

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD
CITY OF PORTLAND, MAINE**

**WORKSHOP
562 CONGRESS STREET**

TO: Chair Sheridan and Members of the Historic Preservation Board
FROM: Rob Wiener, Preservation Compliance Coordinator
DATE: June 15, 2018
RE: June 20, 2018 **Workshop**

Application for: Certificate of Appropriateness for façade and marquee replacement
Address: 562 Congress Street
Property Owners: Terbax Realty, Inc.
Property Manager / Applicant: Bruce Kistler, Fore River Company

Introduction

Bruce Kistler of the Fore River Company has requested a preliminary review of plans to attach a new cement board facing to three facades of the Baxter Building at 562 Congress Street, and to replace the entrance marquee on Congress Street. The Baxter Memorial Building was erected in 1894 - 1896, and was designed by Francis Fassett in the Queen Anne Style. It was part of the nationally designated Spring Street district created in 1970, and is included in the local Congress Street Historic District created in 2009. In both cases, the property is designated as non-contributing because of extensive modifications carried out in 1954 - 1955. Many architectural details were lost at that time, when windows, storefronts, and the marquee were replaced, a magnificent turret was removed, and the entire shell was covered with stucco.

Mr. Kistler has submitted a brief project description, and drawings showing the existing elevations and preliminary elevations with the new siding. A details page shows some of the construction details, but fully engineered construction drawings have not yet been executed. The applicant also submitted photos of existing conditions on the various faces of the building, as well as a sample of the fiber cement panels.

Subject Property

As is evident from the historic photo of Francis Fassett's Baxter Building, very little of its original splendor remains. True to the Queen Anne Style, the property had a great variety of architectural elements, windows, and embellishments. The pedimented, temple-like gable remains at the center of the Congress Street façade, with four of the arched windows in the

sixth floor below the pediment making a sad, incongruous nod to the original fenestration. The 1950's stucco surface is flat and plain, especially apparent above the fifth floor windows where an original cornice was removed. Above the Congress Street storefronts the broad area below the second floor windows has been partially framed with painted trim. There is a thick, metallic, semi-circular marquee above the main entrance that appears to be fairly recent.

Windows are recessed approximately 5.5" at the heads and sills, and approximately 7" at the sides of the openings. Steel window frames of windows installed in the 1950's frame the darker aluminum windows installed in the 1990's. Mr. Kistler believes much of the stucco is on metal lath held off the original surface by metal bars but a full investigation of existing skin is to be conducted.

Proposed Alterations

Mr. Kistler's project summary indicates that the proposed façade work is necessary to stabilize the stucco surface and its underpinnings. (See Project Summary, Attachment 1.) Details to note:

- The fiber-cement panels are 5/16" thick, and the air gap behind them (provided by structural steel strips) will be a minimum of 3/4", so the recesses at the windows will be deepened by slightly more than an inch.
- New flashing will ensure drainage at openings.
- Panels are to be spaced apart 5/16" at joints.
- Panels are to be fastened with exposed stainless steel screws.
- No changes are proposed for the windows (except the new fiber-cement returns to the metal frames, at the edges of the openings.)
- No changes are proposed to the west wall, above the lower Cross Jewelers building.
- Few details are provided for the proposed entrance canopy, to replace the existing marquee, which is to be drained by an existing internal drain (see sheet A-4.)

Staff Comments

With the necessity to address structural issues on the wall surfaces, the new fiber-cement panels perhaps offer a welcome update for the aging stucco façade, including more joint patterning in an otherwise flat surface. It is nonetheless difficult not to grieve for the past losses suffered by the building. Staff suggests the Board might discuss several considerations:

- Is there a way to design an integrated approach to wall signage that could help break up the expanse of panels above the Congress and Free Street storefronts in a way that nonetheless ties the band together?
- Could more patterning be added above the fifth floor windows to alleviate the expanse above the fifth floor windows?
- More detailed drawings of the proposed work, including the entrance canopy will be required for a public hearing.

