

2013

St. Mary's Parish House: Reuse and Rehabilitation Feasibility Report

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St. Mary's Parish House

Reuse and Rehabilitation
Feasibility Report

Academic Partner:
School of Architecture, Art
and Historic Preservation

Community Partner:
Island Commons

Fall 2013

SEPTIC TANK

EAST MAIN ROAD



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December 9, 2013

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HP 681 - Historic Rehabilitation | Professor Arnold Robinson

Introduction

Saint Mary's Parish House, located at 324 East Main Road in Portsmouth, Rhode Island, is a Shingle style parish house constructed in 1927 for Saint Mary's Episcopal Church. The structure was originally built as a community center to house recreational and educational facilities for the parish, and it is currently underutilized since the construction of a new parish house. The building maintains a good deal of historical integrity, especially on the exterior, and was mentioned in the 1995 National Register of Historic Places nomination for Saint Mary's Episcopal Church as part of the property.

This report outlines a plan to reuse the parish house as a sustainability center for Island Commons, while retaining its historical character so that it can continue to enrich Portsmouth's built environment.



Students observe the parish house's front porch, a character-defining feature of the architectural style.

Methodology

The St. Mary's Parish House team documented the building and its existing conditions through archival research, site visits and consultation with the client. Before the building was physically documented, cursory research was conducted into the history of the property and its regulatory environment.

Research was divided among group members. Elizabeth and Dylan conducted historical research through the Portsmouth Historical Society, Newport Historical Society, Portsmouth Public Library, parishioner Marshall Lundberg, town historian James Garman and St. Mary's Parish secretary. Amy and Alison conducted regulatory research, going to the various offices at Portsmouth Town Hall and gathering relevant regulations applicable to the rehabilitation property.

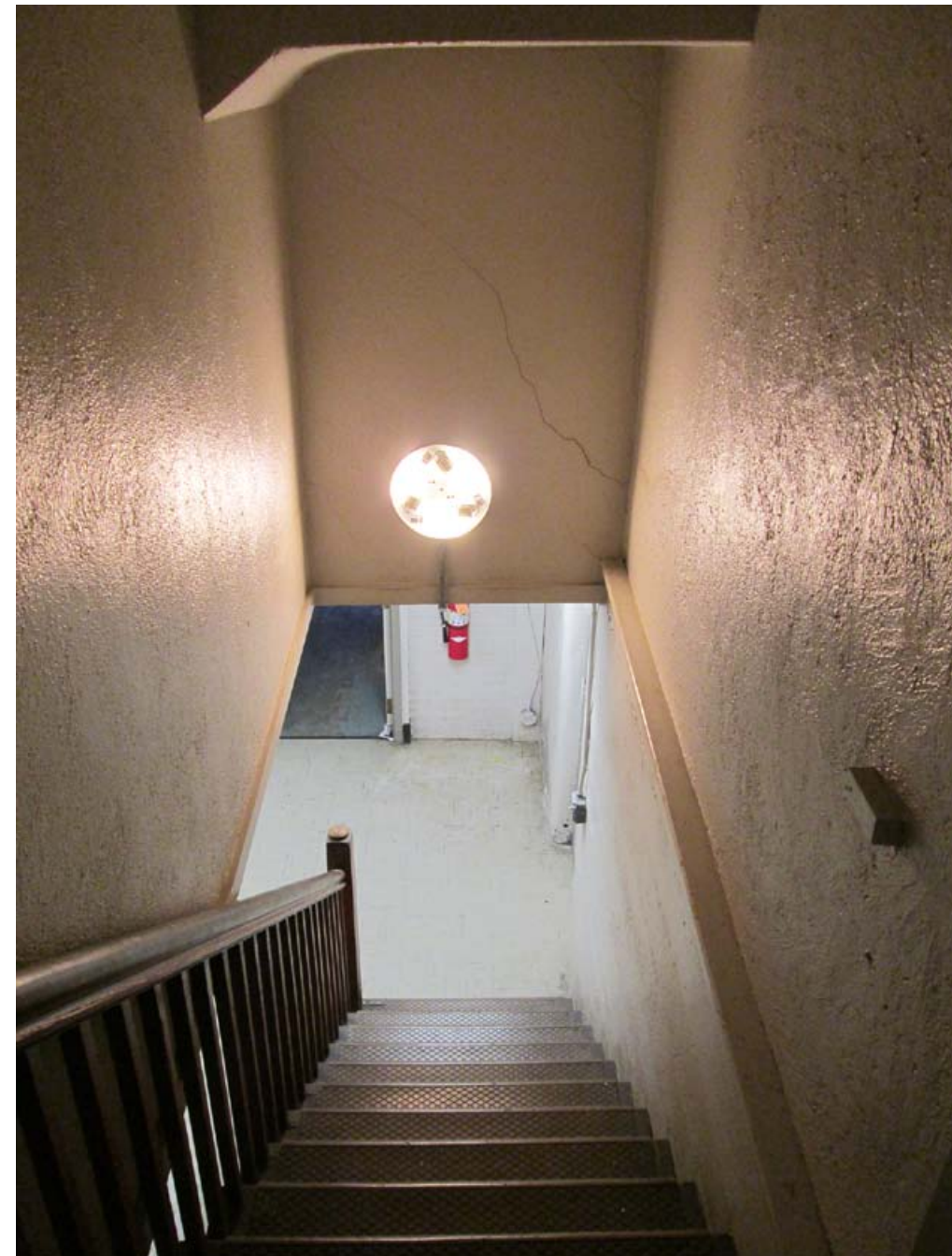
The team conducted two site visits (9/9/13 and 10/8/13) to visually inspect the conditions, photograph the building and ascertain an understanding of the programmatic goals of Island Commons.

For the second site visit, the team returned to document conditions using floor plans and photography, marking on the floor plans where each observed deficiency is located on the interior and exterior of the structure. Amy and Alison documented the first floor, and Dylan and Liz docu-

mented the second floor. Then Dylan, Liz and Amy documented the basement. Notes were organized using the CSI MasterSpec divisions. Physical conditions were examined and assessed with conditions graded as:

- **Excellent** – A building element that shows no noticeable signs of deterioration and requires little to no repair.
- **Good** – A building element that shows some signs of age and might require minor repairs.
- **Fair** – A building element that shows signs of more substantial deterioration and requires extensive repairs.
- **Poor** – A building element that is significantly deteriorated, possibly beyond the point of repair, and will need major repairs or replacement.
- **Missing** – A building element that is no longer present.

During the site visits, the team consulted with representatives from Island Commons to determine known issues with the building and how it functions, as well as the vision of the organization for the future of the building. This research and documentation informs the Existing Conditions Assessment and the Rehabilitation Plan.



Stairs leading to the basement. Plaster walls exhibit cracking. Light fixtures will be replaced with ones that respect the building's historic character.

History and Significance

History

Situated at the southern end of the 69-acre property of Saint Mary's Episcopal Church is the old Saint Mary's Parish House on East Main Road in Portsmouth, Rhode Island. The site configuration of the parish house has changed little since its construction: the structure is set back from the street, fronted by a driveway and separated from both East Main Road and Paquins Lane by stone walls that are present in photos from 1927.

The parish house exists within the context of the growth of Saint Mary's parish. Sarah Gibbs of Portsmouth, Rhode Island, who donated her eighty-acre Oakland Farm for the church site, was influential in the founding of the parish and the eventual construction of the Gothic Revival church structure designed by renowned architect Richard Upjohn in 1847. Preceding the construction of the parish house, the surrounding area consisted primarily of farmland with smaller house lots along East Main Road. The Vanderbilt family owned several large estates around the church, with their principal estate, Oakland Farm (the name taken from Sarah Gibbs' estate), surrounding the church property.

In 1925, William Vanderbilt, who was a trustee of the Deed of Trust of Sarah Gibbs, donated a plot of land on the opposite side of the church property from Oakland Farm (between the church property

and Paquins Lane) for the construction of a parish house. Mr. Vanderbilt also contributed significant funds toward its construction, along with contributions from St. Mary's parishioners and others in the community.



Construction on the parish house began in 1926, and by January 1927 it was mostly complete. Built to house educational and recreational facilities for the parish, its intended use was as a community center. The large two-story, Shingle style structure was designed by architects Clarke & Howe from plans prepared by Isaac Chase, Jr.

It has a long, gable-on-gable roofed section from which project two large front-gabled wings. In the center section, between the two wings, is a porch set under the main roof mass over which there are three hip-roofed dormers. The building has two tall corbelled chimneys, wood shingle siding and a cement foundation. The structure contained a bowling alley, kitchen and gymnasium.

There have been numerous changes to the parish house throughout its history. One major campaign was the addition of a long, one-story, flat-roofed classroom section added in 1959 to the rear west façade, with further additions in 1969. The church school was founded in 1908, and by 1959 new classrooms were needed to meet the needs of a growing congregation during a period of significant suburban growth in Portsmouth. Based on the 12-over-12 configuration of the windows on the north wall of the gymnasium and the visible cut marks beneath each 12-over-8 window on the west wall of the room, it is probable that the windows on the west wall were configured to their present state (presumably from being 12-over-12) when the addition was added. The

St. Mary's Parish House,
November 1927.

current kitchen adjacent to the gymnasium was potentially installed during the 1959 additions, or shortly after because it was present by 1969.

On either side of the structure, attached to the side dormers on the front gables, is an exterior roofed fire escape stairway with “Chippendale-like railings that ascend to an entrance.” This was designed by architect Jeff Staats and constructed in the late 1980s.

At some point, possibly during the 1980s renovations, the front balustrades on the porch stairs were changed to metal railings, two basement windows were turned into egress doors and a small maintenance room was constructed inside the main entry foyer. The bowling alley was also removed from the basement. The Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission has determined the St. Mary’s Church property to be eligible for listing in the National Register.

A new parish house was constructed closer to the church and dedicated on September 15, 2012. Since then, the old parish house is no longer in active use apart from housing the Island Commons farmer market. In 2013 the stage was removed from the gymnasium.

Significance

Saint Mary’s Parish House is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places at the local level under Criterion C. Properties that are listed under Criterion C are specimen of a type or period of construction or embody “distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction.” To be eligible, a property must clearly contain enough characteristics to be considered a true representative of a particular type, period or method of construction. Characteristics can be expressed in terms such as form, proportion, structure, plan, style or materials. They can be general—referring to ideas of design and construction such as basic plan or form—or they can be specific, referring to precise ways of combining particular kinds of materials.

The architectural classification for the parish house would be considered late Victorian Shingle style. The Shingle style became extremely popular along the eastern seaboard in the 1880s and 1890s through the 1930s. Then the style had a resurgence of popularity in the 1950s and 1970s, influencing domestic postmodern design. The style was largely inspired by the American past and colonial archi-



The parish house is classified as Shingle style architecture because of its exterior wooden shingles, gabled roofs, multi-light windows and porch.

tecture. However, it did not copy the formal symmetry characteristic of colonial architecture, but rather took its “nostalgically ramshackle shape,” as seen in houses such as Whitehall, that have a variety and complexity of forms.

Shingle style structures have been characterized as being “wrapped in continuous envelopes of shingles.” The shingle is quite possibly the most important design element of the style, creating a “continuity of surface” between the roof and walls, so they all seem “organically connected.” The shingling on the exterior walls of Saint Mary’s Parish

House has been identified as a character-defining feature of the structure because of its connection to the Shingle style and its visual impact on the structure. The roof is currently asphalt, but was made of cedar shingles, according to historic photographs.

