

PLANNING BRIEF

Application:

Purpose of Application: To convert an existing 7-plex to a 12-plex by removing all the existing interior and creating a new optimized layout.

Type of Application:

- Redevelopment subject to site plan control,
- Standard Non-Rural (Staff Approval, No Public Consultation)

Legal Description: PT LT 20 & LT 21, PL 30671 , N/S JAMES ST, AS IN CR571874 ; OTTAWA/NEPEAN

Municipal Address: 157 and 159 James St, Ottawa, ON

Zoning: R4UD(478)

Summary:

The subject property is an existing multi-unit residential (MUR) building in Centre Town and is in an area where there is a very high density of MURs. This particular street has a large number of MURs and some single family homes. The property fronts on James Street between Bay St and Lyon St. The site has ready access to pedestrian, cycling, transit and automobile services.

The existing building was bought by the current owners with 7 pre-existing units. The city compliance report identifies it as a legal 7-plex. The existing interior and infrastructure is extremely dated with the last known renovation done circa 1920s and thus the existing interior cannot be effectively reused. The intent of this application is to create a 12-plex in compliance with city and associated provincial requirements by completely removing the existing interior and laying it out for 12 units.

Though the property is not in a heritage overlay, as has been done by the applicant's other properties in the city, they like to preserve and augment the existing architectural and design features of the building rather than replace it. This sometimes comes with compromises to be made to achieve this. As part of the augmentation process, the east side forward protrusion (porches and top floor enclosure) will have its roof line adjusted to make it more aesthetically appealing. At the same time, a similar forward protrusion will be added to the west side of the building to add symmetry and additional amenities for tenants.

Landscaping will involve an elaborate front yard design which will accomplish both an improved streetscape and prevent tenants from using the front yard as parking. Rear and side yard designs will focus on amenity space creating a positive tenant experience while also dealing with practical elements such as use of soft scaping to reduce precipitation run off.

Response to City Documents

In designing this project, due consideration was given to both the sunseting Official Plan as well as the New Official Plan (OP) and their respective Secondary Plans for Centretown.

This application strongly supports these plans and in the context of the new OP, contributes to four of the five big moves. Namely:

1. Intensification while preserving the heritage aspect of buildings (big move 1 and 3)
2. Sustainable transportation through the reduction in parking spaces and expansion of bicycle parking (big move 2).
3. Environmental, climate and health resiliency and energy through a number of project initiatives (big move 4).

This project addresses the following key attributes:

- Retaining and expanding rental housing inventory. Through a reconfiguration of the existing building and a modest change expansion of the building envelope, this project can add an additional five rental apartments while preserving the number of one and two-bedroom apartments in the original seven units. Through the reconfiguration of the building, it will be possible to create these units at a lower entry price within the market. This is done by making efficient use of the existing interior space, adding more outdoor amenity space, and expanding the third floor rear portion of the building envelope. This can only be accomplished by completely removing the existing interior and investing in modern structures.
 - New OP: 2.2.1, 2.2.4, 4.2.1, 4.2.2, 4.2.3, 4.2.4
 - New Secondary Plan: 4.4.4 parts (2) and (3)
- Energy and Climate Change. The extensive nature of this renovation, in adding an additional five units, provides an opportunity to completely modernize the interior of the building resulting in significant thermal efficiency. It also provides an opportunity to upgrade various infrastructure components such as power which in turn enables the use of heat pumps for apartment HVAC needs and eliminating carbon sources of heating. Subject to Hydro Ottawa's local capacity on James street, it is the intent to add charging stations for electric vehicles. There will be an expansion of bicycle parking and storage as has been accomplished in other properties by the applicant.

Priority will be given to protecting the existing tree canopy and it is believed that this can be achieved though it may require rerouting of power from Hydro Ottawa's transformer. Soft-scaping has been significantly expanded and most parking removed. This will reduce the existing site's run off contribution and help reduce the inner city "thermal heat island" effect.

- New OP: 2.2.3
- New Secondary plan: 4.4.4 objective 6

- Preserving and enhancing the heritage of Centretown. The applicant has a predisposition to preserving and enhancing buildings of heritage value. Some of their other properties have in fact been spot lighted by the heritage committee. Even though this particular 1901 era building does not fall within the heritage overlay district, once rehabilitated, it will become a valuable addition to other fine examples on James street and enhance Centretown's heritage inventory. Further, the front yard will be enhanced through professional landscaping which will accomplish two major design objectives: (a) provide additional beauty to the property and the neighbourhood; (b) reduce the risk of tenants using the front yard for parking. All parking will be at the rear of the property. More detail on all these elements is given later in this document.
 - New OP: 2.2.6, 4.5, 4.6.3, 4.6.4, 4.6.6
 - New Secondary Plan: 4.4.3, 4.4.4 (objectives 1, 2, 3, 5, 7), 4.4.7, 4.4.8

Exception to current zoning:

- R4-UD(478) Front yard setback. Required 4.5m or AVG=5.6m. The current east side front protrusion has a setback of 2.94m and has been in place since at least 1929. This protrusion will be improved aesthetically, and a similar protrusion is proposed for the west side of the building (with the same set back) to provide symmetry to the building. The third floor of this protrusion is enclosed providing additional living space to the apartment on this floor. To keep the front façade symmetric and not remove existing interior space, a similar construct will be done on the proposed new west side protrusion. Though desired, no new enclosures will be created on the second or first floors in an effort to respect the intent of this zoning rule.
- R-UD(478) rear yard setback. Required 9.942m (30%). The existing setback 9.59m (28.9%) and has been in place since at least 1929.
- Part 6, section 161, 16(b)(i)&(ii). 25% of units must have 2 bedrooms if the lot size is larger than 450m². The applicant generally supports the intent of this requirement. The current building has one 2-bedroom unit. The proposal preserves this 2-bedroom unit. To add more presents insurmountable challenges if the intent is to preserve the existing building and its heritage value. The building was originally two semi-detached properties (157 James St and 159 James St) with lot sizes of approximately 287m² and is built of structural brick (not veneer) which significantly limits unit placement. As such, the units are laid out in a quadrant pattern to allow reuse of the existing structures.

The second reason is economic. To fund the significant cost of rehabilitating this building to meet all the other objectives (environment, heritage, adding rental units), a minimum average revenue per unit is required. This project is already at its limit to enable all this work.




The third reason is practical. This immediate neighbourhood already has a large number of larger apartments and single family homes most of which are not in the affordable range. In this specific neighbourhood, based on the applicant's experience, affordable 1-bedroom units are highly sought after.

Context Plan

The below diagram is an excerpt from the new OP schedule H2 and the subject property is marked with a red X.

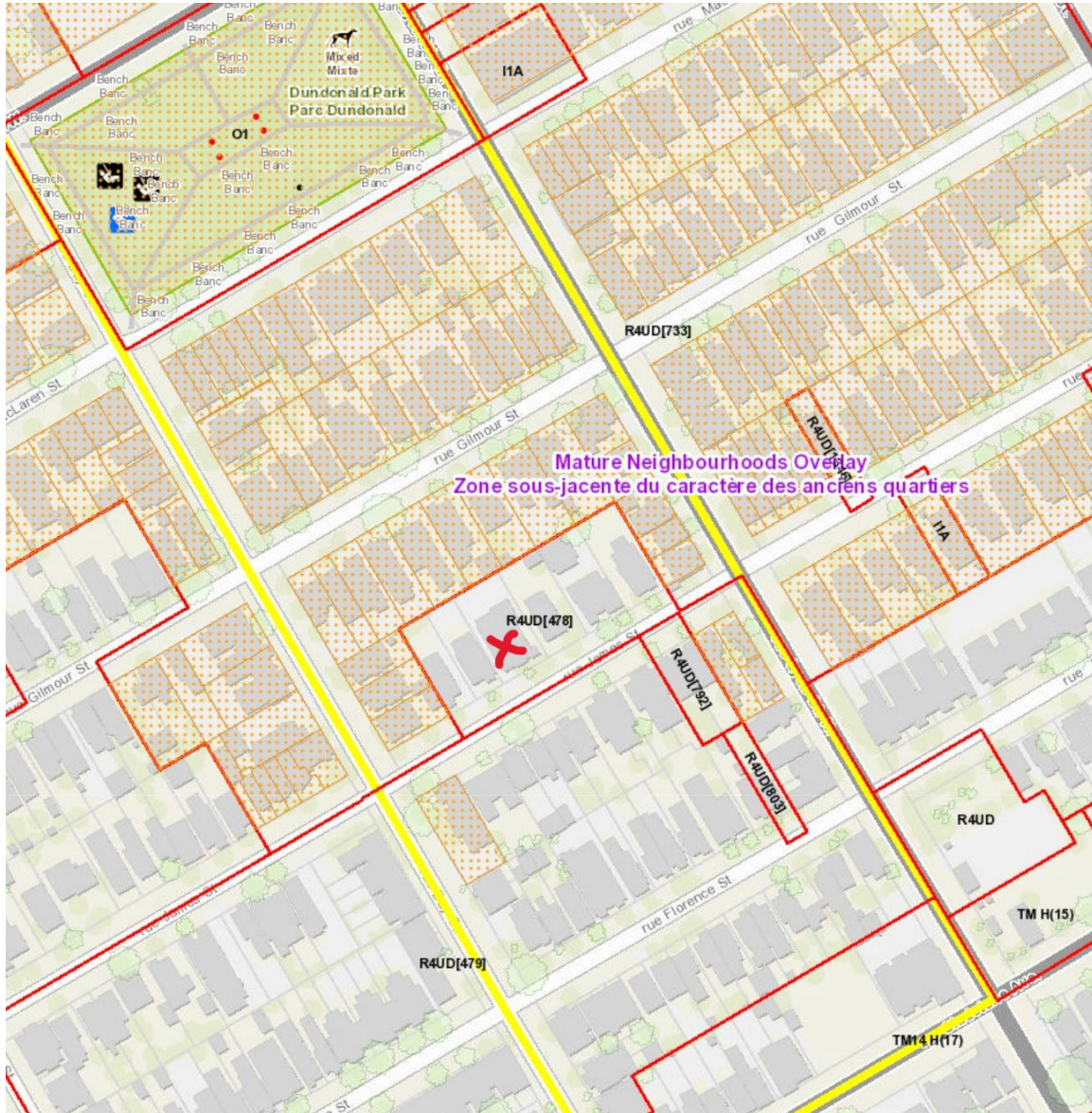


HERITAGE / PATRIMOINE

-  Heritage Building Group 1 or 2 / Bâtiment du patrimoine catégories 1 ou 2
-  Heritage Conservation District / District de conservation du patrimoine
-  Heritage Overlay / Secteur désigné à valeur patrimoniale

