

## ANN ARBOR HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

### Staff Report

**ADDRESS:** 1550 Washtenaw Avenue, Application Number HDC19-027

**DISTRICT:** Washtenaw Hill Historic District

**REPORT DATE:** March 14, 2019

**REPORT PREPARED BY:** Jill Thacher, Historic Preservation Coordinator

**REVIEW COMMITTEE DATE:** Monday, March 11, 2019

	<b>OWNER</b>	<b>APPLICANT</b>
<b>Name:</b>	Zeta Tau Alpha Leah Ozment, Director	Midwestern Consulting Susan C. Dickinson
<b>Address:</b>	1550 Washtenaw Ann Arbor, MI 48104	3815 Plaza Drive Ann Arbor, MI 48108
<b>Phone:</b>	(734) 369-2733	(734) 995-0200

**BACKGROUND:** This grand Tudor, nestled in a deep setback off Washtenaw near “the Rock”, was built in 1921 by the Phi Kappa Psi fraternity. Two pairs of brick columns flank the driveway, and another pair borders a footpath off Hill Street. They feature the Greek Letters of the fraternity and the initials of law Professor Jerome C. Knowlton, who lived next door. It was purchased in 1971 by the Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority, who received a preservation award for the building from the Historic District Commission in 2013.

In May of 2018 the HDC approved HDC18-077 for a rear kitchen addition, parking lot modifications, a new service door, and a barrier free path and stoop to the front door.

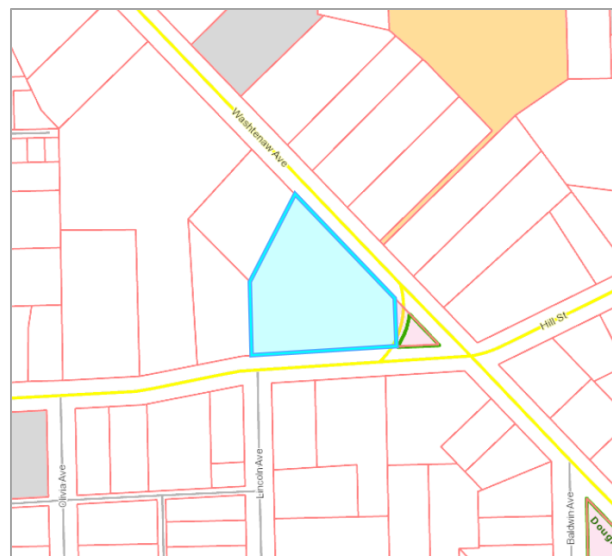
**LOCATION:** The site is located on the northwest corner of Washtenaw Avenue and Hill Street.

**APPLICATION:** The applicant seeks HDC approval to move the historic columns located at the corner of Washtenaw Avenue and Hill Street.

#### **APPLICABLE REGULATIONS:**

##### **From the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation:**

- (2) The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
- (9) New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the



property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

**From the Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (other SOI Guidelines may also apply):**

**Masonry**

Recommended: Identifying, retaining, and preserving masonry features that are important in defining the overall historic character of the building such as walls, brackets, railings, cornices, window architraves, door pediments, steps, and columns; and details such as tooling and bonding patterns, coatings, and color.

Replacing in kind an entire masonry feature that is too deteriorated to repair--if the overall form and detailing are still evident--using the physical evidence as a model to reproduce the feature. Examples can include large sections of a wall, a cornice, balustrade, column, or stairway. If using the same kind of material is not technically or economically feasible, then a compatible substitute material may be considered.

Not Recommended: Removing a masonry feature that is unrepairable and not replacing it; or replacing it with a new feature that does not convey the same visual appearance.

**Setting**

Recommended: Identifying, retaining, and preserving building and landscape features which are important in defining the historic character of the setting.

Such features can include roads and streets, furnishing such as lights or benches, vegetation, gardens and yards, adjacent open space such as fields, parks, commons or woodlands, and important views or visual relationships.

Not Recommended: Introducing new construction into historic districts that is visually incompatible or that destroys historic relationships within the setting.

**Site**

Recommended: Retaining the historic relationship between buildings and the landscape.

Replacing in kind an entire feature of the building or site that is too deteriorated to repair if the overall form and detailing are still evident. Physical evidence from the deteriorated feature should be used as a model to guide the new work. This could include an entrance or porch, walkway, or fountain. If using the same kind of material is not technically or economically feasible, then a compatible substitute material may be considered.

Not Recommended: Removing or radically changing buildings and their features or site features which are important in defining the overall historic character of the property so that, as a result, the character is diminished.

**From the Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines (other Guidelines may apply):**

**Masonry Walls, Trims & Foundations**

Appropriate: Protecting, maintaining and preserving masonry features and surfaces that contribute to the overall historic character of a building or site.

**STAFF FINDINGS:**

1. The earliest photo staff could find of the columns is at the end of this report. Chauncy Millen's mansion was the first residence purchased by, and converted to, a fraternity. Phi Kappa Psi bought it in 1892; the fraternity tore down the mansion in 1918 and the current house opened in 1921.
2. The four columns have been struck by vehicles multiple times and vandalized by painters of the Rock across the street. Zeta Tau Alpha (ZTA) sorority has faithfully repaired and replaced elements of the columns, but the columns are repeatedly compromised. They request approval to move the columns back from the sidewalk by 3.2 to 7.6 feet, depending on which column, and to move the columns farther away from the driveway. The columns in each pair will maintain their current spacing and slight skew. The taller columns are currently on the driveway's edge, about 10' apart. They are proposed to be moved to 22' apart. Please note that the detail shown on attachment Sheet 1 is correct. On A1.01, the Architectural Site Plan, the columns are incorrectly shown farther back.
3. The stone trim and caps are proposed to be saved and reused, but the brick would be replaced with new bricks that match the old very closely. Because the columns on Hill Street have not been painted, they can be used to identify appropriate bricks for the relocated columns. The application is silent on whether the damaged stone insignia(s) from the tall columns will be repaired or replicated.
4. The masonry columns are a feature important in defining the overall character of the property. Relocating the columns is in their best interest, and the change will not radically diminish the character of the site and setting. Reusing the stone but replacing the brick in the relocated columns is appropriate since it will prolong the life of the historic resource.
5. Staff believes the work, as proposed, is compatible with the site and sett, and the surrounding historic district, and meets the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines* and the *Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines*.

**POSSIBLE MOTIONS:** (Note that the motions are only a suggestion. The Review Committee, consisting of staff and at least two Commissioners, will meet with the applicant on site and then make a recommendation at the meeting.)

I move that the Commission issue a certificate of appropriateness for the application at 1550 Washtenaw Avenue, a contributing property in the Washtenaw/Hill Historic District, to relocate four columns in the front yard, as proposed. The work is compatible in exterior design, arrangement, texture, material and relationship to the rest of the building and the surrounding area and meets *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*, in particular standards 2 and 9 and

the guidelines for masonry, setting, and site, as well as the *Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines*, particularly as they pertain to masonry.