Another emblematic feature of the Shingle style is the roof. Shingle style roofs have been described as “enveloping geometric forms, especially the broad, long-slung triangular gable.” The massing of the roof of Saint Mary’s Parish House has been identified as a character-defining feature of the struc-

ture due to its relationship to the Shingle style and its visual impact on the building. The roof of the parish house can be best described as an amalga-



mation of gabled roofs. There are two gables that dominate the east elevation (front) of the structure. Additionally, there is a steeply pitched gable roof over the large gymnasium.

Another feature that is typical of the Shingle style is multi-light windows. High style examples of the Shingle style, such as the Isaac Bell House, contain six-over-six, double hung windows that harken back to the configuration found in Jacobean houses. The six-over-six and 12-over-12 historic windows in the parish house have been identified as character-defining features because of their integrity, relationship to the style and overall visual impact on the structure.

Finally, a feature that is particularly emblematic of the Shingle style is the porch. Shingle style structures, such as the Low House in Bristol, integrate porches under the large roofs. Typically, Shingle style porches are set into the structure, rather than projecting outward. The small central porch on the eastern façade of the parish house is a character-defining feature. Rather than projecting out from the structure, the porch fits within the footprint of the building.

The shingles, roof, windows and porch are all character-defining features of the parish house that establish the structure's relationship to the Shingle style overall. The parish house is architecturally significant because it is representative of a type and period of construction that is common in the Newport area.

Character-Defining Features

Despite numerous changes to the building over time, largely identified in the historical narrative, the building maintains a great degree of historical integrity, retaining many of its historic character-defining features. A character-defining feature can be described as a “prominent or distinctive aspect, quality or characteristic of a historic property that contributes significantly to its physical character” and “tangible architectural components that, prior to rehabilitation, convey the building’s sense of time and place.”

Some of the character-defining features on the exterior of the parish house that are distinctive to its design include the structure’s symmetry, massing, roofline, inset front porch and shingle cladding, which are all emblematic of its Shingle style construction. The symmetrical fenestration pattern, original six-over-six wood windows, relatively tall chimneys atop each front gable and the hipped-roof dormers on the front of the structure are also character-defining features original to the building’s construction. The stone walls that separate the property from Paquins Lane and East Main Road are landscape elements that are either contemporary with or predate the construction of the parish house and are character-defining to the site.



1. The gymnasium space is a character-defining feature of the parish house.

2. The six-over-six double-hung windows are another character defining feature of the structure.

On the interior, the gymnasium space, with its large 12-over-12 and 12-over-8 windows (two with interior shutters), stage area, exposed wood structure, unique clapboard siding and mouldings, is a significant character-defining feature. Throughout the structure, historic baseboards, architraves around doors and windows, and other historic mouldings (such as wainscoting in room with the fireplace), along with historic wood doors and door hardware are character-defining features. Other character-defining features for the interior include the wood floors throughout, the built-in drawers in the upstairs classrooms, the stairwell with its simple balustrade and the fireplace mantel.

Site Context and Regulations

Saint Mary’s Episcopal Church is located at 324 East Main Road near the southern border of the town of Portsmouth, Rhode Island. Within this 69-acre property is the church’s old parish house, set back approximately 90 feet from the street. The lot designated to the old parish house has changed little since its construction, enclosed by historic stone walls along East Main Road and Paquins Lane. The parish house property is accessed by a driveway off of East Main Road.

The property on which the parish house is located slopes down towards the street. This site condition poses some challenges as far as drainage and moisture protection within the building. The property is located within zone R-30. This zone requires that front and rear setbacks are a minimum of 30 feet and side setbacks are 20 feet. Additionally, only 20% of the lot can be covered by the structure.

Currently there is a leech field onsite that services the bathrooms. A new septic tank must be installed to handle the new program and occupancy of the building.

Finally, the current parking lot next to the building can hold forty cars. The lot will need to be expanded to accommodate the new use of the building, especially for events. However, there is limited

space to expand this parking lot. Shared use with the church parking lot should be explored.

Applicable Regulations

Federal Regulations

The building does not currently meet the federal ADA Accessibility requirements. ADA mandates that every building must allow for people with disabilities to enter and have access to the entirety of the building. The Parish Hall is also considered a contributing resource in the application for St. Mary’s Episcopal Church to the National Register of Historic Places, and the rehabilitation of the Parish Hall will follow the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation if federal tax credits are desired.

State Regulations

In order to qualify for tax credits, rehabilitation on the parish house will have to comply with the State of Rhode Island Historic Preservation and Heritage Commission. “The State Register is an authoritative guide to be used by state and local governments, private groups, and citizens to identify the state’s his-

torical, architectural, and cultural resources which are significant and worthy of being preserved.”¹ If tax credits are not desired, this would be optional.

The building must also follow the local fire codes, SRC-1 – Rhode Island State Rehabilitation Building and Fire Code for Existing Buildings and Structures.² This code allows for variances to



1. Aerial view of St. Mary’s Parish House.

2. North elevation of the parish house shows the limited space for parking.



historic structures to encourage reuse. “The purpose of this code is to encourage the continued use or reuse of existing buildings and structures. This code is intended to permit repairs, renovations, alterations, reconstructions, additions, and/or changes of occupancy that maintain or improve the health, safety and welfare in existing buildings, without requiring full compliance with the construction requirements of the Building Code, Mechanical Code, Plumbing Code, Rhode Island Fire Safety Code, Rhode Island Fire Prevention



Code, Electrical Code, Boiler Safety Code, Energy Code, Elevator Code, or Accessibility Code, except for proportional additional work as specified in this code.”

With regards to lead paint removal in the parish house, Island Commons will have to follow the applicable State of Rhode Island lead laws, which are very similar in scope to federal EPA standards. The law states that in construction, if more than six square feet per room of lead paint area is going to be disturbed, or if more than 20 square feet on the exterior will be disturbed, then lead remediation must occur by a qualified professional.

Local Regulations

The parish house is currently zoned as “R-30” for properties larger than 30,000 square feet. R-30 zoning mandates minimum setbacks of 30 feet on the front and rear and 20 feet on the sides with a maximum of 20% of the property built upon. The property would have to have various non-permitted uses zoned “S” for “special use,” which is defined by the town as “...a regulated use which is permitted pursuant to the special-use permit issued by the authorized governmental entity...”³ The building is a part of the historic fabric of the property and any work or alterations done to the parish house needs to be carefully considered and maintain the aesthetic quality the property has from the street.

By law the property is allowed to be used for the following purposes based on its R-30 zoning designation:

A. Residential

- One detached dwelling unit on a separate lot occupied by not more than one household.
- One two-family or one duplex structure on a separate lot.
- Renting of rooms in an existing dwelling unit to not more than (4) persons provided there are no separate cooking facilities and no separate means of ingress or egress.
- Conversion of an existing dwelling unit to accommodate not more than two (2) households provided there is no external evidence of occupancy by more than one (1) household and provided the dimensional requirements for a two-family dwelling are met.
- Community residences.

B. Institutional, Recreational and Educational Uses

- Family day care home.

C. Agricultural Uses

- Farms-agricultural, orchard, horticultural or silvacultural.
- Farms-livestock, fish and shellfish or poultry but not swine, provided that any building housing livestock or poultry is not less than

- fifty (50) feet from property boundary.
- One roadside stand per farm for the sale of agricultural or horticultural products the major portion of which are grown or produced on the premises must provide off-street parking.

D. Accessory Uses

- A private garage for residents of an existing dwelling on the same premises.
- A storage shed with a maximum of 120 sq. ft. area and no more than 12 ft. in height. Storage sheds of over 120 sq. ft. shall meet all dimensional requirements of zoning use district in which it is located.
- Private greenhouse, tennis court or other similar building or structure for domestic use.
- Swimming pool enclosed by a six (6) foot fence and the pool area locked when not in use.
- The raising or keeping of animals, livestock or poultry as pets or for use by residents of the premises provided that no buildings or enclosure (including fencing) for any animal may be less than (50) fifty feet from side, rear or front lot line. Provided, however, the raising or keeping of swine shall comply with all R.I. Dept. of Health rules and regulations not inconsistent with the provisions hereof.
- Home occupation of a resident provided that not more than three (3) persons shall practice or be employed on the premises at any one

St. Mary’s church property.

time and further provided that not more than 20% of the floor area is so used. (See definitions of home occupation.)

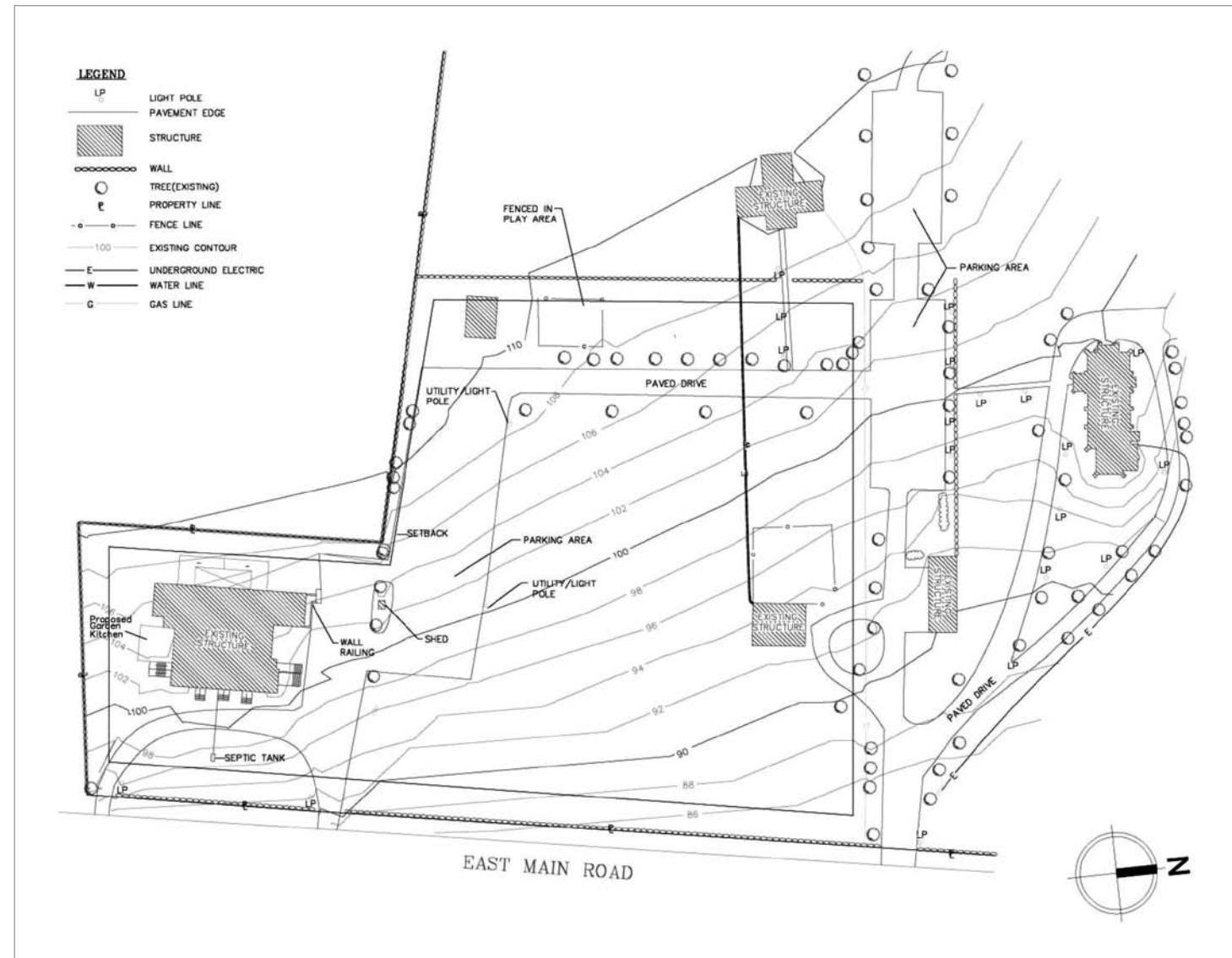
- The storage of (1) one recreational vehicle and (1) one boat and trailer, meeting the yard requirements as set forth in the Land Space Requirements Table, except that in R-10 the yard requirements for this use shall be fifty (50%) percent of those set forth in the Land Space Requirements Table.
- Day care conducted in one's own home, but otherwise meeting the definition of "Day Care-Family Day Care Home" provided there is no exterior signage.
- Accessory family dwelling unit, providing there are no separate cooking facilities and no separate means of ingress or egress.