Applicable Review Standards

- (1) *Every reasonable effort shall be made to provide a compatible use for the property which requires minimal alteration to the character-defining features of the structure, object or site and its environment or to use a property for its originally intended purpose.*
- (2) *The distinguishing original qualities or character of a structure, object or site and its environment shall not be destroyed. The removal or alteration of any historic material or distinctive architectural features should be avoided when possible.*
- (3) *All sites, structures and objects shall be recognized as products of their own time, place and use. Alterations that have no historical basis or create a false sense of historical development such as adding conjectural features or elements from other properties shall be discouraged.*
- (4) *Changes which may have taken place in the course of time are evidence of the history and development of a structure, object or site and its environment. Changes that have acquired significance in their own right, shall not be destroyed.*
- (9) *Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties shall not be discouraged when such alterations and additions do not destroy significant cultural, historical, architectural or archeological materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the size, scale, color, material and character of the property, neighborhood or environment.*
- (10) *Wherever possible, new additions or alterations to structures and objects shall be undertaken in such a manner that, if such additions or alterations were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property would be unimpaired.*

Attachments

1. Applicant's project summary
2. Applicant's photos of existing conditions
3. Google view of existing conditions
4. Architectural description and photo of original building (from GPL "Congress Street")
5. Preliminary elevations and elevations showing existing conditions

April 30, 2018

Deb Andrews, Historic Preservation Program Manager
Robert Wiener, Preservation Compliance Coordinator
City of Portland Historic Preservation Program
389 Congress Street, 4th Floor
Portland, ME 04101

**RE: Certificate of Appropriateness, Noncontributing Structure
Chart, Lot, & Block: G014001**

Dear Deb and Robert,

We are applying for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed alterations as shown on the attached drawings and outlined below.

Applicant:

Bruce Kistler
Fore River Company
P.O. Box 7525
Portland, Maine 04112
Work #: (207) 772-8286 x 207
Email: bkistler@forerivercompany.com

Property Owner and Billing Address:

Terbax Realty, Inc
P.O. Box 7525
Portland, Maine 04112

Project description including scope of work:

Work to the existing noncontributing office/retail building to include:

1. Renovations to the Congress Street, Oak Street, & Free Street facades:
 - a. Stabilization of the existing stucco and window headers by installing new structural steel over the outside of the stucco and anchoring the new steel to the existing /stable wall structure.
 - b. Covering the stucco and new steel with a cement board panel and flashing system from approximately the top of the 1st floor storefronts to the bottom of the roof/soffits at approximately the top of the 6th floor.
2. Replacement of the 562 Congress St entry marquee with a new painted steel awning and precast wall panels.

ATTACHMENT 1

Note:

1. Existing double hung windows to remain.
2. Existing painted brick and metal to be repainted.
3. No work to the southwest masonry division wall façade.
4. It is anticipated that the proposed work can take place while the building is occupied and will require sidewalk protection.

Attached Drawings:

- Elevations showing existing conditions
- Elevations and details of proposed alterations.
- Survey show existing and abutting building.

Photographs of building facades:

- See attached .jpeg

Engineer:

TBD

Contractor:

Keeley Construction
149 Front Street
South Portland, Maine 04106
Work #: (207) 883-8499

Please call with questions or comments.

