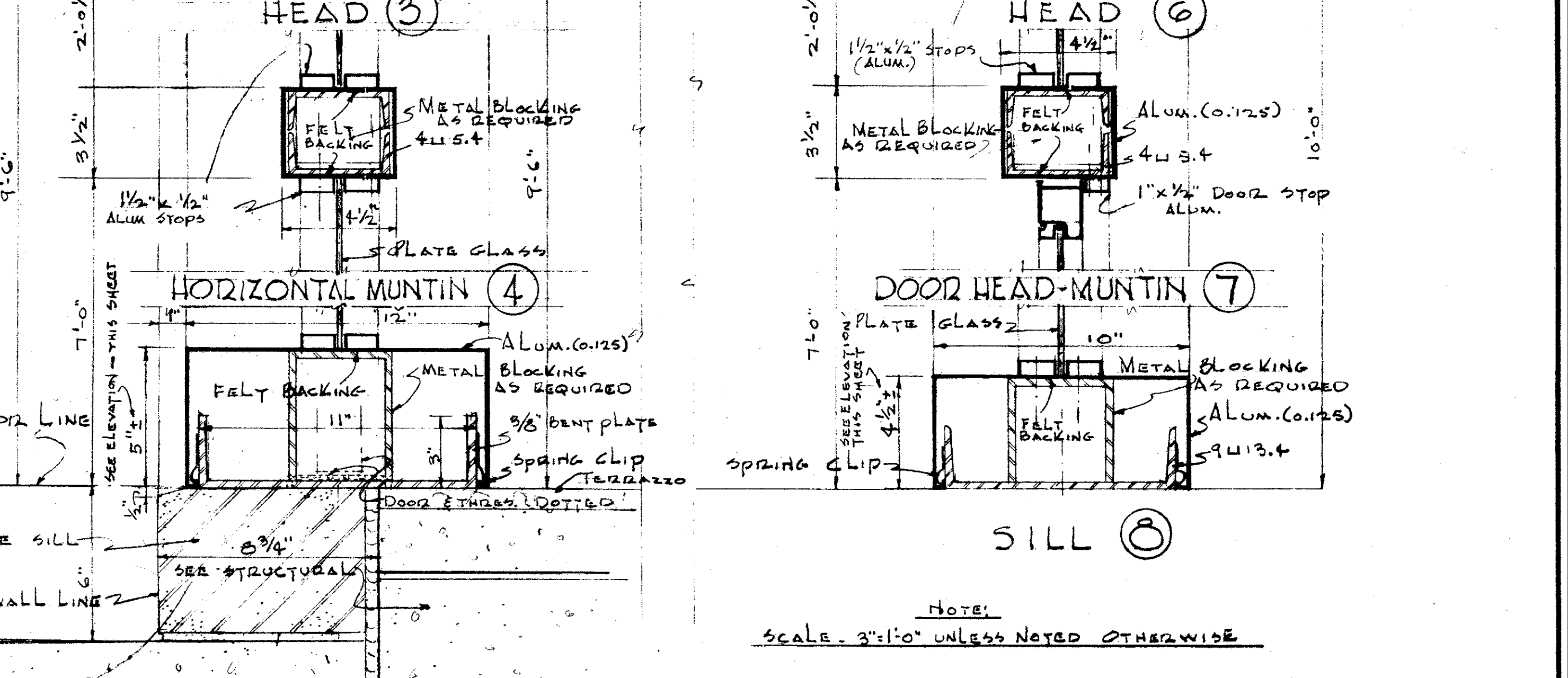
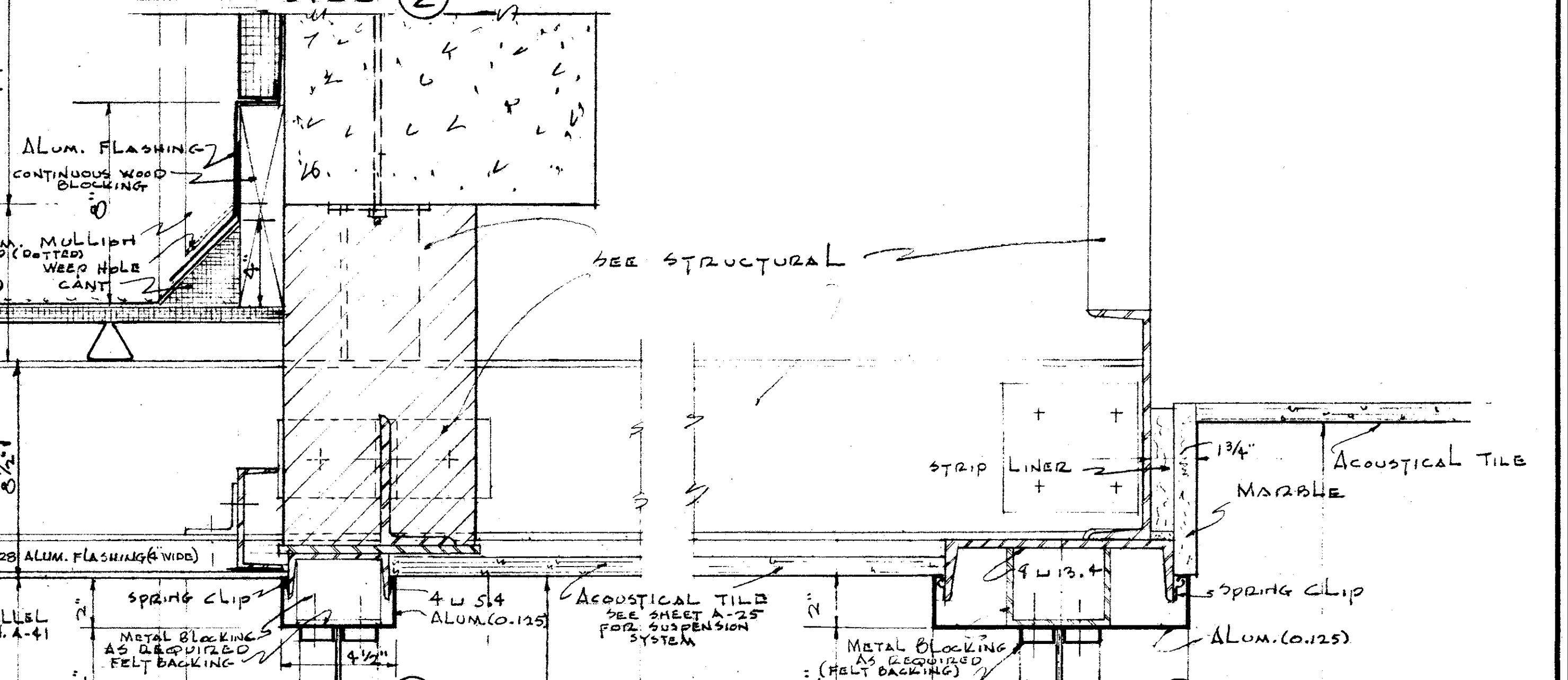
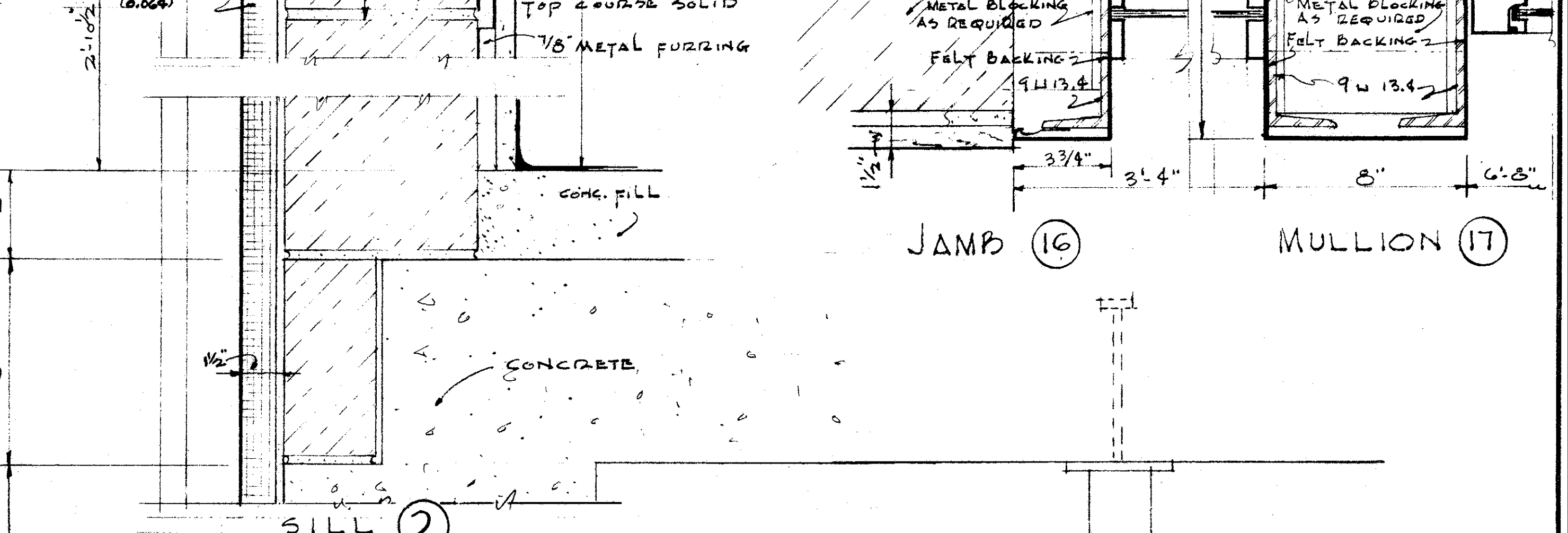