However, in order to meet desired programmatic functions, changing the zone from R-30 should be considered. Under R-30 zoning, special use permits are required for the flexible event space, the farmers market, the teaching kitchen, and the wedding banquet space. The classrooms, café, offices, housing for an onsite manager/live-in farmer, retail space, and restaurant are not allowed and would require zoning variances. As seen in Appendix C, Zone C-1 is the most applicable to the uses of Island Commons. This would require special use permits for the flexible event space, classrooms, teaching kitchen, housing and wedding banquet space and would allow the other desired programmatic functions.

¹ <http://www.preservation.ri.gov/review/regulations.php>

² <http://sos.ri.gov/documents/archives/regdocs/released/pdf/3b493e49b0a2a162589891f1e4b0f9c3/4721.pdf>

³ http://www.portsmouthri.com/townplanner/documents/Zoning_Ord_08_31_08_w_Amends_Thru_3_28_11.pdf Article II-18, Definitions.



Site plan.

Existing Conditions

Exterior Assessment

General Condition

Saint Mary's Parish House is in fair condition overall. Many character-defining features remain intact, and there is a great deal of historical integrity. Numerous deficiencies exist both on the interior and exterior that limit use of the structure; left unchecked, these will eventually compound to adversely compromise the integrity of the structure further. Some of the most urgent issues affecting the use and longevity of the structure include the asphalt roof, the windows, the shingle siding, the interior finishes, code issues, moisture in the basement and the interior layout.

Facility Construction Subgroup - Division 03: Concrete

Foundation: Good Condition

The concrete foundation exhibits minor cracks on the south elevation. There is evidence of earlier attempts to seal these cracks and evidence of moisture infiltration where the school addition meets the main structure in the basement.

Front Stairs: Poor Condition

The concrete front porch stairs are in poor condition with significant cracking throughout, rust and loss of large chunks of concrete.

Division 04: Masonry

Brick Chimneys (2): Fair Condition

The chimneys are in fair condition, showing signs of deterioration. There are loose mortar joints in both chimneys and visible cracks running down the exterior of the north chimney.

Division 05: Metals

Railings: Fair Condition

The painted cast iron railings on the steps to the front porch are in poor condition with a significant amount of rust and paint loss. They appear to have been added c. 1980.



1. The front stairs exhibit significant cracking and loss of concrete. The railings show rust and paint loss.

Division 06: Wood, Plastics and Composites

South Fire Escape: Fair to Poor Condition

The south fire escape is in fair to poor condition. There is significant weathering of the wood, including some rot. Risers are detached from stringers, and treads are detached from risers. There is also significant paint loss.



2. The south fire escape shows wood rot, paint loss and detached risers.

North Fire Escape: Fair to Poor Condition

The north fire escape is in fair to poor condition. There is significant weathering of the wood, including some rot. Risers are detached from stringers, and treads are detached from risers. There is significant paint loss.

Shingle Cladding: Fair to Poor Condition

Many of the shingles are weathered; some exhibit water damage and biological growth. Many shingles around the entire building are missing.

Cornice: Fair Condition

The cornice is slightly deteriorated, showing signs of weathering and cracking. There is paint loss and chipped paint throughout. The cornice exhibits a visual appearance of rot in the southeast corner.

Window Frames: Fair to Good Condition

Window frame conditions vary based on location. The window frames protected by the porch are in excellent condition while other frames range from good to fair condition. Most experience minor deterioration due to weathering. Some window frames have rotted and missing wood.



Division 07: Thermal and Moisture Protection

Asphalt Roof: Poor Condition

The asphalt roof on the original structure has reached the end of its useful life and exhibits critical deterioration, particularly on the west façade. The part of this roof on the east façade that is flat has limited access, but it appears to be either EPDM or tar. From aerial views on Bing Maps, it appears to be in poor condition.

EPDM Roof: Good Condition

The flat EPDM roof on the school seems to be in good condition, showing few signs of age.

Chimney Flashing: Fair Condition

The chimney flashing is in fair condition, showing signs of age and deterioration.

Gutter System: Poor to Good Condition

Gutters appear to be wooden with galvanized steel downspouts. The downspouts flanking the front entry porch have been replaced with a material that appears to be PVC piping. There are missing and disconnected downspouts on each elevation. The gutters exhibit some signs of rot and have no flashing to protect the wood from the weather. Further, a missing downspout on the north elevation is channelling water directly onto the pipe where the electrical wires for the structure are gathered. Overall, these gutters are in poor condition and are near the end of their useful life. Gutters on the school addition are aluminum with aluminum downspouts and are in good condition, with some dents and debris.

This window on the south elevation shows a deteriorating wood frame. The wooden gutters show signs of rot and many are disconnected from the downspouts.

Division 08: Openings

Exterior Doors: Good Condition

The front entry door is in good condition and is original to the structure. Other entry doors are made of metal and are in good condition, showing slight signs of age (mainly cosmetic, through some chipped paint).



Windows: Fair Condition

Most windows in the structure are original, configured six-over-six, except for the gymnasium which is 12-over-12 and 12-over-8. Most windows in the addition are configured as six-over-six and seemingly original to its construction. Several windows are broken (indicated on floor plans).

There is significant paint loss on most windows. Two windows, behind the former stage wall, are boarded up. Some window surrounds show signs of rotting. Numerous storm windows are damaged, detaching from the window frame or missing.

Division 09: Finishes

Paint: Poor Condition

Paint throughout the exterior of the structure is in poor condition. Paint on the front entry door is cracked. Paint on the porch ceiling is peeling off in large flakes that hang from the ceiling. There is significant paint loss on the cornice and most window surrounds.

Facility Services Subgroup - Division 22: Plumbing

Septic Tank: Unknown Condition or Existence

Further investigation required. Approved plans found at Portsmouth Building Inspector's Office, but it is unknown if this reflects current conditions.



1. All exterior doors are in good condition including this metal one.
2. The porch ceiling exhibits significant paint peeling.

Existing Conditions

Interior Assessment

Facility Construction Subgroup - Division 03: Concrete

Concrete Block: Excellent Condition

The concrete block load-bearing walls in the rear addition act as partitions for the classroom spaces. They are in excellent condition with no observable deficiencies.

Basement Walls: Fair Condition

The concrete walls in the basement have some cracks with previous attempts at sealing. The western foundation wall that abuts the classroom addition appears to be saturated with moisture and has a significant amount of mold growth, suggesting an exterior drainage problem.

Division 04: Masonry

Fireplace: Good Condition

The fireplace on the first floor is reportedly working but testing was not able to be completed. Visual inspection could not yield any significant damage of the flue or firebox.

Division 06: Wood, Plastics and Composites

Structural Columns: Fair Condition

The structural piers in the gym are splitting vertically, which happens over the lifetime of many species of wood. This seems to be allowing weight to still be transferred downward because this member is in compression. These cracks do not appear to be new and there is no apparent rot or structural instability upon visual inspection from the floor.



Basement Beams: Fair Condition

The reciprocating sawn wooden beams in the basement show signs of horizontal cracking and splitting, but seem to be in stable condition. However, there are signs that mold is starting to spread to the beams from the walls due to the damp environment in that part of the basement.

Division 07: Thermal and Moisture Protection

Rear Addition Moisture Protection: Poor Condition

Moisture protection in the rear addition appears to be in poor condition. There is some mold on the walls of the rear addition and the acoustic tiles on some of the ceilings are stained from water leakage. Further investigation is required to determine the source of this water infiltration.

The structural columns in the gymnasium are splitting, although they still appear stable.

Division 08: Openings

Windows: Fair Condition

Most windows in the structure are historic and in fair condition, consisting of double-hung, six-over-six, divided-light windows throughout most of the building and 12-over-8 divided-light windows in the gymnasium. Windows on the first story of the south façade, in the school addition, are wooden and one-over-one.

Most windows throughout the structure exhibit significant paint loss and loss of putty. Several windows, as indicated on the annotated floor plans, have broken ropes, broken glass, missing/broken storm windows and/or rotted wood. Wasp nests are also present in several windows, including in the kitchen and the upstairs classrooms.

Skylights: Fair Condition

Skylights in the first floor bathrooms are causing water damage to the ceiling.

Doors: Good Condition

Interior doors throughout the structure are in good condition overall. Numerous wood doors throughout the structure are original with original hardware. Other doors have been added or replaced c. 1980 with aluminum fire doors or mod-



ern wood doors. All doors are functional, though some doors on the second floor require door stoppers because they are damaging the walls that they open onto. The doors that formerly led to the stage are now floating.

Division 09: Finishes

Wood Floors: Good Condition

The original wood floors in the gym and upstairs classroom spaces are in good condition. There are a few minor cosmetic issues, including a few small paint splatters on the floors upstairs and slight wear on the finish of the gymnasium floor.

Asbestos Tile Floors: Fair Condition

The asbestos tiles in the classroom addition, kitchen and upstairs bathrooms are in fair condition and show signs of wear and deterioration.

Plaster: Fair Condition

Plaster condition varies throughout the structure. The plaster is in generally fair condition throughout the first floor, with some holes, missing plaster and hairline cracks. The plaster textured finish on the walls in the upstairs classrooms and particularly in the stair hall is in poor condition, including cracking, bulging and separation from the walls in some areas.

The majority of parish house windows are six-over-six, double hung, and they exhibit significant paint and putty loss.

Paint: Poor to Good Condition

Paint is in fair to good condition in most rooms and exhibits some cosmetic flaws such as scuffs and occasional chips. In several areas the condition is more severe, particularly in the fireplace room, which exhibits significant paint failure. Several window architraves throughout the structure also exhibit peeling paint. Considering the age of the structure, the presence of lead paint is probable.



Drop Ceilings: Poor Condition

Drop ceilings in the kitchen and rear addition exhibit staining due to water damage and missing tiles.

Gymnasium Ceiling: Fair Condition

Based on visual inspection from the floor, the gymnasium ceiling appears in fair condition overall, with several areas of water damage due to water infiltration from the roof.

Wood Panelling: Good Condition

The wood panelling on the walls of the gymnasium is in good condition, despite some loss of paint in a few places. Some areas exhibit some bulging, scratches or deterioration. However, the stage was recently removed, leaving the wood panelling under the former stage unfinished (back wall) and non-existent (side walls).

Light Fixtures: Fair Condition

Fluorescent light fixtures throughout are in fair condition. They are functional, but of poor quality, dirty and outdated.