Sincerely,

Bruce Kistler



**NO
DRINKING OF
ALCOHOLIC
BEVERAGES**
Per Order City of Portland
(17 MRSA Sec. 2003-a, Sub.2)

ATTACHMENT 2



**NO
DRINKING OF
ALCOHOLIC
BEVERAGES**
Per Order City of Portland
(17 MRSA Sec. 2D03-a, Sub.2)

EAT & DRINK
PORTLAND

5
6
2

THE
SUGAR
SHACK

NO
PARKING





DO NOT ENTER

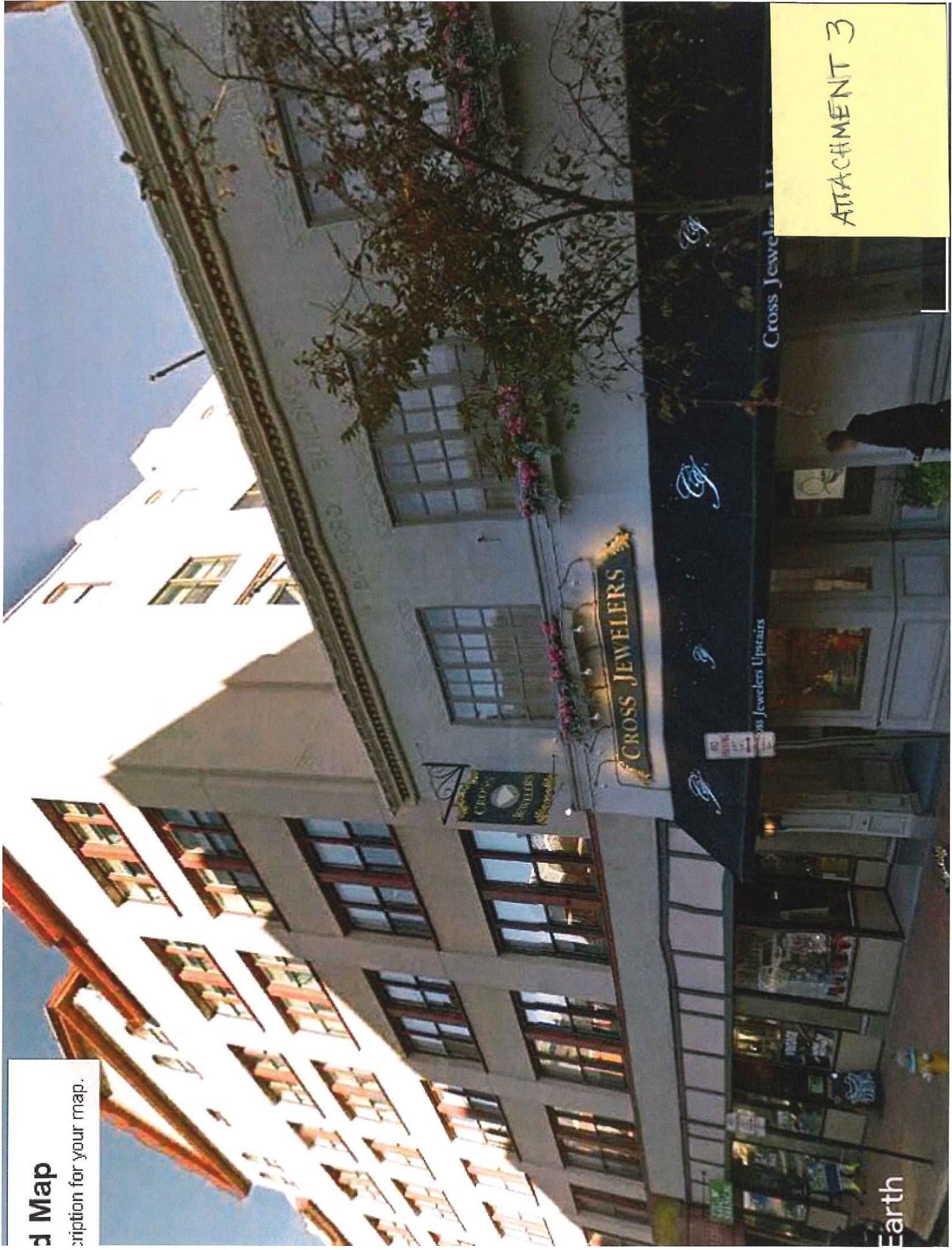
ONE WAY

Office

2

Map

Description for your map.



ATTACHMENT 3

Earth

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

562 CONGRESS BAXTER MEMORIAL BLOCK

The Baxter Memorial Block at 562 Congress was erected by James P. Baxter in 1894-96, in honor of Elihu Baxter. The building was for many years the home of J.R. Libby & Co. Designed by Francis H. Fassett in the Queen Anne style, the five-story brick building was one of the most ambitious mercantile buildings ever built on the Portland peninsula. Its towering corner turret, capped with a two-story-high, classically-detailed lantern pinnacle with bell roof, served as a downtown landmark until 1954-55, when it was removed as part of a major remodelling.