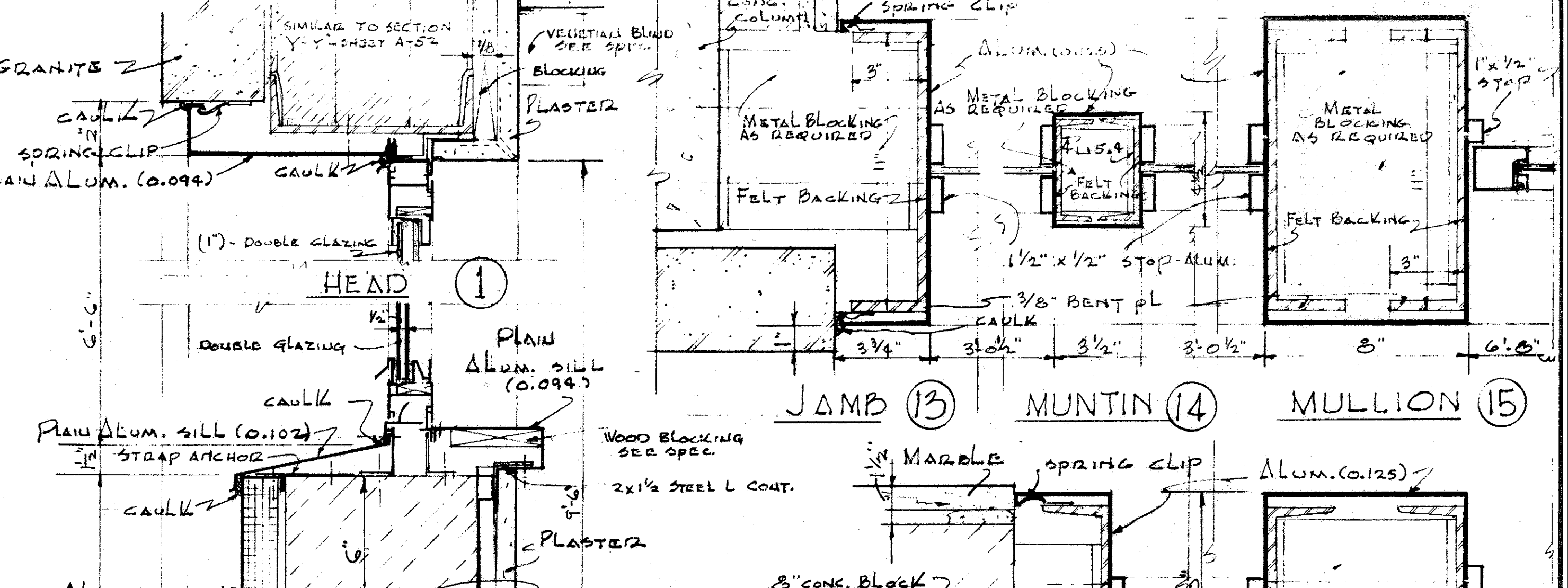
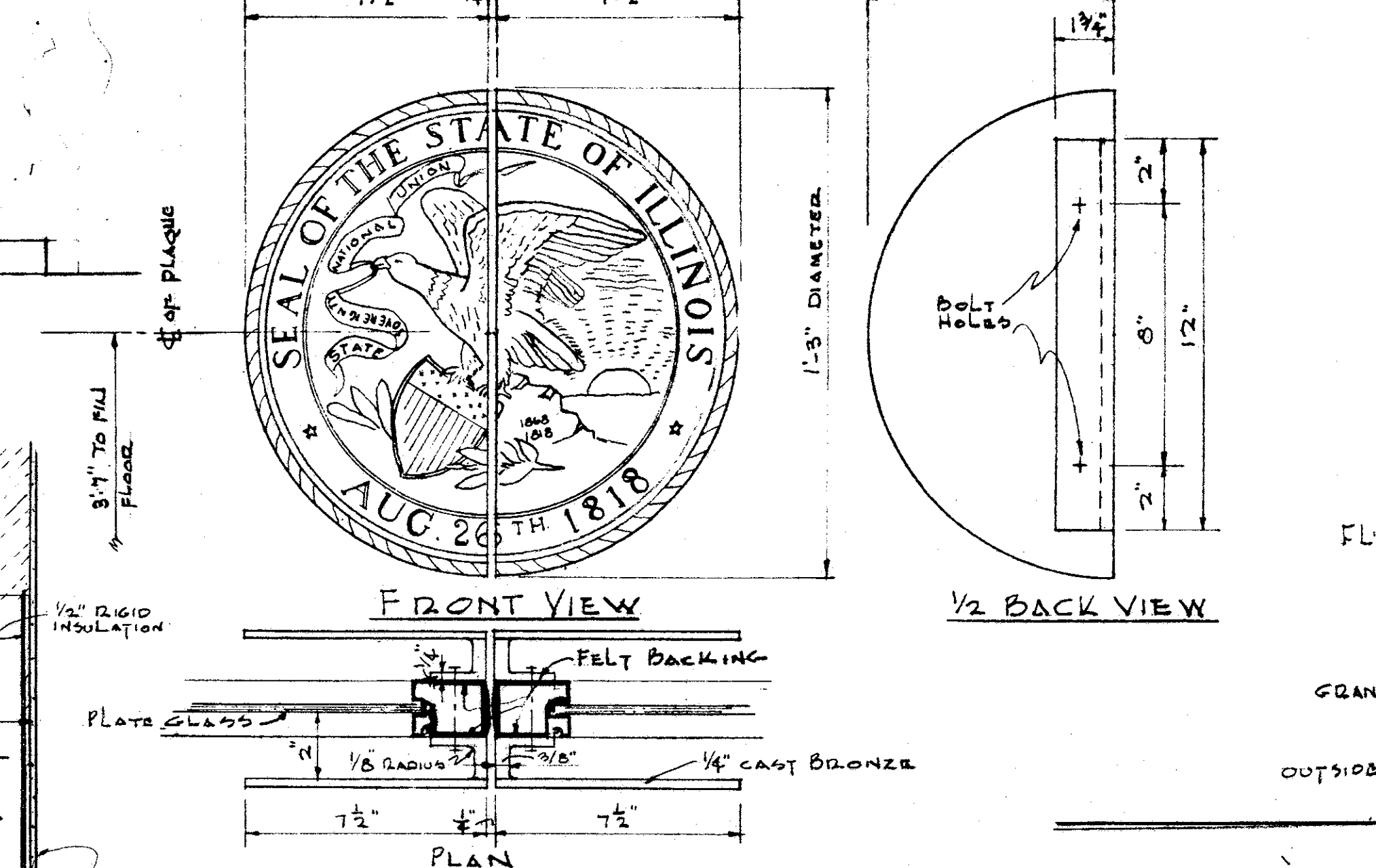
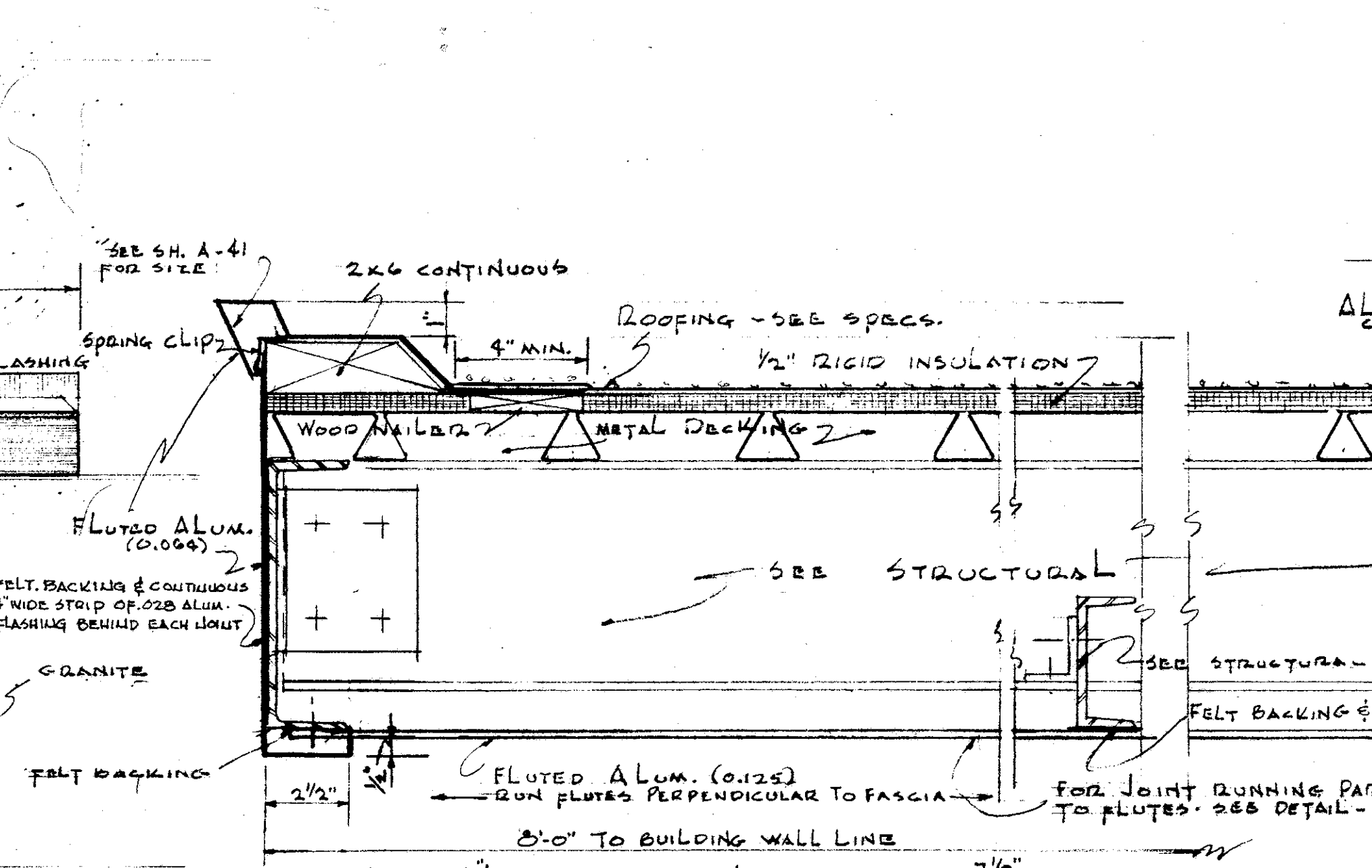