Division 11: Equipment

Cooling Fan: Fair Condition

A fan from the gymnasium to the outside, blowing warm air from the area on hot days, is in fair condition. However, it may be problematic during the winter months when it allows the interior to be exposed to the cold temperatures outside.

Division 14: Conveying Equipment

Elevator/Chair Lift: Missing

There is no elevator, chair lift or other means of conveying disabled persons to the upper floors. However, both the first floor and the basement are handicap-accessible.



1. Paint failure in the south parlor.

2. The drop ceiling tiles in the kitchen show staining due to water damage.

Facility Services Subgroup - Division 21: Fire Suppression

Fire Alarms: Present

Fire alarms are present but the condition was not tested by the team.

Sprinkler System: Missing

Sprinklers are not present in either the original parish house or the school addition.

Division 22: Plumbing

Bathroom Fixtures: Fair Condition

Bathroom conditions on the first and second floors are functional but are showing signs of age and deterioration.

Division 23: Heating, Ventilating and Air Conditioning

Radiators: Good Condition

The cast iron radiators throughout building are in good condition. The only observable issue is some minor paint chipping on several radiators, though some have more chipped paint than others.



Basement Pipes: Fair Condition

There are no visible issues with the pipes themselves, however, the pipes in the basement need rewinding as the insulation is significantly deteriorated in most places.

Thermostat: Poor Condition

A thermostat in the upstairs classroom (northern classroom) is broken.

Division 26: Electrical

Electrical System: Good Condition

All light switches work and no visible deficiencies are observed with the electrical system, as far as operating the lights can show. Some original switches are intact, others have been replaced.

Division 28: Electronic Safety and Security

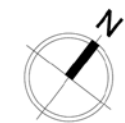
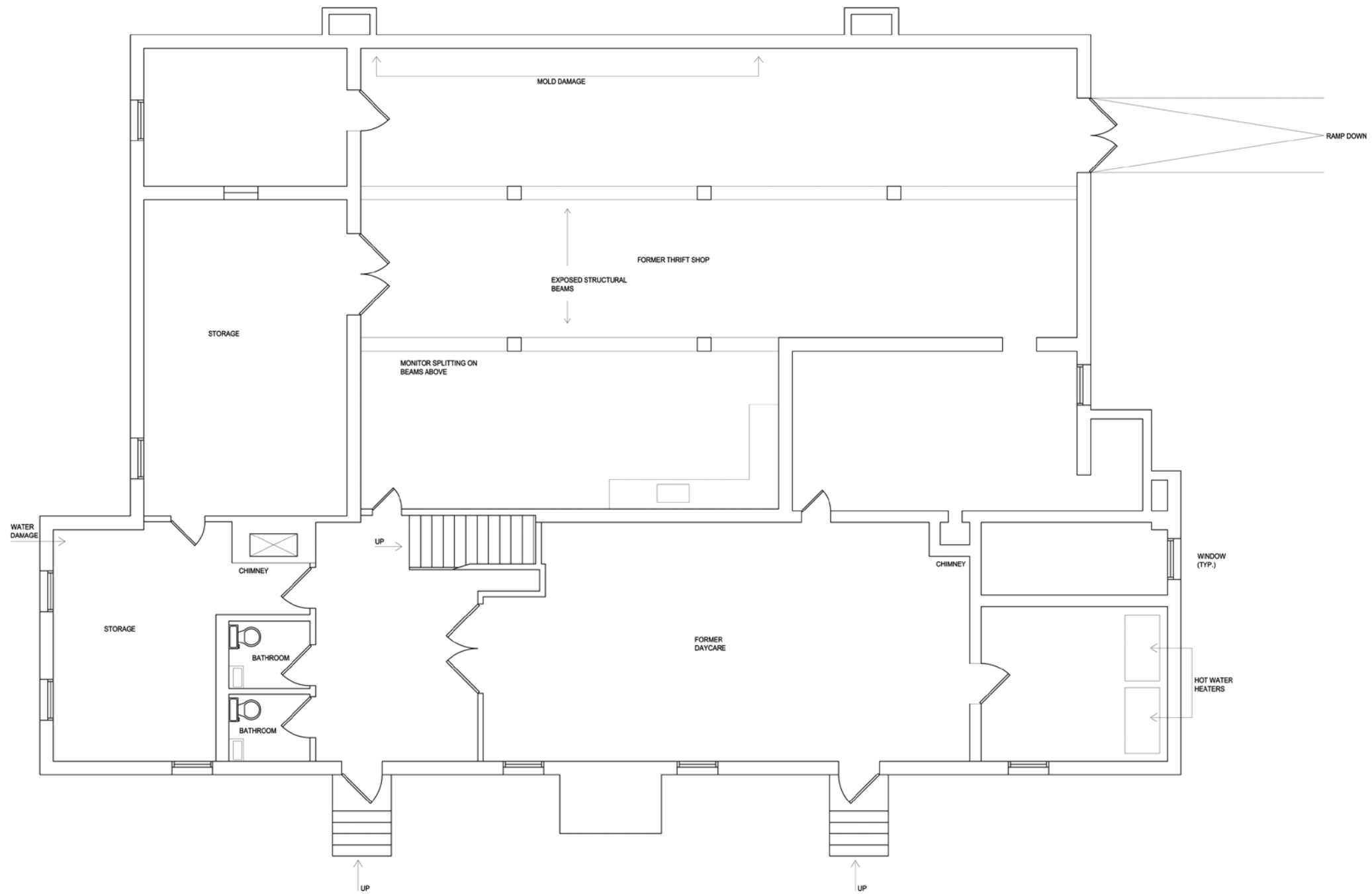
Security System: Missing

No known security system is present.

1. Basement pipes need to be rewrapped for insulation.

2. Broken thermostat in the upstairs northern classroom.





Project Number: XXXX

Former St. Mary's
Parish House
Portsmouth, RI

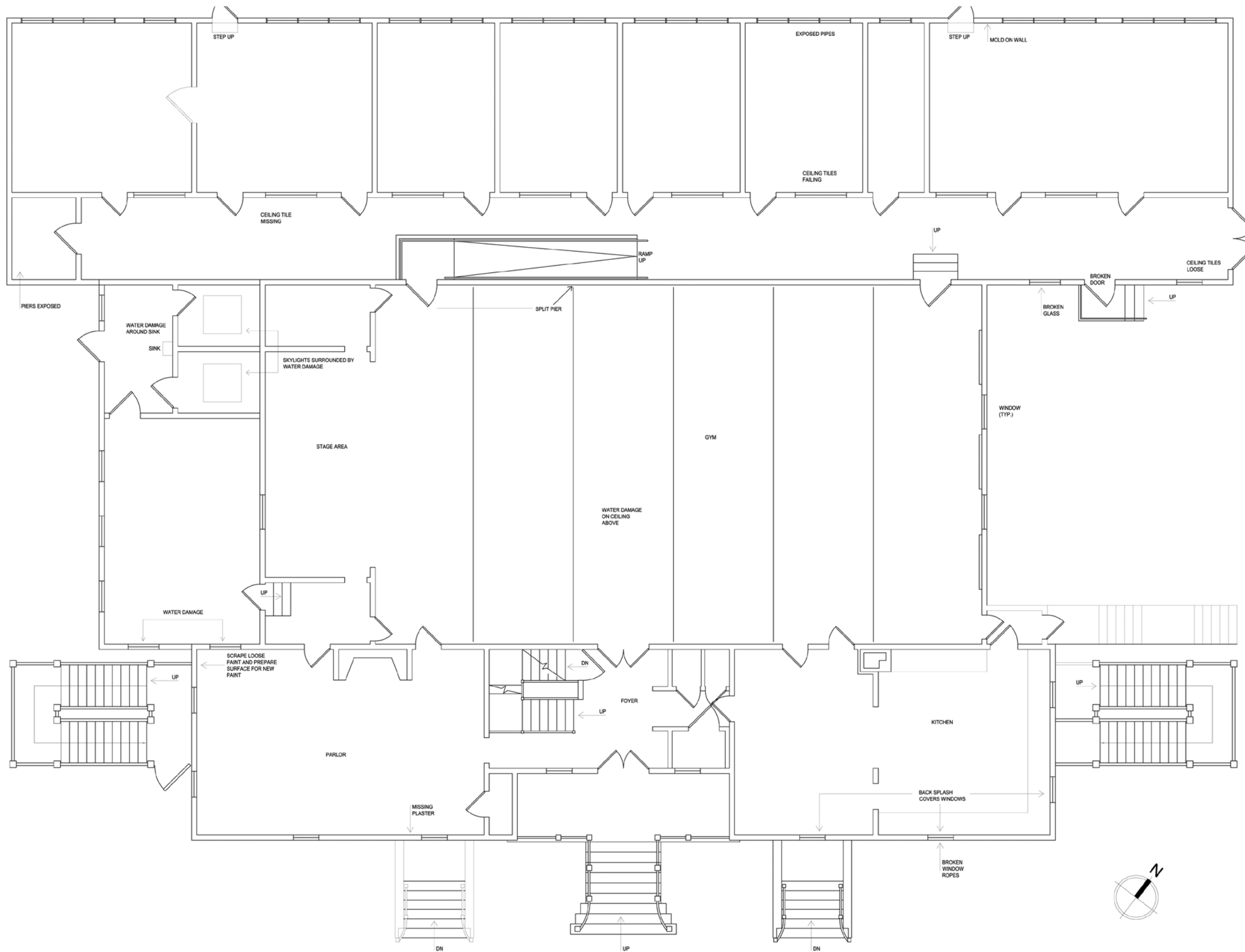
Description: Existing Conditions
Basement Plan

Date issued: 1-4-01

Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"