Typical of the Queen Anne style were elaborate and varied details in wood, metal, and brick. In addition to the turret, prominent decorative features included a massive temple-form gable atop a slightly projecting center section that also

had a two-story, arched, main building entry at its center. Windows varied in size and configuration; bays were defined by pilasters, arches, and spandrel panels that featured recessed panels or decorative garlands.

Storefronts were typical of the time, with large expanses of glass, brick piers, wood and glass bulkheads, and flush sign panels. A corner entrance was cut out at Oak and Congress, with a diagonal entrance wall behind a two-story column that rose to the bottom of the turret.

The 1954 renovation included the removal of the turret, the removal or covering of all other building decoration, and the replacement of all windows. The only visible remnant of the original building is the temple-roofed gable at the top of the building.



570-572 CONGRESS

Historic photographs show a four-story facade in a simple late-Victorian style. The present block constructed in 1936-37 designed by Portland architect Herbert W. Rhodes. Several times since the present manifestation no trace of former facade current storefront is brick, glass, and bronze metal. A balloon awning the upper story entrance per story consists of panels, wooden window minimum and plastic sign of ribbon-line metal applique.

574-576 CONGRESS

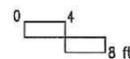
The twin brick storefronts at 574 and 576 Congress are examples of facade work a long period of time. They play a special role on Congress Street, as they serve as a visual terminus for the Forest Avenue. They



ATTACHMENT 4



① Existing Congress Street Elevation



ATTACHMENT 5

Note:
Subject to code approval.
Field verify.

THE BAXTER BUILDING
562 CONGRESS STREET
PORTLAND, MAINE

CONGRESS STREET
ELEVATION

REVISIONS:

Existing

1

30 APRIL 2018



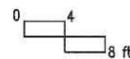
THE BAXTER BUILDING
562 CONGRESS STREET
PORTLAND, MAINE

CONGRESS STREET
ELEVATION

REVISIONS:

Note:
Subject to code approval and prior lease/
Field verify.

1 Proposed Congress Street Elevation



A-1

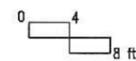
30 APRIL 2018



Free Street

Congress Street

① Existing Oak Street Elevation



Note:
Subject to code approval.
Field verify.

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562 CONGRESS STREET
PORTLAND, MAINE

OAK STREET
ELEVATION

REVISIONS:

Existing
2

30 APRIL 2018



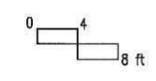
THE BAXTER BUILDING
562 CONGRESS STREET
PORTLAND, MAINE

OAK STREET
ELEVATION

REVISIONS:

Note:
Subject to code approval and prior lease/
Field verify.

① Proposed Oak Street Elevation

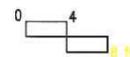


A-2

30 APRIL 2018



① Existing Free Street Elevation



Note:
 Subject to code approval.
 Field verify.

THE BAXTER BUILDING
 562 CONGRESS STREET
 PORTLAND, MAINE

FREE STREET
 ELEVATION

REVISIONS:

Existing
 3

30 APRIL 2018



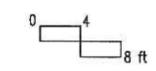
THE BAXTER BUILDING
562 CONGRESS STREET
PORTLAND, MAINE

FREE STREET
ELEVATION

REVISIONS:

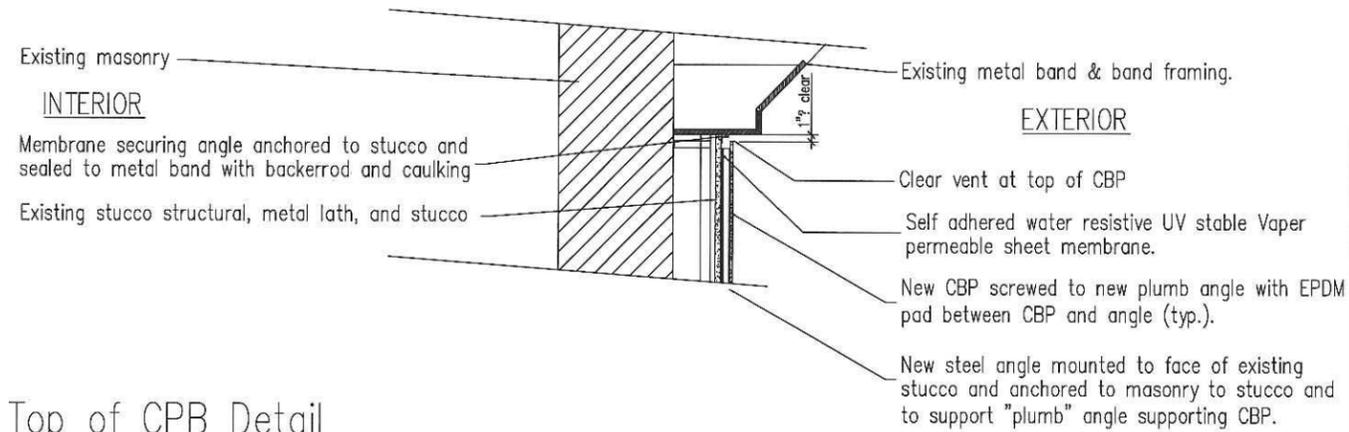
Note:
Subject to code approval and prior lease/
Field verify.

1 Proposed Free Street Elevation

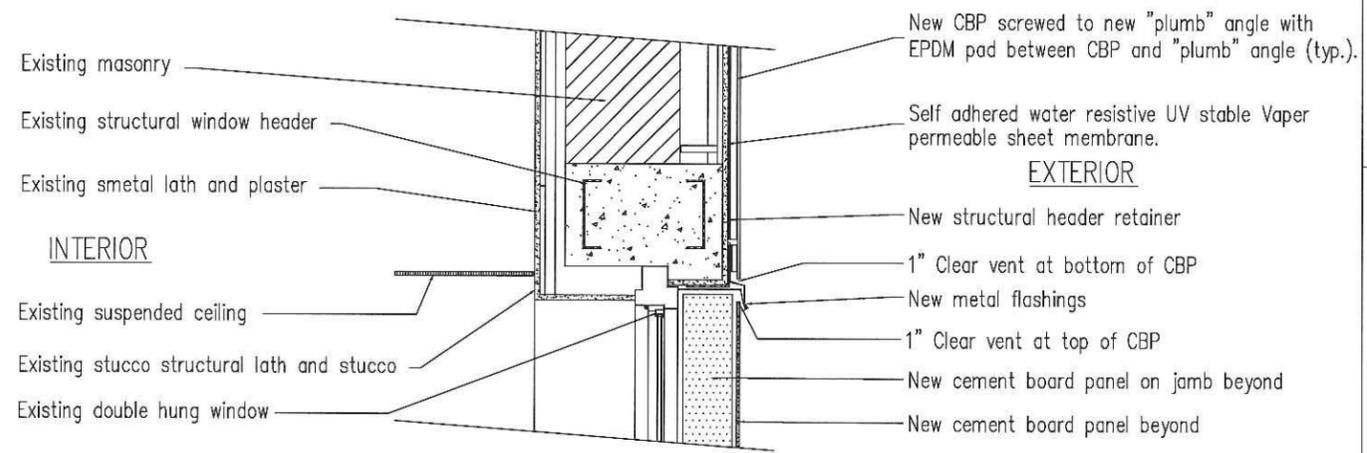
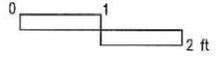