**MOTION WORKSHEET:**

I move that the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work at 1550 Washtenaw Avenue in the Washtenaw Hill Historic District

\_\_\_\_ Provided the following condition(S) is (ARE) met: 1) STATE CONDITION(s)

The work is generally compatible with the size, scale, massing, and materials and meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, standard(S) number(S) (*circle all that apply*): 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

**ATTACHMENTS:** application, drawings, photos.

1550 Washtenaw at Hill Street, July 2018 (courtesy Google Streetview)





Phi Kappa Psi Fraternity Members in front of their house (formerly Chauncy Millen's mansion)  
(undated, courtesy Bentley Historical Library)





# HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

## PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

City Hall: 301 E. Huron St. Ann Arbor, MI 48104-6120

Mailing: P.O. Box 8647, Ann Arbor, MI 48107-8647

Phone: 734.794.6265 ext. 42608

Fax: 734.994.8460

[ithacher@a2gov.org](mailto:ithacher@a2gov.org)

OFFICE USE ONLY	
Permit Number	HDC# _____
	BLDG# _____
DATE STAMP	

**APPLICATION MUST BE FILLED OUT COMPLETELY**

### PROPERTY LOCATION/OWNER INFORMATION

NAME OF PROPERTY OWNER <b>Zeta Tau Alpha, Leah Ozment</b>		HISTORIC DISTRICT <b>Washtenaw/Hill</b>
PROPERTY ADDRESS <b>1550 Washtenaw Avenue</b>		CITY <b>ANN ARBOR</b>
ZIP CODE <b>48104</b>	DAYTIME PHONE NUMBER <b>( 734 ) 369-2733</b>	EMAIL ADDRESS <b>fhcvpconstruction@zetataualpha.org</b>
PROPERTY OWNER'S ADDRESS (IF DIFFERENT FROM ABOVE) <b>1036 S. Rangeline Road</b>		CITY <b>Carmel</b> STATE, ZIP <b>IN, 46032</b>

### PROPERTY OWNER'S SIGNATURE

<b>SIGN HERE</b>	<b>PRINT NAME</b> Leah Ozment	<b>DATE</b> 2/21/19
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### APPLICANT INFORMATION

NAME OF APPLICANT (IF DIFFERENT FROM ABOVE) <b>Midwestern Consulting, LLC, Susan C. Dickinson</b>			
ADDRESS OF APPLICANT <b>3815 Plaza Drive</b>			CITY <b>Ann Arbor</b>
STATE <b>Michigan</b>	ZIP CODE <b>48108</b>	PHONE / CELL # <b>( 734 ) 995-0200</b>	FAX No. <b>( 734 ) 995-0599</b>
EMAIL ADDRESS <b>scd@midwesternconsulting.com</b>			

### APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE (if different from Property Owner)

<b>SIGN HERE</b>	<b>PRINT NAME</b> x Susan C. Dickinson	<b>DATE</b> 2/21/19
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### BUILDING USE -- CHECK ALL THAT APPLY

<input type="checkbox"/> SINGLE FAMILY	<input type="checkbox"/> DUPLEX	<input type="checkbox"/> RENTAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MULTIPLE FAMILY	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> INSTITUTIONAL
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### PROPOSED WORK

Describe in detail each proposed exterior alteration, improvement and/or repair (use additional paper, if necessary)

Four existing brick columns at the Washtenaw/Hill intersection are to be dismantled. The stone pieces will be salvaged and relocated slightly further into the property away from the right of way and placed wider apart at the driveway in the new column location, but new brick is proposed due to the condition of the existing brick. The existing brick is all currently painted due to vandalism and repair from vehicular damage. More detail/pictures are shown and discussed within the attached narrative.

### DESCRIBE CONDITIONS THAT JUSTIFY THE PROPOSED CHANGES:

The current location of the columns pose a safety risk to pedestrians and residents. The current location does not allow for appropriate vehicle egress which has resulted in multiple column/vehicle collisions. The repairs are costly and the continue repairs will further deprive the columns of historic value. The proposed location is further back from the right of way on ZTA Property and wider to allow easier vehicle turning movements and deter graffiti etc. More detail is discussed within the attached narrative.



# HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION APPLICATION

## FEE CHART

DESCRIPTION	
<b>STAFF REVIEW FEES</b>	
Application for Staff Approval	\$35.00
Work started without approvals	Additional \$50.00
<b>HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION FEES</b>	
All other proposed work not listed below	<b>\$100.00</b>
Work started without approvals	Additional \$250.00
<b>RESIDENTIAL – Single and 2-story Structure</b>	
Addition: single story	\$300.00
Addition: taller than single story	\$550.00
New Structure - Accessory	\$100.00
New Structure – Principal	\$850.00
Replacement of single and 2-family window(s)	\$100 + \$25/window
<b>COMMERCIAL – includes multi-family (3 or more unit) structures</b>	
Additions	\$700.00
Replacement of multi-family and commercial window (s)	\$100 + \$50/window
Replacement of commercial storefront	\$250.00
<b>DEMOLITION and RELOCATION</b>	
Demolition of a contributing structure	\$1000.00
Demolition of a non-contributing structure	\$250.00
Relocation of a contributing structure	\$750.00
Relocation of a non-contributing structure	\$250.00

### FOR COMMISSION REVIEWS:

- Application withdrawals made before public notice is published will qualify for a 50% refund of the application fee.
- Application withdrawals made after public notice is sent but before the public hearing will qualify for a 25% refund of the application fee.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING APPLICATIONS

All HDC applications must be signed by the property owner and the applicant, if different, with the exception of staff approvals, which may be signed by only the applicant.

All completed HDC applications and their attachments may be submitted to Planning and Development Services by mail, in person (paper or digital), faxed, or via email to [building@a2gov.org](mailto:building@a2gov.org).

We accept CASH, CHECK, and all major credit cards. Checks should be made payable to "City of Ann Arbor"

HDC applications that are incomplete or not submitted with the required documentation or payment will not be processed or approved.

## APPLICATION EXPIRATION

HDC applications expire three (3) years after the date of approval.

## OFFICE USE ONLY

Date of Hearing:		
Action	<input type="checkbox"/> HDC COA	<input type="checkbox"/> HDC Denial
	<input type="checkbox"/> HDC NTP	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff COA
Staff Signature		
Comments		
Fee:	\$ _____	
Payment Type	<input type="checkbox"/> Check: # _____	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Cash	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Credit Card	



## Zeta Tau Alpha

1550 Washtenaw Avenue  
Proposed Historic Column Relocation

**DATE:** February 21, 2019

**MC Project No.:** 18012

Zeta Tau Alpha proposes to relocate the historic columns on the property at 1550 Washtenaw Avenue in an effort to increase the safety of ZTA resident/visitors, University students and pedestrians, minimize cost to the sorority for repairs and restore/maintain the historical integrity of the pillars.