Sheet: of XX

E 1.0

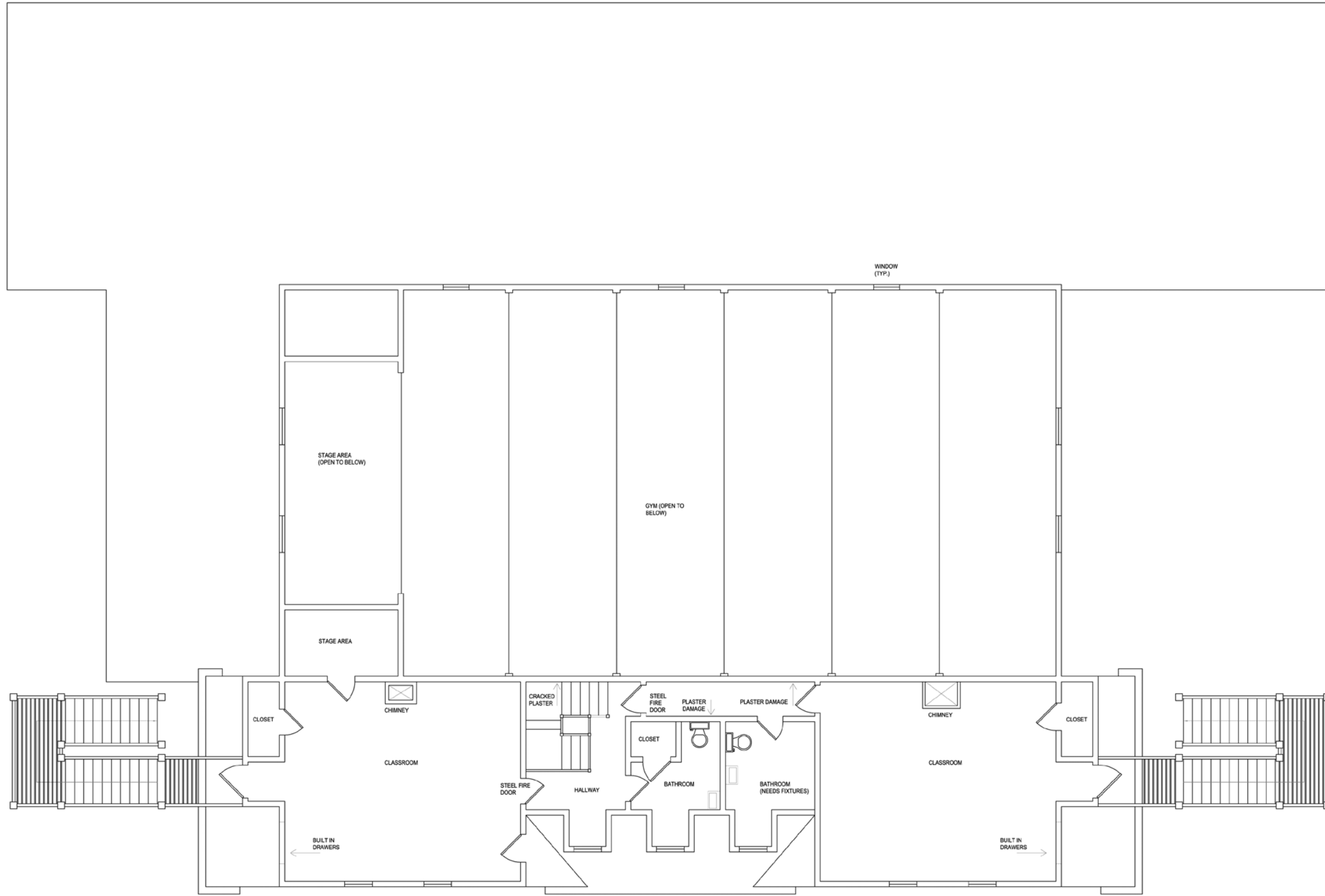


Project Number XXXX

Former St. Mary's
Parish House
Portsmouth, RI

Description: Existing Conditions
First Floor Plan
Date Issued: 1-4-01
Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"
Sheet: of: XX

E 1.1



Project Number XXXX

Former St. Mary's
Parish House
Portsmouth, RI

Description: Existing Conditions
Second Floor Plan

Date Issued: 1-4-01

Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"

Sheet: 1 of 20

E 1.2

Proposed Program

First Floor of Main Building

Currently, the interior gym space is used as a winter farmers market with 14 stalls for vendors. A high-priority goal for stall space would include increasing the amount to 20-24 stalls that measure 10'x12'. This space potentially needs to accommodate 750 to 1,000 people during a four-hour time frame. Desired occupancy for this event space would be 350 people (i.e. a wedding). The amount of people will be “moving” and “circulating” through the space and will not necessarily be static for the time frame. Along with the farmers market, it is important that the gym remain a flexible space for event usage.

Also desired for the first floor of the structure is a visitor center/gift shop space to sell environmental products and promote agricultural features of the Aquidneck Island Trail System and a café that would occupy up to 16 people. A restaurant is desired on site.

Second Floor

The main use desired for the second-floor is office space for Island Commons and/or a restaurant office.

Basement

The basement is currently underutilized, but has some limited kitchen facilities present. Island Commons has expressed a desire for having a teaching kitchen onsite.

Rear Addition/New Addition

Current plans from Newport Collaborative Architects exist for a new addition to the back of the main building. It is possible that a

new addition could contain a continuation of event space, a full-service restaurant and possible living arrangements for a live-in farmer.

Site

Parking for events will need to accommodate the levels of attendance that are anticipated as well as the entrance/exit to the building and



safety concerns. An outside teaching garden is also desired with the ability to accommodate up to 13 people at any given time.

Scope of Work

The objective of this rehabilitation plan is to propose ways in which the former Saint Mary’s Parish House can be physically rehabilitated to accommodate full utilization while retaining its historical integrity and ensuring the building’s long-term survival. Rehabilitation is defined by the National Park Service as “the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.”

Based on the building’s historic significance, integrity and potential eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places, treatment recommendations to address the deficiencies detailed in the Existing Conditions Report are informed by The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation. This is the national standard in the field of preservation for rehabilitating historic structures and provides a guiding framework for rehabilitating structures for a new use while retaining the character-defining features that give the structure its historic character.

This report focuses on the physical rehabilitation of the existing historic structure to allow full utilization to accommodate the most critical elements of program. This report also exam-

The weekly Island Commons farmers market currently uses the gymnasium of the parish house.

ines where new use might be accommodated, depending on how much more space would be required to fully accommodate desired programmatic elements.

Proposed Use and Program

The building will continue to follow its current use as a center for weekly farmers markets. The building will house multiple programmatic functions in order to establish the property as a “Sustainable Agricultural Center.” These new functions, along with the expansion of current functions, will cause an increase in the occupancy of the building, and the facilities will have to be increased accordingly. The programmatic spaces within the building are mainly defined by the existing square footages of spaces. The basement will be used primarily for storage and for the teaching kitchen, which will be located in the former thrift shop. This space would be 2,100 square feet and could accommodate roughly ten people, using the International Building Code standard of 200 sq. ft. per person for a kitchen/preparation area.

The program on the first level will be public space, containing the existing gymnasium, which will be used for the farmers market and flexible event space. The current kitchen will be integrated more thoroughly into the gymnasium space with large swinging doors, described in greater detail under Division 8 of the Treatment Recommendations, so that the kitchen can be used to house four more stalls for the farmers market. This will bring the total up to 18 stalls for this phase of the rehabilitation, with the possibility of more stalls

during Phase II. The new doors to the former kitchen will be able to close to make the space more intimate so it can be used for conference and classroom space as needed. There will also be first-floor space allocated to the new café in the former parlor area, which could seat approximately 33 individuals based on its current size. A dumbwaiter can be installed in the space separating the café from the stage area to allow food to be easily transported up from the kitchen.

It is recommended that the second floor be used for two office spaces: one as an office for a future restaurant and the other as an office space for farmers market employees. Each of these rooms can comfortably accommodate three individuals, according to the standards of the International Building Code. The land to the south of the building within the current fenced area of the playground will be converted into a teaching garden.

We’ve come to the conclusion that the current space cannot accommodate the full range of the programmatic goals of Island Commons. However, it can accommodate all the core programmatic elements. After the existing classroom addition is demolished, a second phase (Phase II) would include the construction of a new addition that would house the remaining program, including a small restaurant, gift shop and visitor center. Floor plan A1.1 suggests where new use might be accommodated and elevation A 2.0 suggests what an appropriate scale

for this new structure might be. A total of approximately 3,000 square feet is needed to house the remaining program. This includes roughly 1,000 sq. ft. for a processing kitchen, 400 sq. ft. (min) for a caretaker’s residence, 450 sq. ft. for a visitors center/gift shop and 750 sq. ft. for a small restaurant.

The following diagram shows the occupancy calculations used for this report. Standard square footage per person was based loosely on the International Building Code.

Occupancy calculations for Phase I of the parish house rehabilitation.

Island Commons - Sustainable Agricultural Center
 Programmatic Goals/Desires/Requirements

R-30 District is a residential zone with minimum lot size of 30,000 sq. ft.

Phase I

Programmatic Spaces	Priority	Desired Occupancy	Calculation	Required SF	Available SF	Allowed Occupancy	Location in Building
Alternative Community Space							
Flexible Event Space	2	350	7 sf/person x 350 people	2450	2560	365	Gym w/ expansion to South
Wedding Banquet		350	15 sf/person		2560	170	Gym w/ expansion to South
Farmer’s Market	1	24+ stalls	8’x10’ sf x 24 stalls	2880	2560	18	Gym w/ expansion to South
Conference Space	3	20+	20 sf/person x 20 people	400	556	27	South Expansion
Classrooms	4	20+	20 sf/person x 20 people	400	556	27	South Expansion
Local Food Hub							
Café	9	16	15 sf/person x 16 people	240	500	33	Parlor
Teaching Kitchen	5	13	200 sf/person x 13 people	2600	2100	10	Basement
Teaching garden	6	13	n/a	n/a	n/a	13	South of building
Offices							
Restaurant Office	7	3	100 sf/person	300	335	3	2nd floor
Farmers Market Office	8	3	100 sf/person	300	335	3	2nd floor
Storage					961		Existing (see note)
Parking/Driveways	10	450	8’6”x18’ stalls x 40		6120	40	
TOTAL SQUARE FOOTAGE				6320	5830		



Proposed program.

Rehabilitation Plan

Division 03: Concrete

Foundation

- **Problem:** The foundation is cast-in-place concrete and is original to the building. The foundation exhibits minor cracks on the south elevation that are probably due to the settling of the structure. There is evidence of earlier attempts to seal these cracks and evidence of moisture infiltration where the school addition meets the main structure in the basement.
- **Solution:** If simply sealing the cracks has failed in the past, then an epoxy-injection system could be a possible solution. Polygem has a Liquid Concrete Repair Kit⁴ that comes with injection ports to inject epoxy crack sealer deep into the crack. It is recommended that an engineer investigate this further.

Front Steps

- **Problem:** The front steps are cast-in-place concrete, most likely the original steps to the building. They have major cracks and evidence of attempts to seal the cracks. They also suffer from a loss of large chunks of concrete, as well

as rust from the railing. The front steps are in poor condition.

- **Solution:** Remove the stairs down to the ground and up to the foundation. Rebuild steps in kind with concrete to visually match the original profile, materiality and character. The installed repair should also be similar in aspects such as compressive strength, permeability and other characteristics.

Basement Walls

- **Problem:** The concrete walls in the basement have some cracks with previous attempts at sealing. The western foundation wall that abuts the classroom addition appears to be saturated with moisture and has a significant amount of mold growth, suggesting an exterior drainage problem.
- **Solution:** Demolish the classroom addition, and install a new French drain below ground adjacent to the western foundation wall before the new addition is constructed. Clean the interior surface of the western foundation wall of mold with material-sensitive solution such as a fungicide like KCT Quat Professional. Install a dehumidifier in the basement to cre-

ate a drier and healthier basement environment. Address the problem for the future with potential moisture barriers. Seal cracks with either a urethane, polyurethane or high-performance silicon sealant that provides a long-service life.

Division 04: Masonry

Brick Chimneys (2)

- **Problem:** The chimneys are in fair condition, showing signs of deterioration. There are loose mortar joints in both chimneys and visible cracks running down the exterior of the north chimney up into the concrete chimney cap.
- **Solution:** On the south chimney, all exterior masonry joints will be tapped with a masonry hammer to determine failing joints. Where loose, mortar will be removed down to a sound layer and repointed in kind with matching mortar and joint profiles. This should be done in accordance with NPS



To repair cracks and loose mortar joints, the north chimney will be removed and rebuilt with salvaged bricks.

Preservation Brief No. 2: Repointing Mortar Joints in Historic Masonry Buildings. The north chimney will be documented and then removed to roughly four inches above the roofline and rebuilt in kind, using bricks salvaged from the previous chimney. The cement chimney cap will also be rebuilt in kind.

CMU Walls (Classroom Addition)

- **Problem:** The concrete block load-bearing walls in the rear addition act as partitions for the classroom spaces. They are in excellent condition with no observable deficiencies.
- **Solution:** Although the walls themselves are in good condition, the addition as a whole is causing drainage problems and water damage to the original structure. Additionally, the classroom structure is of no use or architectural value to Island Commons. The addition will be demolished and replaced by a larger new addition.