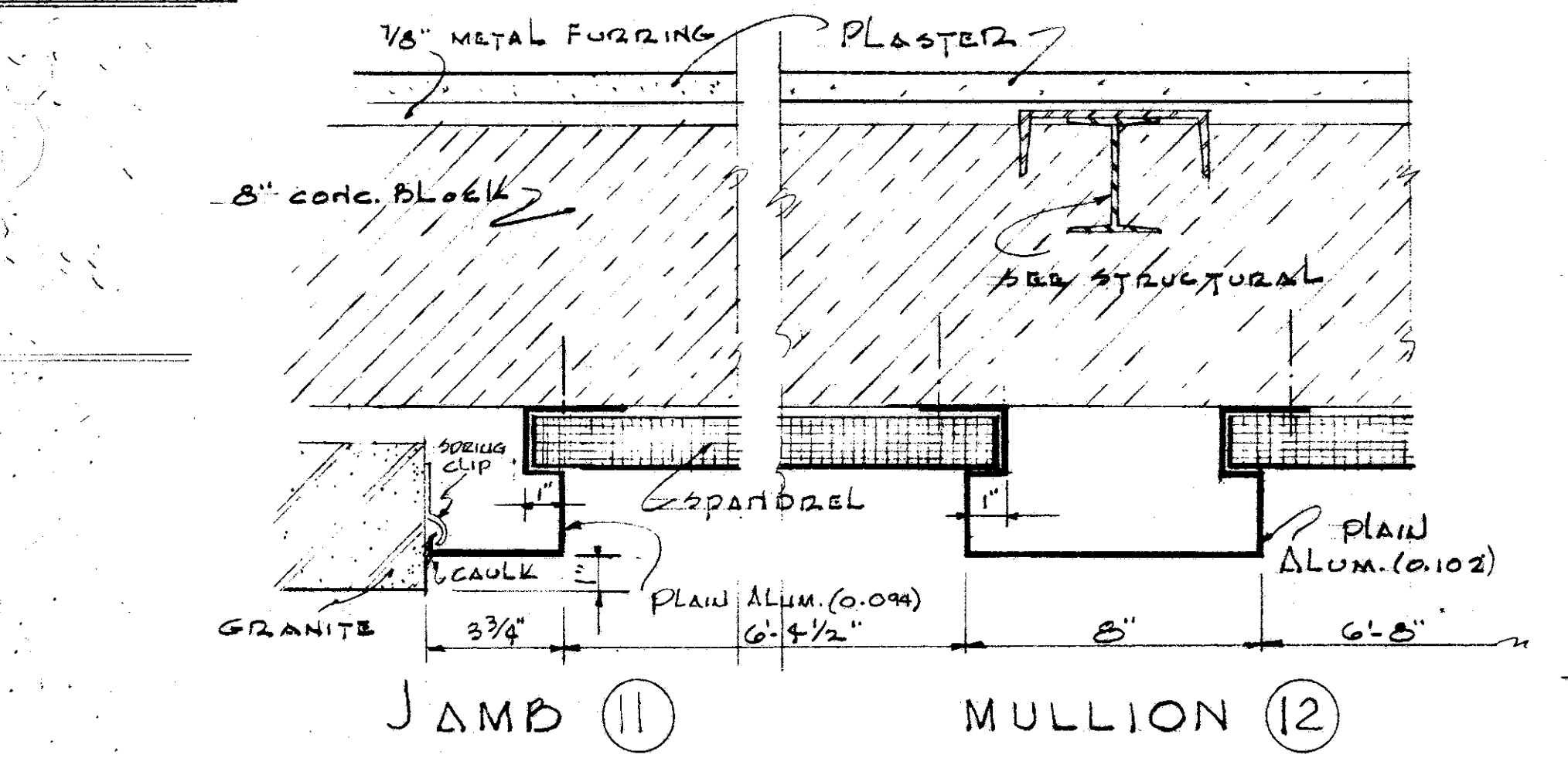
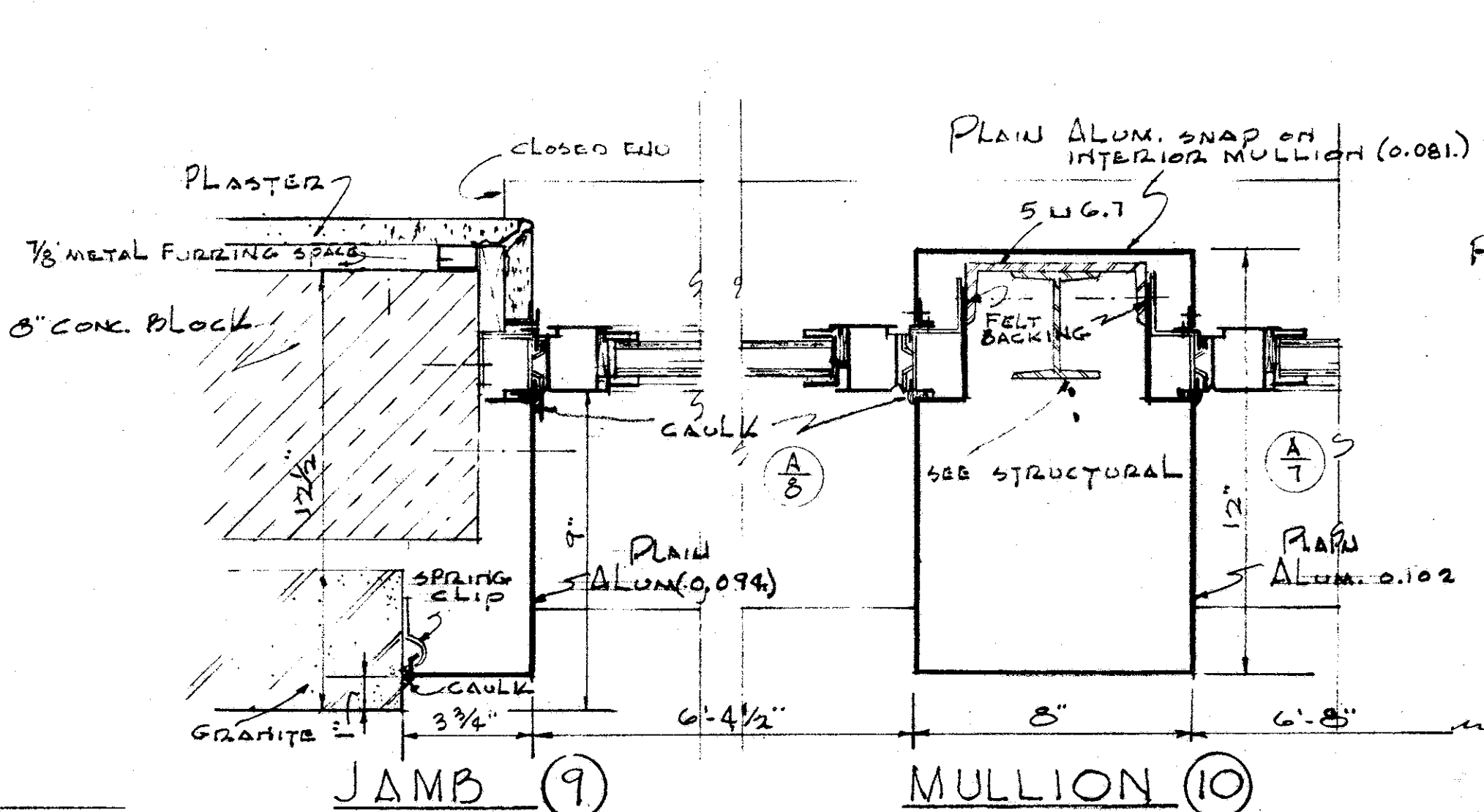
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