Pictured below are the columns at ZTA 1550 Washtenaw main entrance prior to current damage:



**Difficulties presented by the current column location:**

- Columns have been reconstructed a number of times due to structure damage caused by vehicles
- Current opening between columns is approximately 10ft
- Current column location poses a safety risk to ZTA residents, students and pedestrians
- ZTA incurs significant costs annually on repairs - columns have been hit multiple times in one year
- Columns are currently painted to mask previous brick and stone repairs
- Columns are defaced due to the close proximity to the sidewalk and painted rock

**Photographs of recent column damage from vehicles and vandalism:**



Additional photographs of recent column damage from vehicles and vandalism:



### **Proposed Action:**

ZTA would like to present an option for relocation of the columns for review and comment. The proposal maintains the columns in approximately the same location on ZTA property. The columns will face the same direction and spacing between the primary and secondary columns will remain the same. The difference is, the columns will sit further back off of the roadway from their current location and the opening of the centered columns will be widened for vehicles to pass through. ZTA proposes to rebuild and replicate the columns. The original stone will be salvaged and cleaned from the existing columns but the painted brick will not. Instead, ZTA proposes furnishing new brick matching that of the new addition, and replicating the pattern of the existing columns.

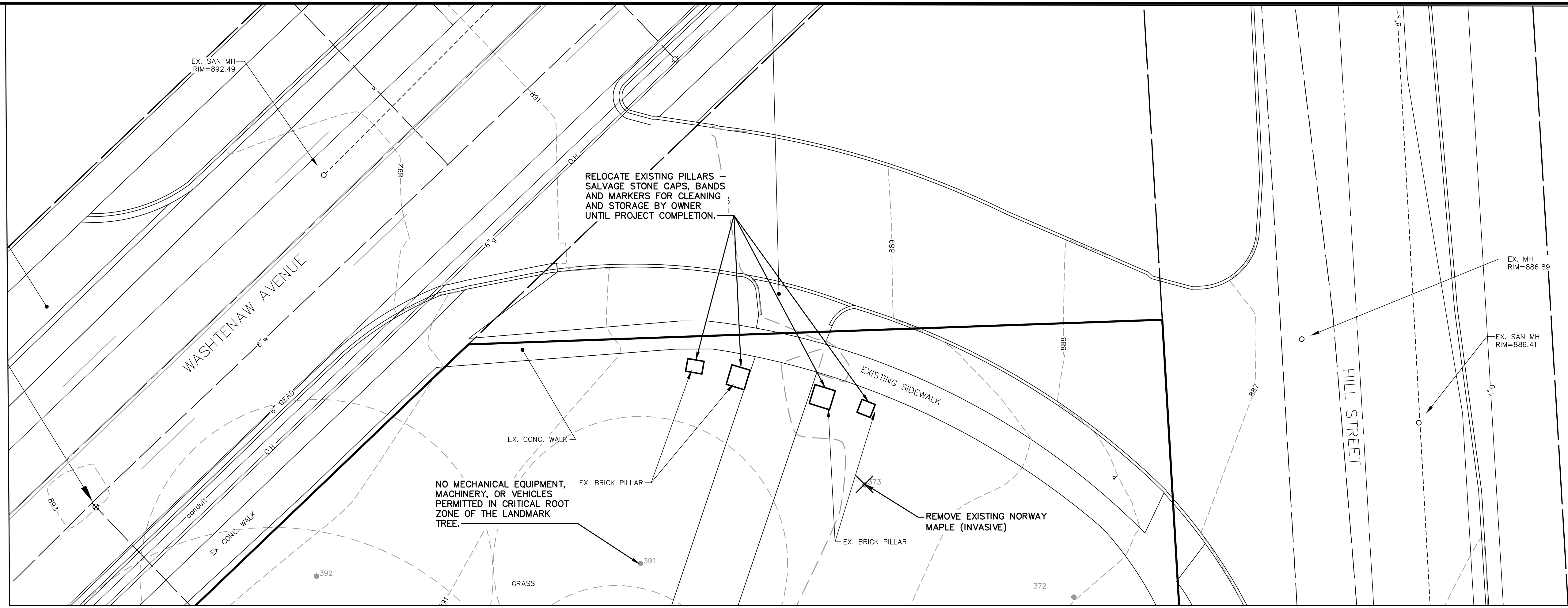
### **Benefits of the column relocation:**

- Minimize the opportunity for structure damage by creating wider turning radius and drive entrance
- Eliminate safety risks posed to the ZTA residents, students and pedestrians
- Lessen costs incurred by ZTA
- Rebuild the columns on more stable footings in an effort to restore the historic look
- Relocation is further from the painted rock and pedestrian traffic

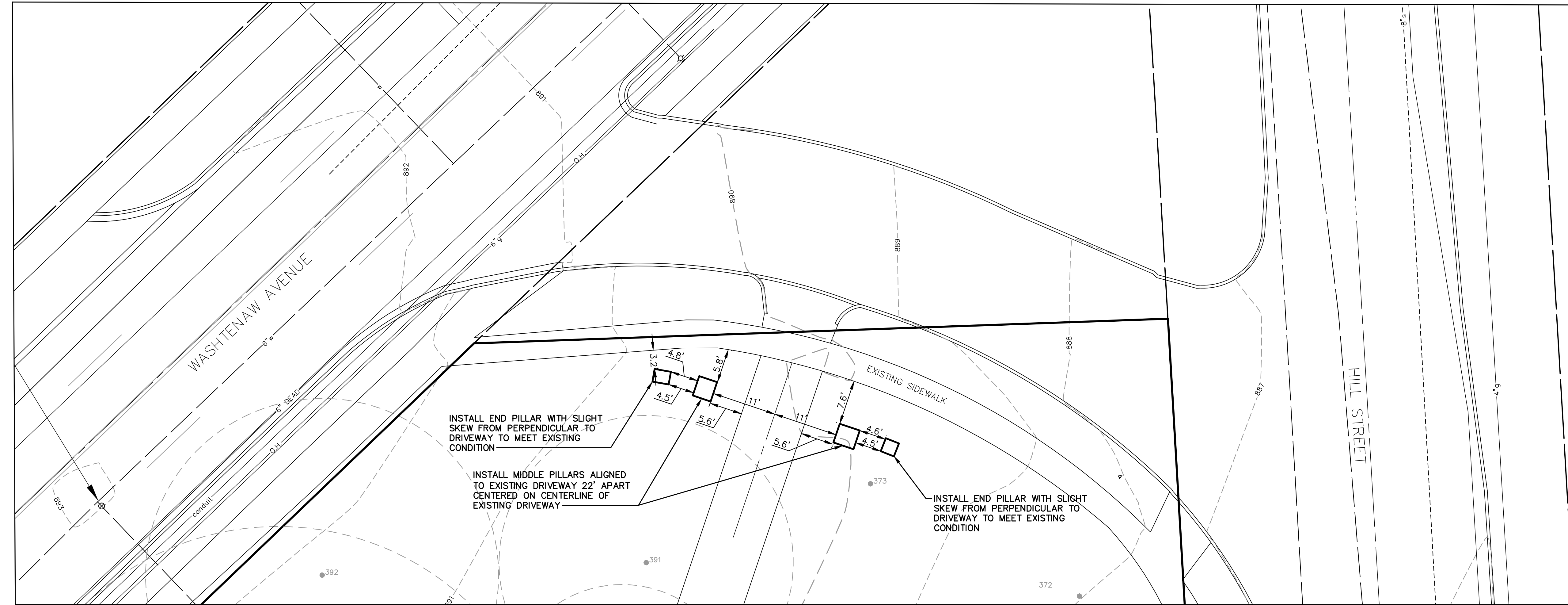
### **Current pillars on Hill Street (to remain in place):**