First-Floor Fireplace

- **Problem:** The fireplace on the first floor is functional and in good condition. The firebox and flue show signs of use.
- **Solution:** Hand wash the affected area with masonry restoration cleaners.

Division 05: Metals

Railings

- **Problem:** The painted steel railings on the steps to the front porch are in poor condition with a significant amount of rust and paint loss. They appear to have been added c. 1980.
- **Solution:** The current railings will be removed and replaced with wooden railings. New railings will be inserted into concrete with a shield to allow for contraction and expansion and form a barrier between the wood railing and concrete. New railings will be at least 42 inches in height for code, but will otherwise visually match the original railings as documented in the November 1927 photograph of the structure. Newel posts/post caps should also be made to visually match the historic photograph.

1. The classroom addition in the rear of the building will be demolished and replaced with a new addition.

2. Loose and warped wood from the north fire escape will be replaced, repaired and painted.

2



Division 06: Wood, Plastics and Composites

Fire Escapes

- **Problem:** The north and south fire escape are in fair to poor condition. There is significant weathering of the wood, including some rot. Risers are detached from stringers, and treads are detached from risers. The wood posts that make up the majority of the stair structure show significant signs of weathering and deterioration. There is also a large amount of paint cracking on the entire structure.
- **Solution:** The fire escapes will be retained and repaired. The structural integrity of the fire stairs will be examined and any loose or warped wood will be replaced with wood of matching dimensions. After repair, the fire stairs should be painted with an exterior-grade paint to ensure the longevity of the wood. During Phase II of the rehabilitation, the fire escapes will be removed once alternate egress is constructed in the addition.

Shingle Cladding

- **Problem:** Many of the shingles are weathered, some exhibit water damage and biological growth. Many shingles around the entire building are missing.
- **Solution:** Remove and recycle existing wood shingles. Then examine the sheathing beneath to determine if there are any areas of damage. Replace damaged sheathing, if any, and then replace shingle cladding with red cedar shingles of the same dimension and overlap similar to those being removed.

Porch Ceiling

- **Problem:** The paint finish on the underside of the front porch ceiling is in poor condition with large areas peeling and chipping to the point where they will need to be stripped and repainted.
- **Solution:** Deteriorated paint will be gently scraped and sanded to establish an even surface that new paint can adhere to before being repainted.

Cornice

- **Problem:** The exterior of the cornice is slightly deteriorated, showing signs of weathering



and cracking. There is paint loss and chipped paint throughout. Additionally, the cornice contains internal wooden gutters lined with copper. These gutters are in poor condition, with the copper lining deteriorating and the wood beneath rotting. They are undersized for the large roof of the parish house.

- **Solution:** Replace the original wood gutters with wider aluminum gutters with a historic molding profile that approximates the existing profile. Retain the existing molding beneath the gutter where possible. Areas of rot must be

replaced with new wood of the same dimensions and profile. Areas of cornice molding to be retained should be scraped and repainted with an exterior grade paint to protect the wood.

Window and Door Surrounds

- **Problem:** Window surround conditions vary based on location. The window frames protected by the porch are in excellent condition while other frames range from good to fair

condition. Most experience minor deterioration due to weathering. Some window frames have rotted and missing wood.

- **Solution:** Where repairable, windows surrounds will be repaired with epoxy or wood consolidant. Small areas of deterioration can be fixed with Dutchman repairs. Areas of significant rot that cannot be repaired will be replaced with wood of similar dimension with the same molding profile. Window surrounds should be scraped and repainted with exterior-grade paint to protect and preserve the wood.

Rehabilitation to the east elevation will include shingle and gutter replacement, as well as repainting of the porch ceiling and cornice.

Structural Piers

- **Problem:** The structural piers in the gym are splitting vertically, which happens over the lifetime of many species of wood. This seems to be allowing weight to still be transferred downward because this member is in compression. These cracks do not appear to be new and there is no apparent rot or structural instability upon visual inspection from the floor.
- **Solution:** Although the structural integrity of the piers does not appear to be compromised, it is recommended that an engineer examine them on a periodic basis.

Basement Beams

- **Problem:** The reciprocating sawn wooden beams in basement show signs of horizontal cracking and splitting, but seem to be in stable condition. However, there are signs that mold is starting to spread to the beams from the walls due to the damp environment in that part of the basement.
- **Solution:** Similar to the structural piers in the gymnasium, these beams do not appear to be structurally compromised. However, it is recommended that a structural engineer be consulted. Additionally, the thin layer of mold on the beams must be cleaned using gentle chemical means.

Division 07: Thermal and Moisture Protection

Asphalt Roof

- **Problem:** The asphalt roof on the original structure has reached the end of its useful life and exhibits critical deterioration, particularly on the west façade.
- **Solution:** The asphalt roof must be removed and disposed of. It can be replaced with a few options based on the building user's priori-

ties for cost and desire to achieve an historic appearance. According to historic photographs and knowledge of building practices during the time, it can be deduced that the original roof was clad with wood shingles. The roof can be re-clad with modern red cedar shingles to recreate the historic appearance. Another option is that the roof can be clad with new asphalt shingles that approximate the color, shape and size of wood shingles

Black Tar Roof

- **Problem:** The part of this roof on the east façade that is flat has limited access, but it appears to be either EPDM or tar. Based on aerial views on Bing Maps, it appears to be in poor condition.
- **Solution:** The flat portion, which is assumed to be tar or EPDM shall be replaced with new EPDM material to ensure proper drainage.

EPDM Roof

- **Problem:** The flat EPDM roof on the classroom addition seems to be in good condition, showing few signs of age.
- **Solution:** This section of EPDM will remain untouched until this portion of the building is demolished.



The deteriorating asphalt roof needs to be replaced, potentially with red cedar shingles to achieve historic appearance.

Chimney Flashing

- **Problem:** The chimney flashing is in fair condition, showing signs of age and deterioration.
- **Solution:** Replace in-kind with new lead flashing.

Gutters

- **Problem:** The gutters are wooden with what appears to be galvanized steel downspouts. The downspouts flanking the front entry porch have been replaced with a material that ap-

pears to be PVC piping. There are missing and disconnected downspouts on each elevation. The gutters exhibit some signs of rot and have deteriorating copper flashing that no longer protects the wood from the weather. Further, a missing downspout on the north elevation is channelling water directly onto the pipe where the electrical wires for the structure are gathered. These gutters are undersized, in poor condition and are near the end of their useful life. Gutters on the school addition are aluminum with aluminum downspouts and are in good condition, with some dents and debris.

- **Solution:** The severity of deterioration requires replacement of the original wooden gutters with wider and deeper 4" aluminum gutters that will have a matching historic moulding profile built up on the outside. It is not possible to retain the current material and size due to it being undersized for protecting the structure from the amount of water shed from the roof. Original galvanized steel downspouts will be retained and reattached, and matching downspouts will be installed where currently missing.

Division 08: Openings

Front Doors

- **Problem:** The front entry doors are in good condition and are original to the structure. Other entry doors are made of metal and are in good condition, showing slight signs of age (mainly cosmetic through some chipped paint).
- **Solution:** Scrape loose paint off the surface of the front entry doors and prepare surface for new exterior grade paint. All other doors may be retained in their current state.

Windows

- **Problem:** Most windows in the structure are original, configured six-over-six, except for in the gymnasium which is 12-over-12 and 12-over-8. Most windows in the addition are configured as six-over-six and seemingly original to its construction. Several windows are broken. There is significant paint and putty loss on most windows. Wasp nests are also present in several windows in the structure, including in the kitchen and the upstairs classrooms. Two windows, behind the former stage wall, are boarded up. Some window surrounds show signs of rotting. Numerous storm windows are damaged, detaching from the window frame or missing.
- **Solution:** Windows that are too deteriorated to be repaired will be replaced with six-over-six, double-hung, divided-light windows. Deteriorated window sashes will be removed for repair and plywood will be placed in window openings while sashes are being repaired. Repairs will be made according to Preservation Brief No. 9: "The Repair of Historic Wooden Windows." Windows will be re-puttied and re-glazed as needed. Wood elements that are deteriorated beyond the point of repair with epoxy will be documented and then replaced in-kind with wood and matching profiles.



Deteriorated paint will be gently scraped and sanded to establish an even surface that new paint can adhere to before being repainted. All storm windows will be replaced. The windows should be retained as a character-defining feature because repairing historic windows is

more sustainable than replacing them with new windows, and adding new storm windows saves roughly the same amount of energy as double-pane windows.

Skylights

- **Problem:** Skylights in the first-floor bathrooms are causing water damage to the ceiling.
- **Solution:** The skylights may be retained until the classroom addition is demolished.

Interior doors are a mix of original doors and modern ones c. 1980. They are in good condition and will remain as part of the house.

Interior Doors

- **Problem:** Interior doors throughout the structure are in good condition overall. Numerous wood doors throughout the structure are original with original hardware. Other doors have been added or replaced c. 1980 with aluminum fire doors or modern wood doors. All doors are functional, though some doors on the second floor require door stoppers because they are damaging the walls that they open onto. The doors that formerly led to the stage are now floating.
- **Solution:** All interior doors will be retained except for the stage doors, which shall be removed. Door stoppers will be installed upstairs to prevent further damage to the plaster walls.

Doors to Kitchen

- **Problem:** The current gymnasium space is too small to house the growing needs of the Island Commons Farmers Market. There is not an easily accessible space nearby for the use of the market.

- **Solution:** As indicated on floor plan A1.1, a set of large swinging double doors will be added to the wall separating the kitchen from the gymnasium. These doors can be simply framed and will incorporate the wainscoting from the walls of the gymnasium so they blend into the wall when closed. After all countertops and appliances are removed from the kitchen, this will allow easy flow and access between the kitchen and the gymnasium. Further, the doors would open up opposite the primary entrance to the gymnasium, establishing visual connection with those entering the space. This would allow at least four more stalls to be incorporated to the farmers market in an area that is much more connected to the primary space almost immediately.

that hang from the ceiling. There is significant paint loss on the cornice and most window surrounds.

- **Solution:** All painted or formerly painted surfaces on the exterior of the building will be scraped, sanded and painted with new exterior grade paint.

Wooden Floors

- **Problem:** The original wood floors in the gymnasium and upstairs classroom spaces are in good condition. There are a few minor cosmetic issues, including a few small paint splatters on the floors upstairs and slight wear on the finish of the gymnasium floor.
- **Solution:** The wood floors will be cleaned, lightly sanded, buffed and refinished.

Asbestos Tiles

- **Problem:** The asbestos tiles in the classroom addition, kitchen and upstairs bathrooms are in fair condition and show signs of wear and deterioration. The tiles are of no immediate danger to the building users in their current state. However, if they are broken up for removal, they will pose a health risk.
- **Solution:** There are two methods of remediation for asbestos tile. The tiles can be removed

Division 09: Finishes

Exterior Paint Finishes

- **Problem:** Paint throughout the exterior of the structure is in poor condition. Paint on the front entry door is cracked. Paint on the porch ceiling is peeling off in large flakes



1. Original wood floors are in good condition, requiring just a light refinishing.

2. The kitchen, upstairs bathrooms and classroom addition contain asbestos tiles that can be covered with another floor material such as poured concrete.

Plaster Finishes

- **Problem:** Plaster condition varies throughout the structure. The plaster is in generally fair condition throughout the first floor, with some holes, missing plaster and hairline cracks. The plaster textured finish on the walls in the upstairs classrooms and particularly in the stair hall is in poor condition, including cracking, bulging and separation from the walls in some areas.
- **Solution:** The plaster shall be retained and repaired. Holes shall be patched with new plaster that matches the historic material in color and texture. Areas of plaster that are bulging shall be reattached to the lathe using mechanical fasteners or chemical adherents.