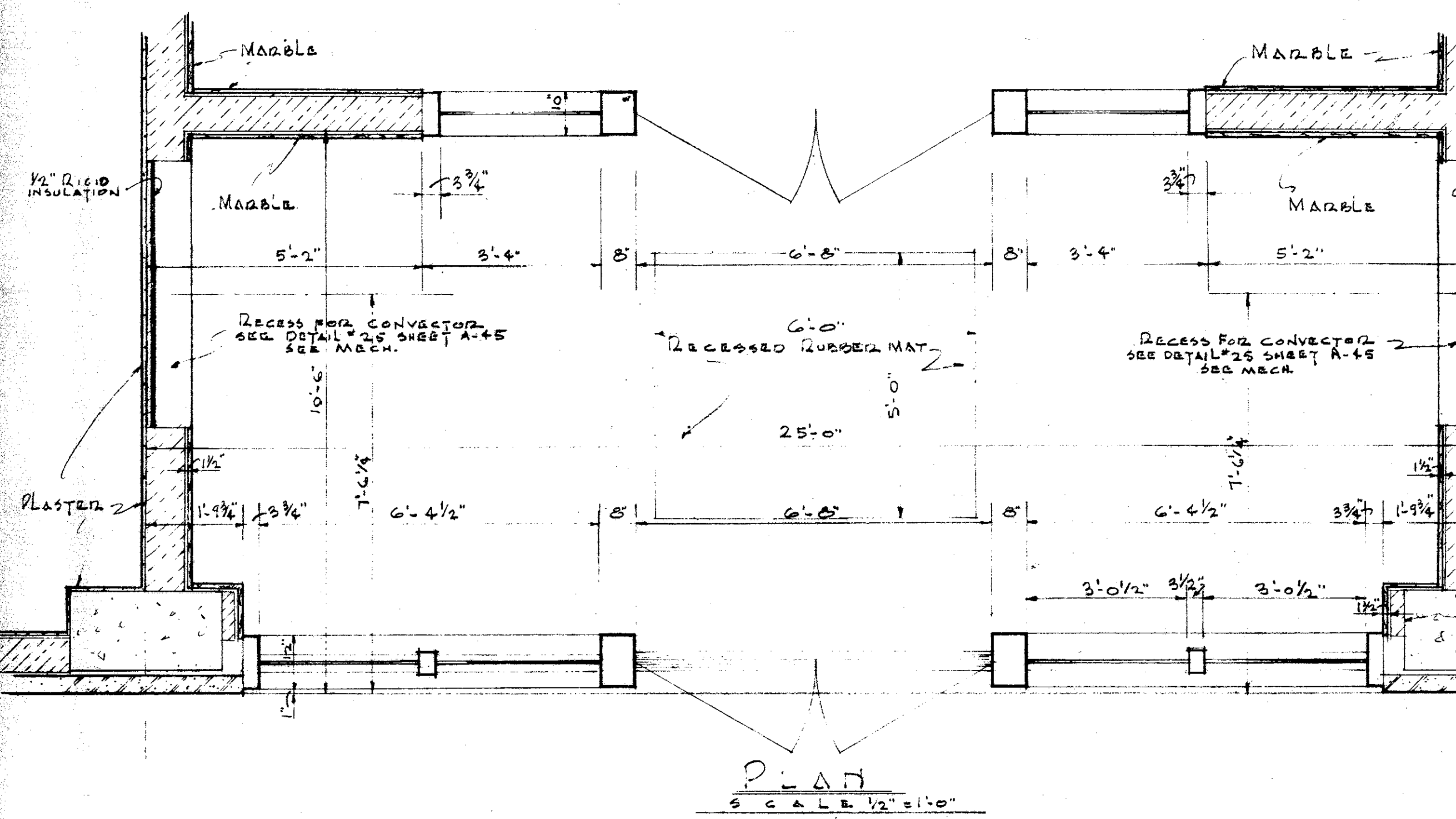
VESTIBULE ELEVATION
SCALE 3/8" = 1'-0"



EXTERIOR ELEVATION
SCALE 3/8" = 1'-0"



FRONT VIEW
1/2 BACK VIEW
DOOR PULL DETAIL



PLAN
SCALE 3/8" = 1'-0"

REVISIONS		DETAILS - NORTH AND SOUTH ENTRANCES	
DATE	REMARKS	DRAWN BY	REVISION NO.
		TSR	HB-219
		TRACED BY	AMOUNTS CHECKED
		TSR	2194
		CHECKED BY	STATE FILE NO.
		E.A.M.	33
		APPROVED BY	DATE
		E.A.M.	Oct. 15, 1953
		APPROVED BY	SHEET NO.
		Louis H. Gerding, A. I. A.	4-42
		Supervising Architect	DATE
		J. Fletcher Lankton - John N. Ziegler	10-15-53
		Associate Architects	DATE
		Peoria, Ill.	10-15-53

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