M:\CIVIL\132\_P\1\18012\18012SP1.dwg, 2/19/2019 6:28 PM, Jeremy A. Matthei, 1, MLLC PDF.pct  
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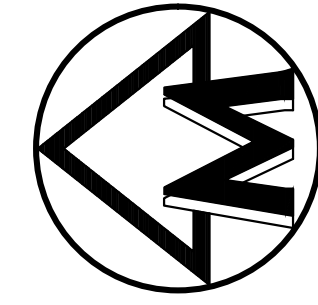


**EXISTING CONDITION AND DEMOLITION PLAN**



**PILLAR LAYOUT PLAN**

The underground utilities shown have been located from field survey information and existing records. The surveyor makes no guarantees that the underground utilities shown comprise all such utilities in the area, either in-service or abandoned. The surveyor further does not warrant that the underground utilities shown are in the exact location indicated. Although the surveyor does certify that they are located as accurately as possible from the information available.



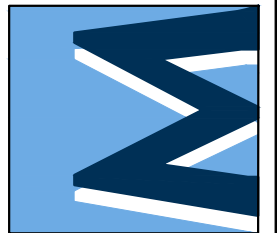
SCALE: 1" = 10'

LEGEND	
838	EXIST. CONTOUR
x836.2	EXIST. SPOT ELEVATION
-o-U.P.	EXIST. UTILITY POLE
□	EXIST. A/C UNIT
OH	EXIST. OVERHEAD UTILITY LINE
*	EXIST. LIGHT POLE
g	EXIST. GAS LINE
w	EXIST. WATER MAIN
⊕	EXIST. HYDRANT
⊗	EXIST. GATE VALVE IN WELL
r	EXIST. STORM SEWER
□	EXIST. CATCH BASIN OR INLET
o	EXIST. DOWNSPOUT
s	EXIST. SANITARY SEWER
p	SIGN
m	ELECTRIC METER
g	GAS METER
•	POST
— — —	FENCE
•	SINGLE TREE
⊙	SECTION CORNER
o F	FOUND IRON PIPE
△	CONTROL PT.
X	REMOVE EXISTING TREE
□	RELOCATED PILLAR

**NOTES**

- CONTRACTOR AND MASON TO ENSURE ADEQUATE MEASUREMENTS AND PICTURES HAVE BEEN DOCUMENTED TO RECONSTRUCT HISTORIC PILLARS PRIOR TO REMOVAL AND STORAGE.
- REMOVAL OF THE EXISTING PILLARS SHALL INCLUDE SALVAGE OF THE EXISTING STONE CAPS, BANDS, AND MARKERS FOR CLEANING AND STORAGE UNTIL COMPLETION OF HOUSEHOLD RENOVATIONS/ADDITION AND REINSTALLATION OF THE PILLARS.
- EXISTING PILLAR BRICKS WILL NOT BE SALVAGED DUE TO EXISTING CONDITION WITH PAINT AND GRAFFITI. PILLARS SHALL BE RESTORED WITH NEW BRICK THAT MATCHES THE EXISTING BRICK PILLARS ON WEST END OF PROPERTY ON HILL STREET.
- PILLARS SHALL BE RE-CONSTRUCTED BY MASONS THAT PERFORM HISTORIC HOUSE RENOVATIONS. PILLARS SHALL BE RESTORED TO THE ORIGINAL PROFILE USING HISTORIC STONE CAPS, BANDS, AND MARKERS, AND WITH NEW BRICK.
- THE PILLARS SHALL BE INSTALLED AT A SLIGHT ANGLE TO EACH OTHER, PARALLEL TO THE ROAD.
- "NEV" REPRESENTS AN EXISTING UTILITY THAT WAS NOT FIELD VERIFIED, AS IT WAS OUTSIDE OF THE SCOPE OF WORK.

**MIDWESTERN CONSULTING**  
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 ST. LOUIS, MO 63139  
 314-645-9595

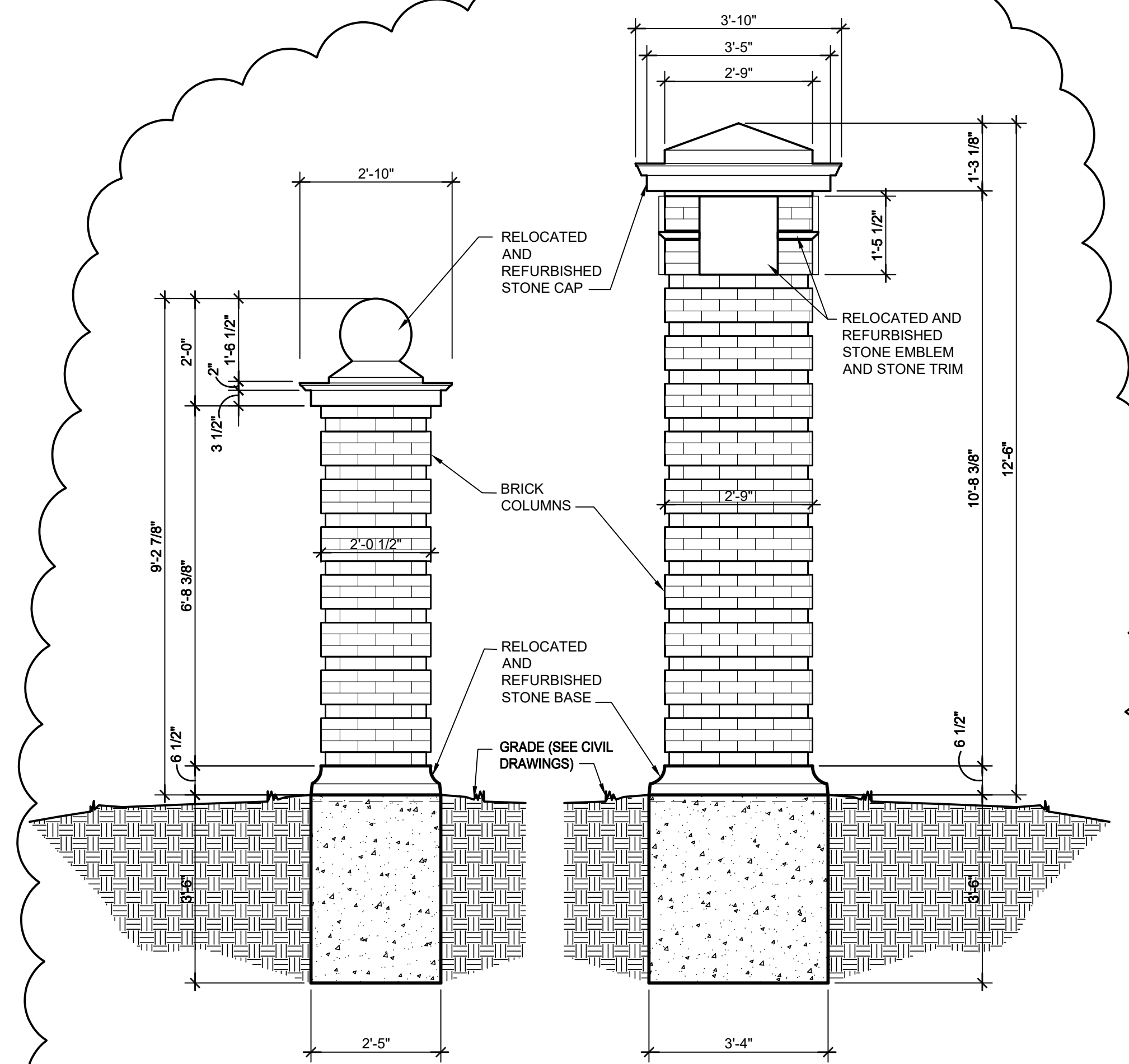
**ZETA TAU ALPHA**  
 HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION  
 SITE DEMOLITION AND PILLAR LAYOUT PLAN