A-3

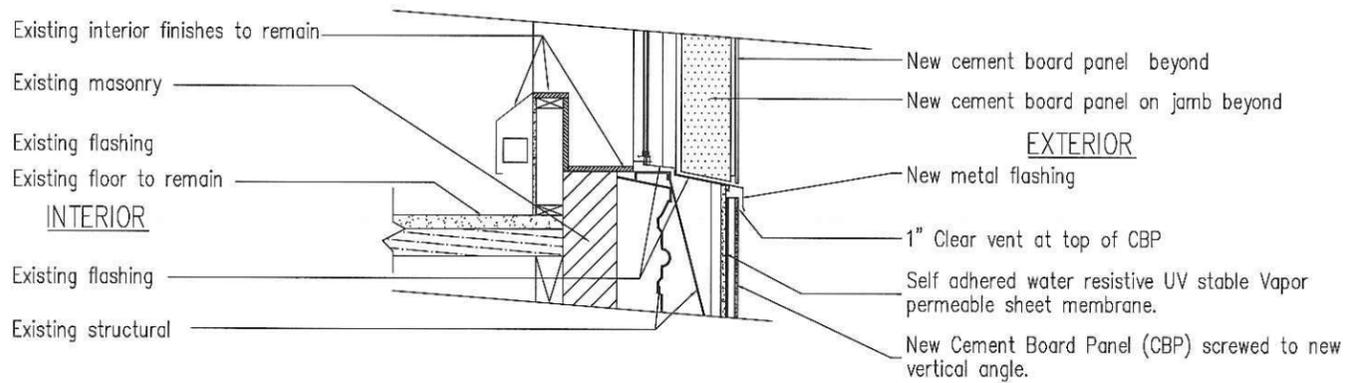
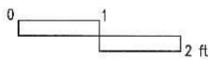
30 APRIL 2018



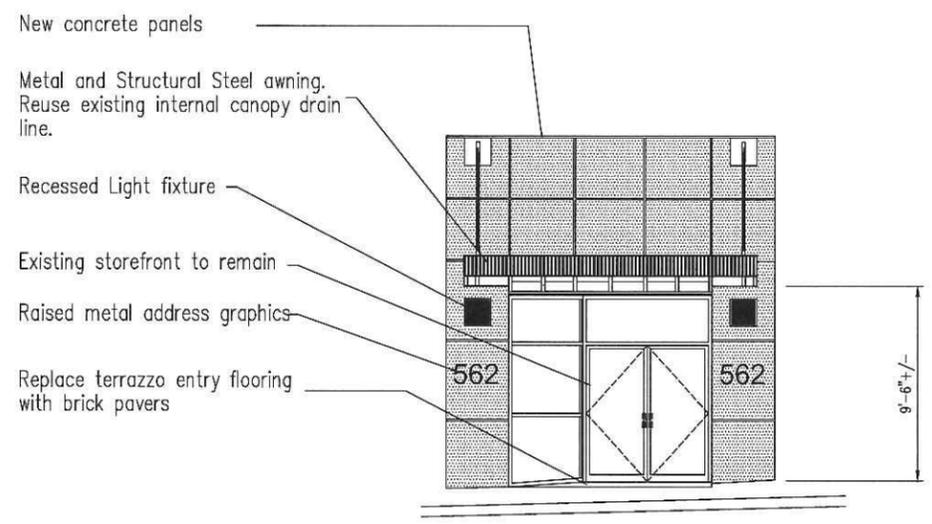
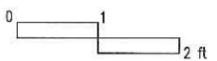
④ Top of CPB Detail



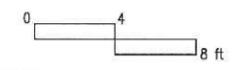
③ 5th floor Window Head Detail (other floor similar)



② 5th floor Window Sill Detail (other floor similar)



① Proposed 562 Congress St Entry



General Notes:

1. Exterior cement board panels (CBP) to be Cement Board Fabricators, Inc, Silbonit panels or equal.
2. Structural drawings to follow.
3. Field verify drawings. Notify owner of any discrepancies. Do not scale drawings.
4. All work to be in compliance with applicable codes and ordinances.

THE BAXTER BUILDING
562 CONGRESS STREET
PORTLAND, MAINE

DETAILS & NOTES

REVISIONS:
15 June 2018

A-4

30 APRIL 2018