Interior Paint Finishes

- **Problem:** Paint is in fair to good condition in most rooms and exhibits some cosmetic flaws such as scuffs and occasional chips. In several areas the condition is more severe, particularly in the fireplace room, which exhibits significant paint failure. Several window architraves throughout the structure also exhibit peeling paint. Furthermore, considering the age of the structure, the presence of lead paint is probable.
- **Solution:** The composition of the existing paint must be tested by a professional to determine if lead is present. Areas of loose or peeling paint must be remediated by professionals in lead removal. Finally, the surfaces will be repainted.

Drop Ceilings

- **Problem:** Drop ceilings in the kitchen and rear addition exhibit staining due to water damage and missing tiles.
- **Solution:** The drop ceilings in the addition may be retained until it this section is demolished. The drop ceiling in the kitchen will be removed, and a new gypsum ceiling will be installed. Before the ceiling is replaced, the source of the water damage will be investigated and remediated to prevent further damage.

Stage Area

- **Problem:** The wood panelling on the walls of the gymnasium is in good condition, despite some loss of paint in a few places.



Some areas exhibit bulging, scratches or deterioration. However, the stage was recently removed, leaving the wood panelling under the former stage unfinished (back wall) and non-existent (side walls).

- **Solution:** See above solution for repainting surfaces. The stage area will be refinished in a way that recognizes the space that the stage formerly occupied. The door architraves will be retained and non-historic doors will be replaced with simple panels to indicate the former location of the doors. Additionally, the unfinished side walls will have panelling that matches the existing vertical panelling installed, but hung horizontally to differentiate it from the original panelling. The new panelling and the existing unpainted panelling on the back wall will be painted the same colour as the door architrave and trim to further preserve the memory of the stage area.

Proposed changes to the stage area.

Light Fixtures

- **Problem:** Fluorescent light fixtures throughout are in fair condition. They are functional, but of poor quality, dirty and outdated.
- **Solution:** All light fixtures in the classroom may be retained until this section is demolished. All light fixtures in the main structure shall be removed and disposed of and replaced with new fixtures that respect the historic character of the building.

Division 11: Equipment

Exhaust Fan

- **Problem:** A fan from the gymnasium to the outside, blowing warm air from the area on hot days, is in fair condition. However, it may be problematic during the winter months when it allows the interior to be exposed to the cold temperatures outside.
- **Solution:** The fan shall be removed and disposed of, as it will become obsolete with the installation of the new air conditioning system. The window that is occupied by this fan shall be restored to its original appearance.

Division 14: Conveying Equipment

Elevator (non-existent)

- **Problem:** There is no elevator, chair lift or other means of conveying disabled persons to the upper floors. However, the first floor and basement are both handicap-accessible.
- **Solution:** An elevator will be incorporated as part of the new rear addition to be designed for Phase II.

Division 21: Fire Suppression

- **Problem:** Fire alarms are present but the condition was not tested by the team. Sprinklers are not present in either the original parish house or the school addition.
- **Solution:** Sprinklers must be installed throughout the building to meet current fire code.

Division 22: Plumbing

Septic Tank

- **Problem:** Currently there is no septic tank installed on the property. All of the waste is disbursed into a leech field.
- **Solution:** A septic tank must be installed on the property to accommodate the desired occupancy of the building.

Bathroom Fixtures

- **Problem:** Bathroom conditions on the first and second floors are functional but are showing signs of age and deterioration. They will not be of sufficient size for the desired new program of the building.



- **Solution:** Bathroom fixtures on the first and second floor of the original structure will be replaced with updated fixtures. Bathroom fixtures in the school addition will remain as-is until demolition. Additional bathrooms will be incorporated in the design of the new addition to accommodate the desired occupancy of the building.

Bathroom fixtures need to be updated and additional bathrooms built to accommodate increased occupancy.

Division 23: Heating Ventilating and Air Conditioning

Heating Pipes

- **Problem:** There are no visible issues with the pipes themselves, however, the pipes in the basement need rewiring as the insulation is significantly deteriorated in most places.
- **Solution:** Remove existing deteriorated insulation. Clean pipes using a mild cleanser to remove dirt and grease. Rewrap the pipes with new insulation (modern practices can be used considering the heating pipes are not considered character-defining).

Radiators

- **Problem:** The cast iron radiators throughout building are in good condition. The only observable issue is some minor paint chipping on several radiators, though some have more chipped paint than others.



- **Solution:** Loose paint may be scraped and removed. In the case of lead paint, this must be carried out by a professional. The surfaces shall be repainted.

Thermostat

- **Problem:** A thermostat in the upstairs classroom (northern classroom) is broken.
- **Solution:** Replace the broken thermostat.

Air Conditioning (non-existent)

- **Problem:** There is no air conditioning system in the building, which has not posed any problems to its current use. However, Island Commons desires to rent the space for events, and this will require an air conditioning system.
- **Solution:** Install a minimally invasive ductless system with wall-mounted air handler units. Central heating and air conditioning may be installed in a future rear addition.

Division 26: Electrical

Switches

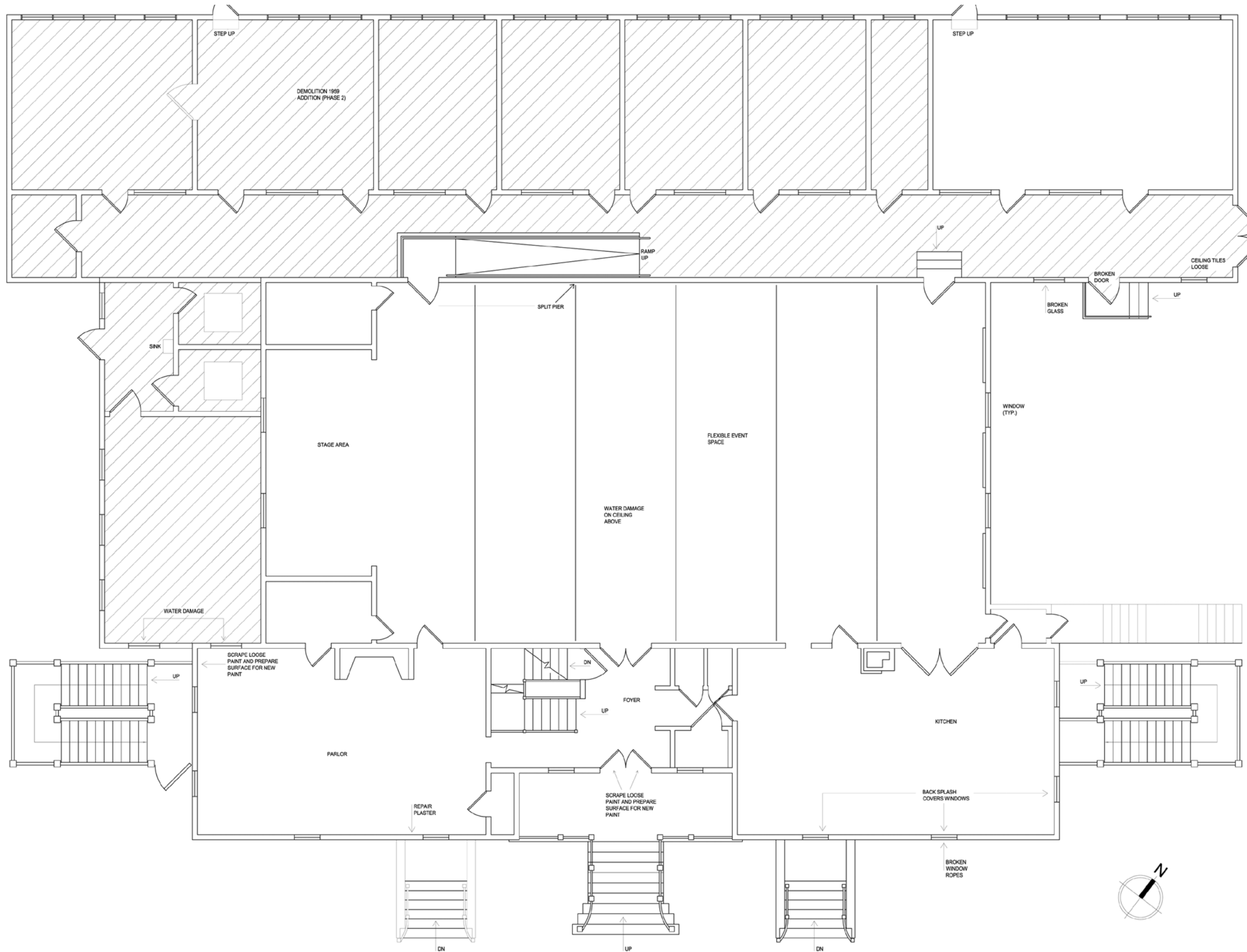
- **Problem:** All light switches work and no visible deficiencies are observed with the electrical system, as far as operating the lights can show. Some original switches are intact; others are replaced.
- **Solution:** New switches may be retained. The wiring behind the historic switches must be examined to determine if replacement is necessary.

Division 28: Electronic Safety and Security

- **Problem:** No known security system is present.
- **Solution:** It is advised that an electronic security system be installed to protect the building and its contents.



1. The cast iron radiators are in good condition, though some require minor scraping and repainting.
2. An historic light switch plate in one of the classrooms. Electrical wiring behind it needs to be examined.