**1**

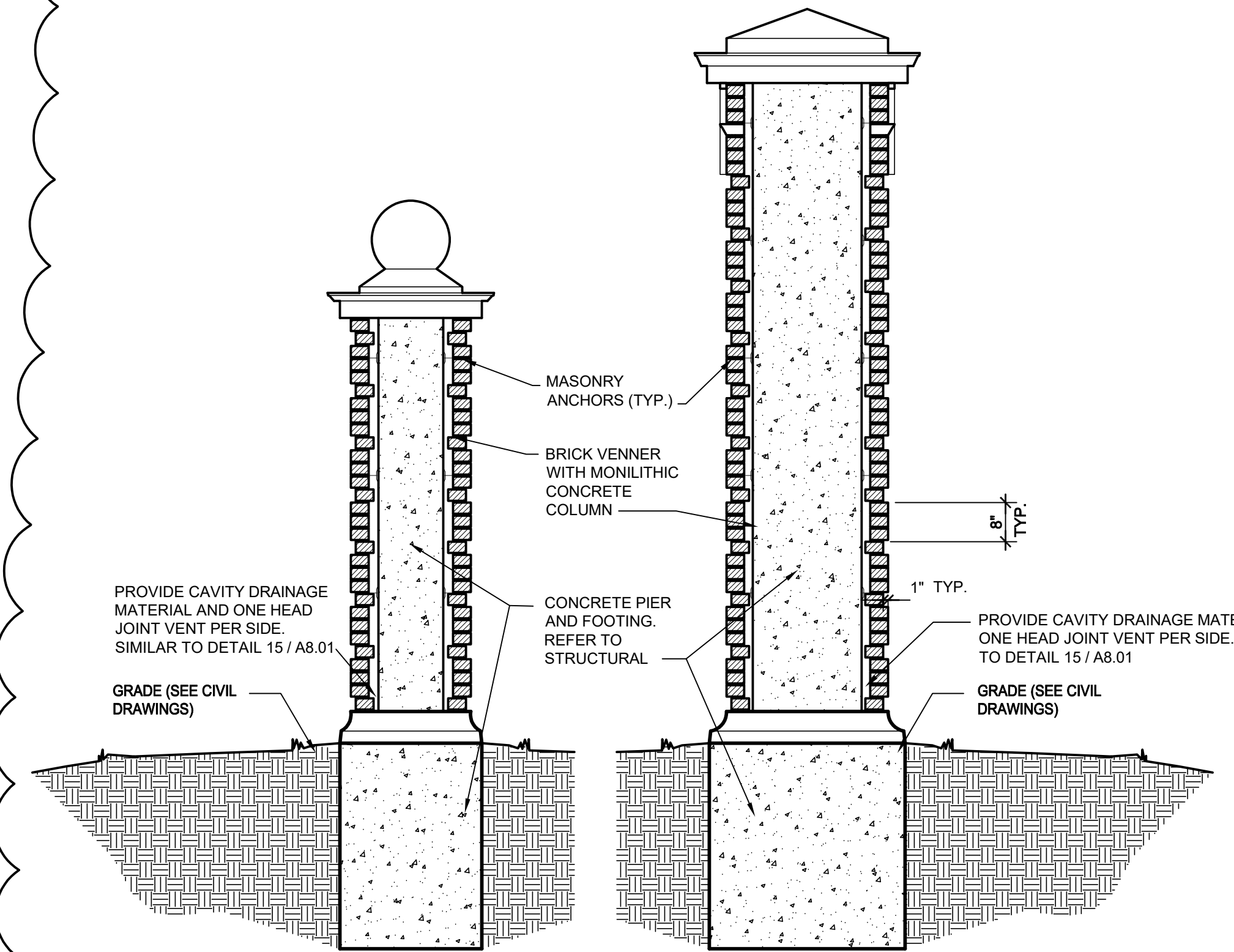
DATE: 02/19/19	REV. DATE:
SHEET 1 OF 1	REV. DATE:
CADD: TRF	REV. DATE:
ENG:	REV. DATE:
PM: SCD	REV. DATE:
TECH: JZSP1.dwg	REV. DATE:
FR:	REV. DATE:

JOB No. **18012**  
 REVISIONS:

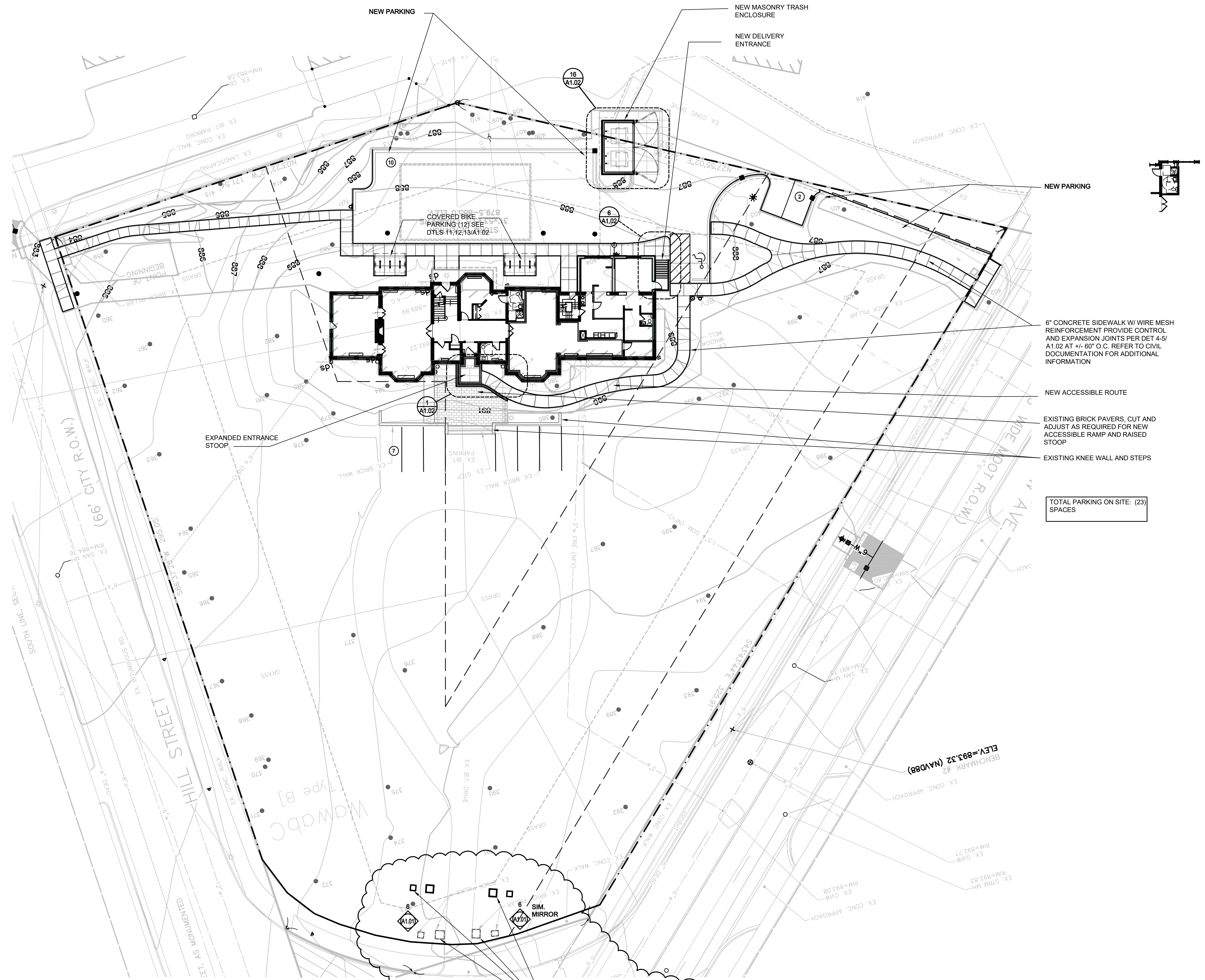
No.	Description	Date
	Owner Review	08.30.18
	Bid / Permit Set	09.07.18
#4	Column Reloc.	01.07.19



6 ELEVATION  
 A1.01 SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0"



11 SECTION  
 A1.01 SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0"

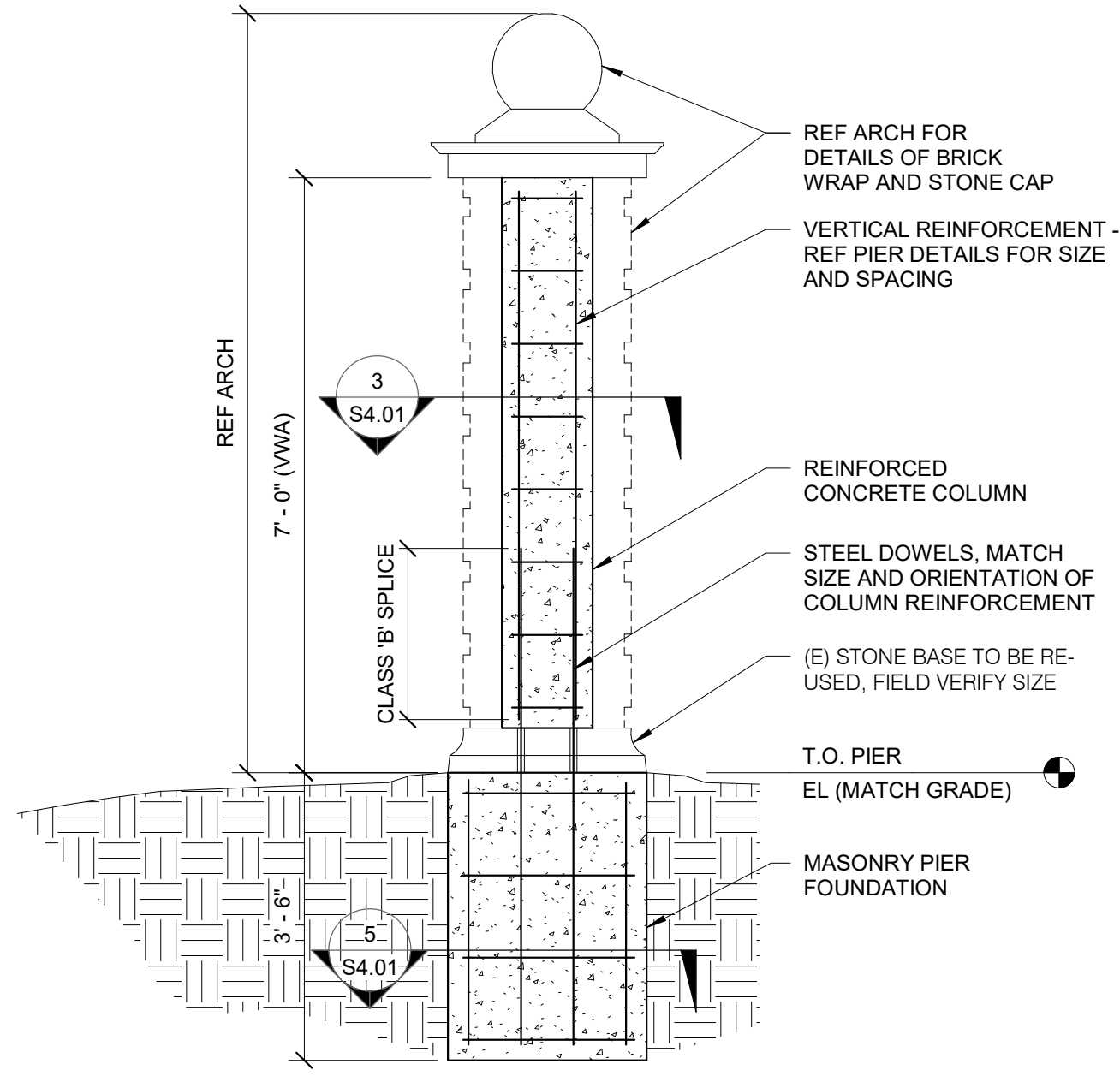


ARCHITECTURAL SITE PLAN  
 SCALE: 1" = 20'-0"

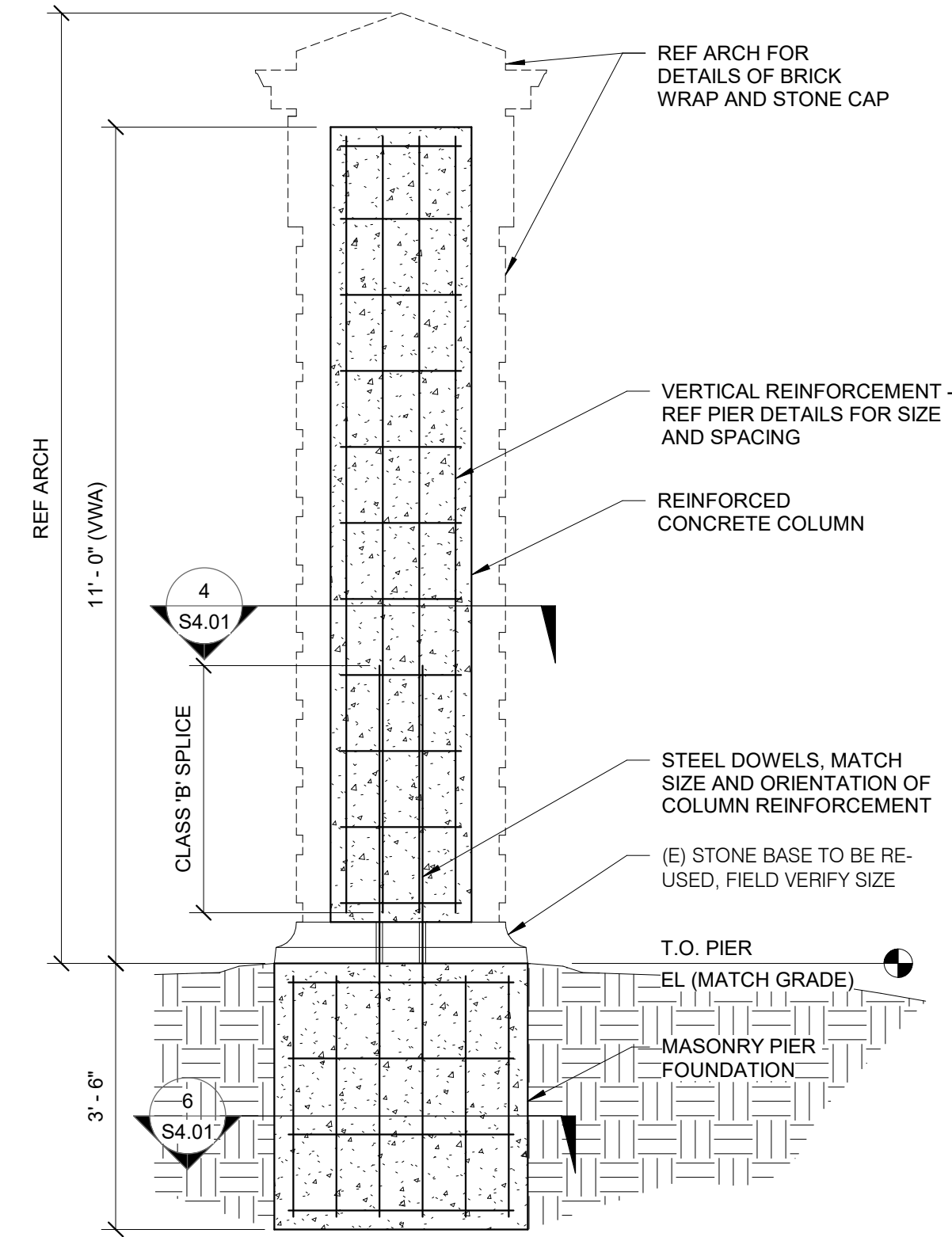
Construction Documents For:  
**ZTA HOUSE**  
 1550 WASHTEWAW AVENUE  
 ANN ARBOR, MI 48014