Project NumberXXXX

Former St. Mary's
Parish House
Portsmouth, RI

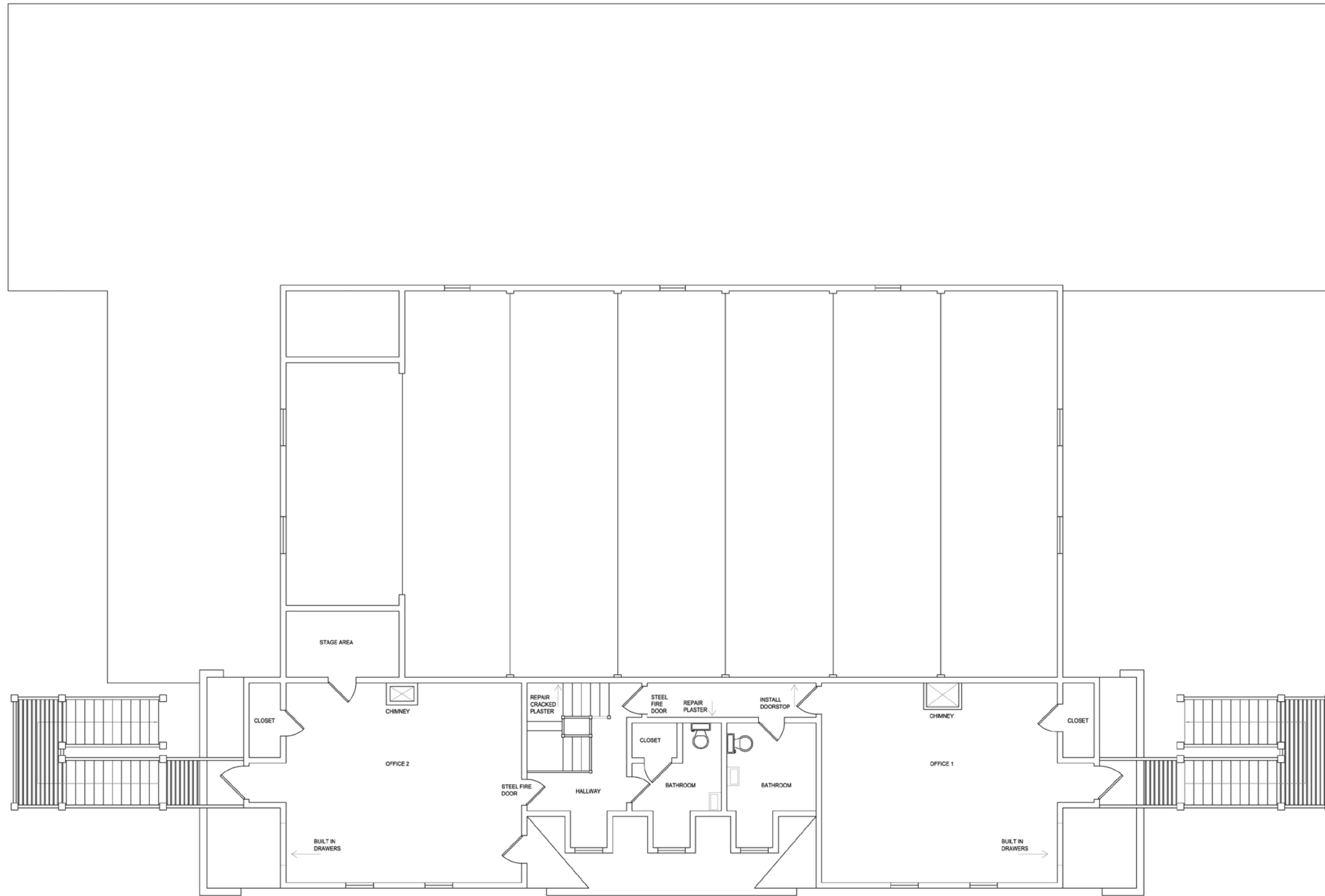
Description: First Floor Plan

Date Issued: 1-4-01

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Project NumberXXXX

Former St. Mary's
Parish House
Portsmouth, RI

Description: Second Floor Plan

Date Issued: 1-4-01

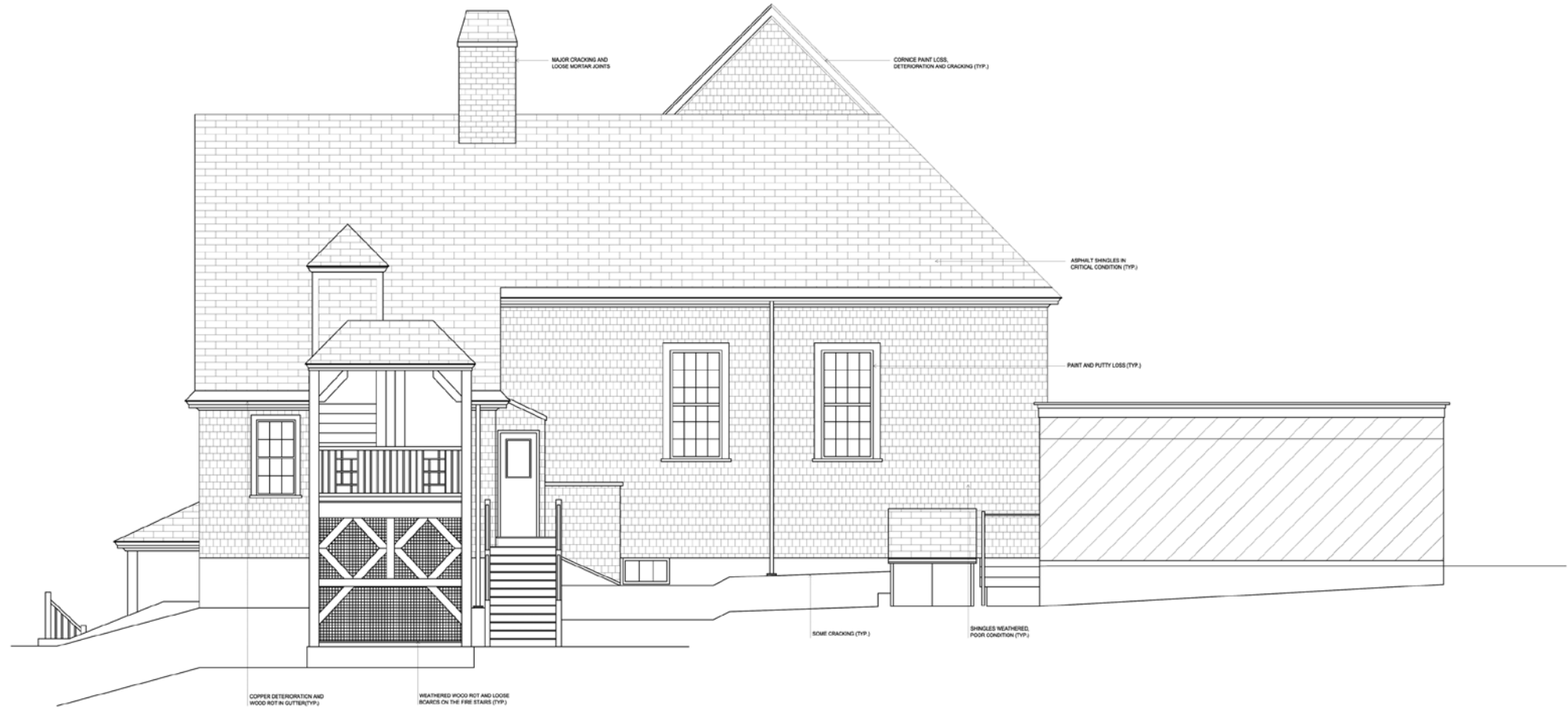
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



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	SHINGLES
	BRICK
	TO BE DEMOLISHED



Project NumberXXXX

Former St. Mary's
Parish House
Portsmouth, RI

Description: North Elevation

Date issued: 1-4-01

Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"

Sheet: of: XX

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	TO BE DEMOLISHED



Project NumberXXXX

Former St. Mary's Parish House
Portsmouth, RI

Description: East Elevation

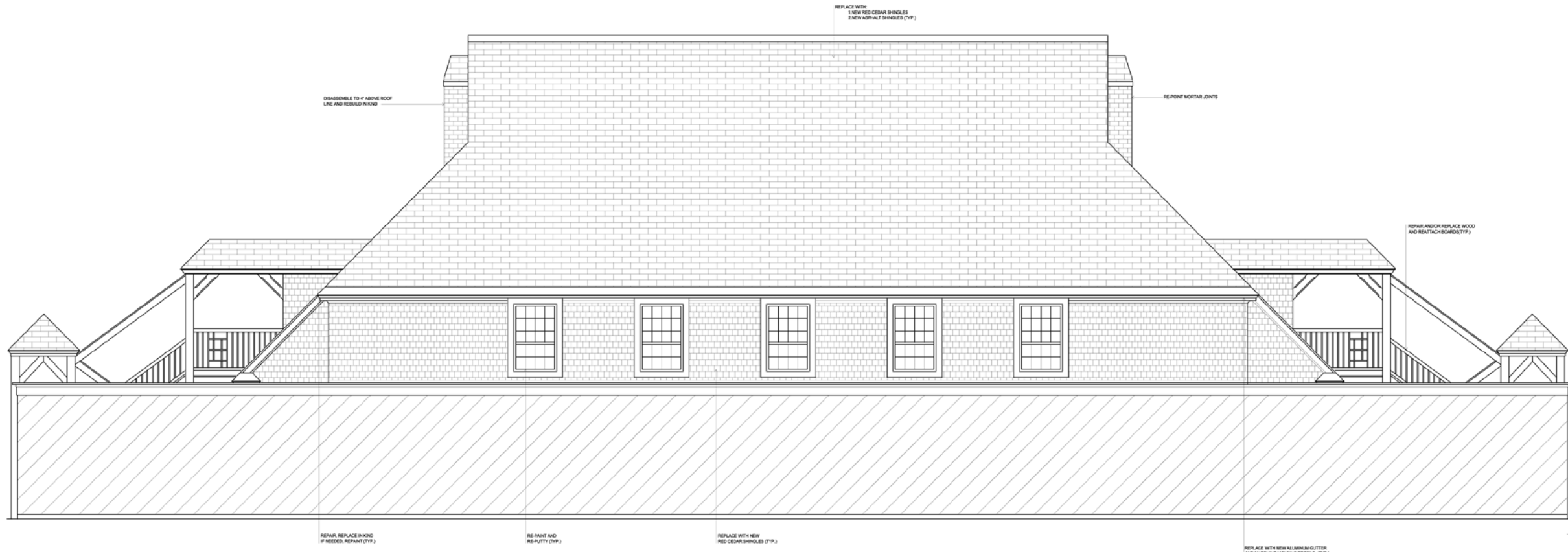
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



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	SHINGLES
	BRICK
	TO BE DEMOLISHED



Project Number XXXX

Former St. Mary's
Parish House
Portsmouth, RI

Description: West Elevation

Date Issued: 1-4-01

Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"

Sheet: of XX

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Conclusion

The rehabilitation of this property should be completed in two phases.

Phase I

Retain the 1959 addition for the extra space and bathrooms it provides; however, do not invest money restoring it. Rehabilitate the interiors of the old parish house (add kitchen, expand area for stalls, add teaching kitchen, add café, add office space upstairs) so that the current building can be fully utilized with a mix of the most important programmatic activities identified by Island Commons. The priorities of this rehabilitation should focus on the most urgent issues identified in the Existing Conditions report, which affect both the use and longevity of the structure: the failing asphalt roof, the windows, the shingle siding, the interior finishes, code issues, moisture in the basement and the interior layout.

Phase II

When sufficient funds have become available, the 1959 classroom addition should be demolished and replaced with a compatible new addition on the west elevation of the structure to meet the other stated programmatic desires.

The original structure does not have adequate space for the programming requirements of Island Commons. As a result, a new structure must be

added to the rear of the building. The new addition should be designed in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation numbers 9 and 10:

“9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.”

10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.”

As stated above, the addition should not harm any historic materials or character-defining features. To avoid this, the addition should be minimally attached to the building, so as to preserve as much of the original structure as possible. The addition may be attached to the original structure through hyphens and corridors. This will also ensure that the addition is reversible in the future.

The large windows on the western wall of the gymnasium are character-defining features of the building. They also provide a great amount of

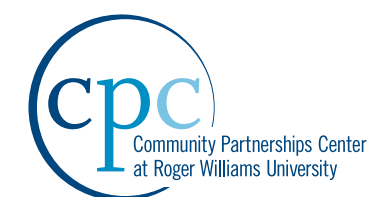
natural light, which can reduce the amount of artificial lighting and electricity used in the space. It is crucial that the new addition does not block these windows. If possible, the addition should be designed to create a courtyard space between the original structure and the new addition. This courtyard space can be covered on the first level with a skylight, so it can be used as additional space for the farmers market.

Furthermore, the addition must be compatible with the original structure in materials, scale and massing. The addition must be built of wood or natural stone, avoiding modern materials such as metal cladding that would give the addition an industrial look. Also, the addition must not be larger than the original structure so as not to dominate it. The massing must be similar to the original structure and contain a pitched roof as opposed to a flat roof.

Most importantly, the addition must respect the historic character of the original structure without replicating it. The addition should be designed in such a way that it is compatible with the structure yet differentiated so as not to create confusion about what is new and what is old. The fenestration pattern should be similar to that of the original structure and the windows should have divided lights.



A team member peeks through one of the floating doors of the removed stage area.



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