ARCHITECTURAL SITE PLAN

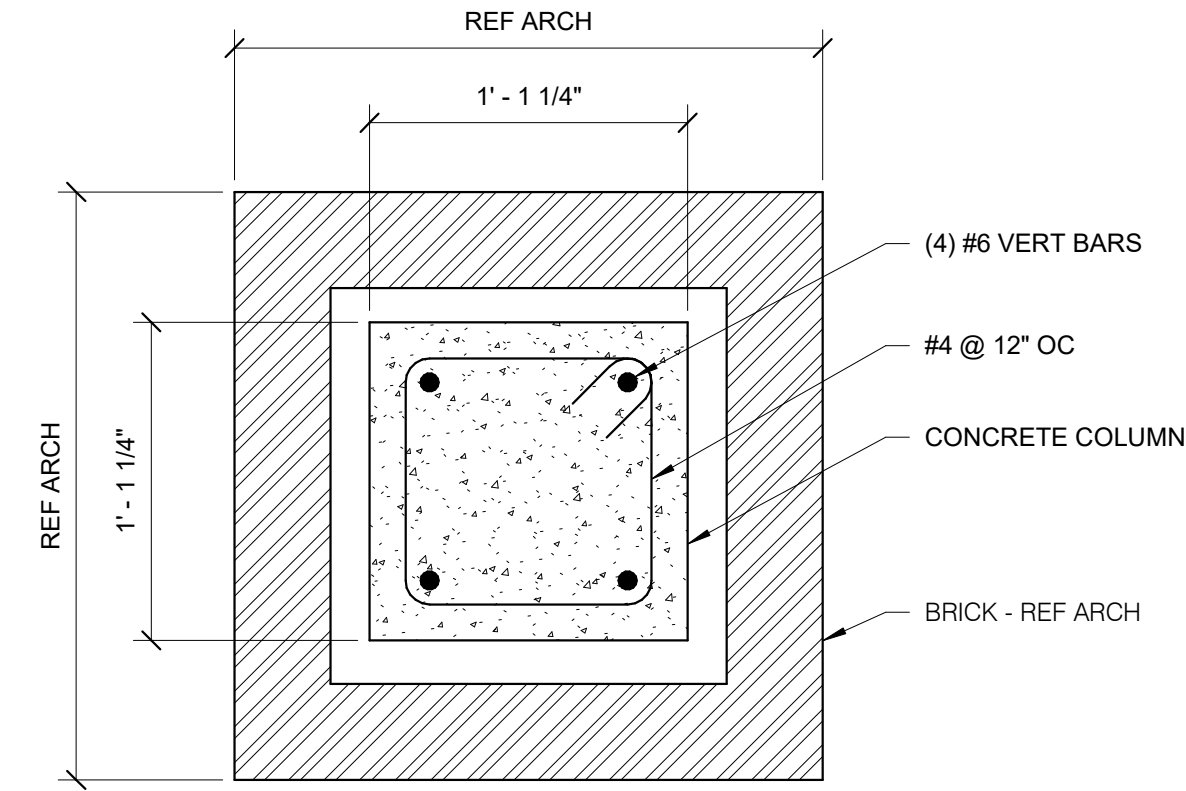




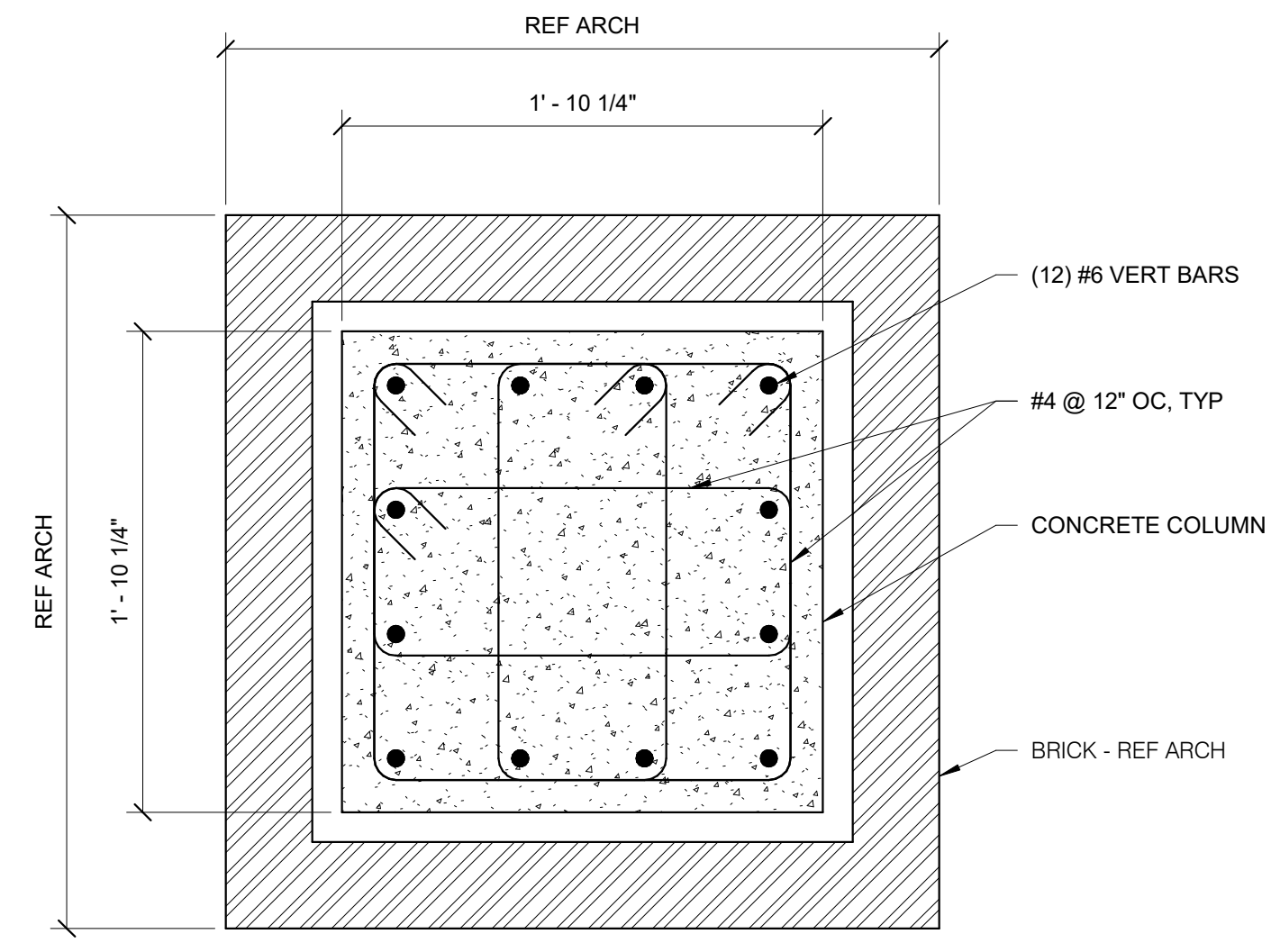
1 MASONRY PIER ELEVATION  
1/2" = 1'-0"



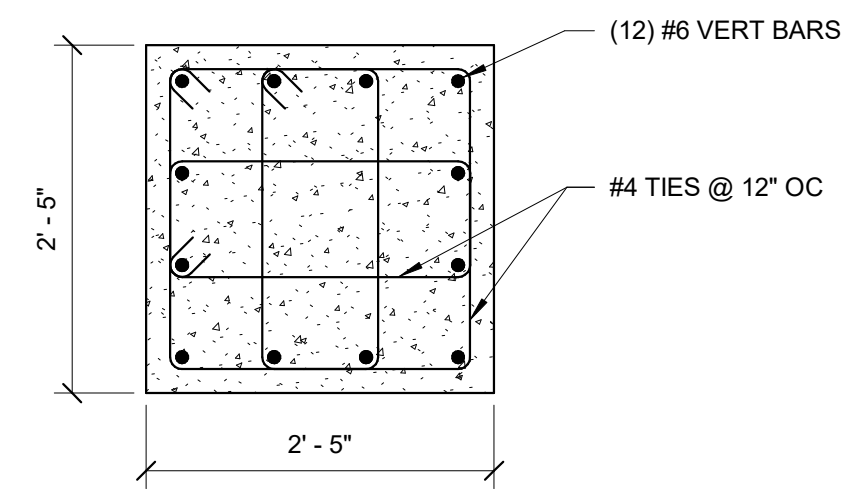
2 MASONRY PIER ELEVATION  
1/2" = 1'-0"



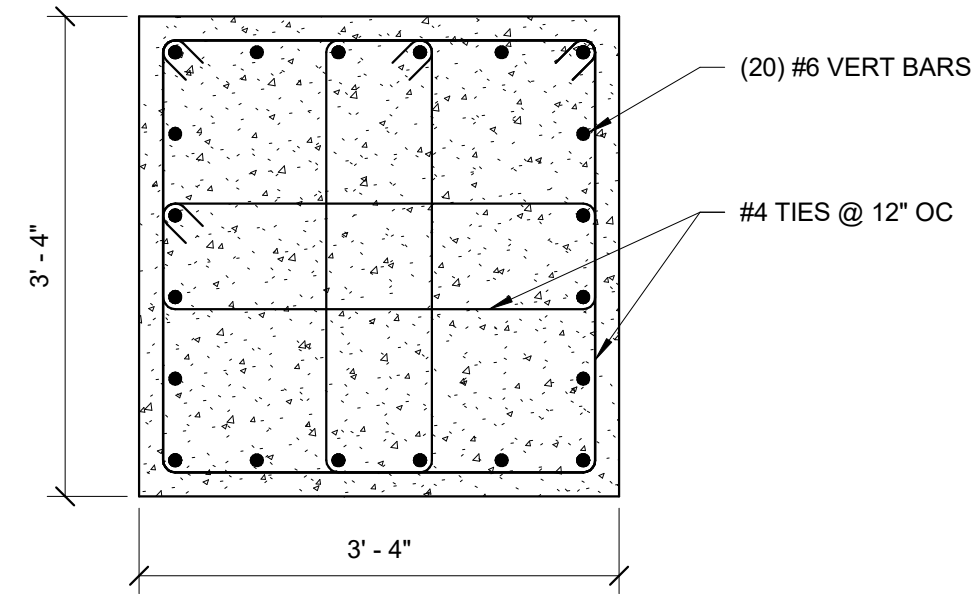
3 MASONRY PIER DETAIL  
1 1/2" = 1'-0"



4 MASONRY PIER DETAIL  
1 1/2" = 1'-0"



5 PIER DETAIL  
3/4" = 1'-0"



6 PIER DETAIL  
3/4" = 1'-0"

Construction Documents For:  
**ZTA HOUSE**  
1550 WASHTEAW AVENUE  
ANN ARBOR, MI 48014

MASONRY DETAILS

gray

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