The subject property is also close to major bicycle corridors (marked in yellow) and two parks, namely Dundonald (in picture) and McNabb (outside, just west of the frame). It is close to a number of commercial establishments appropriate for the community including stores on Somerset, Gladstone, Bank and Bronson all of which are within a 5 to 10 minute walk from the subject property.

Easy access to the Queensway exists using Kent street and Lyon street.



Existing Subject Property:

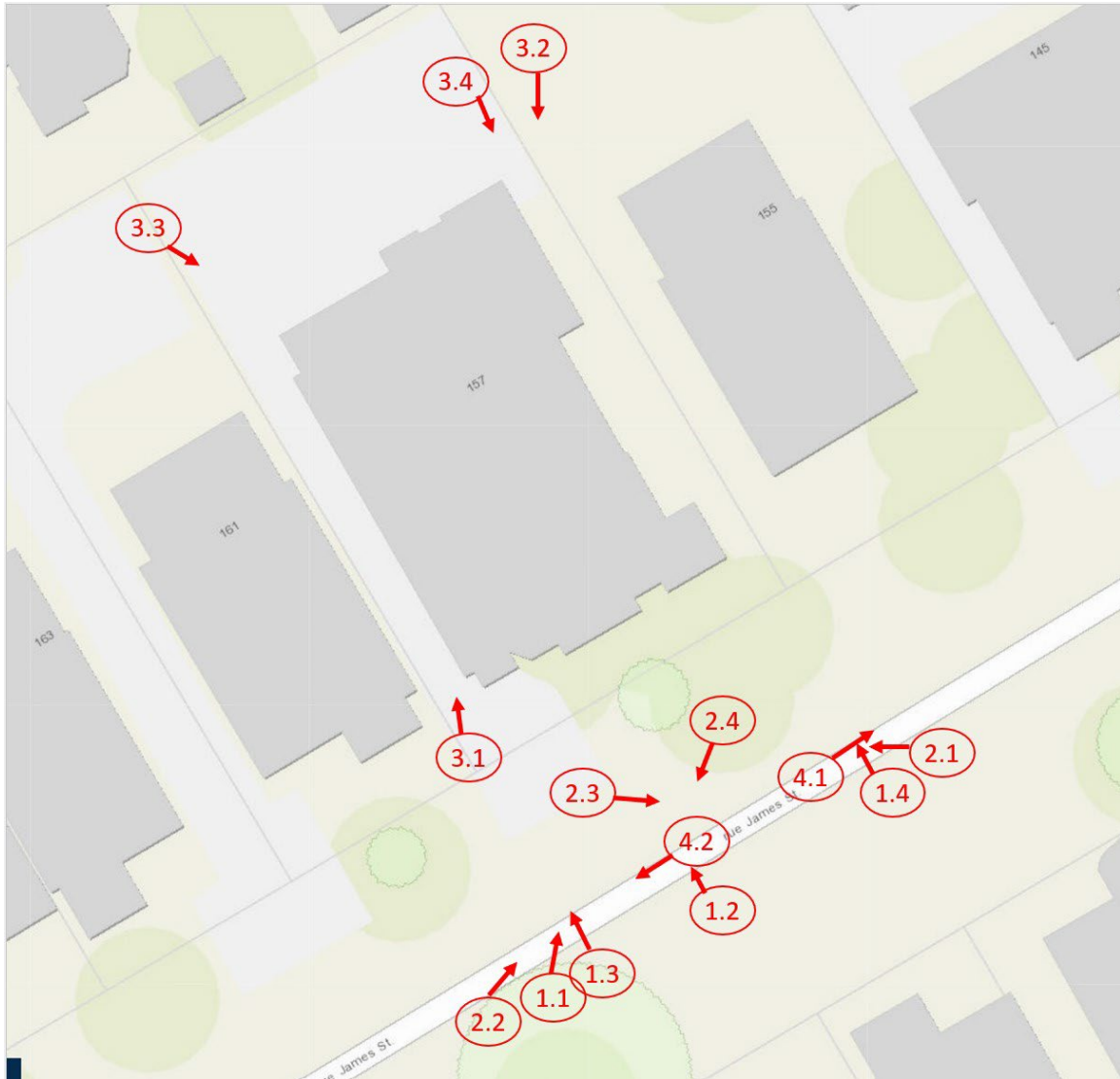
Originally two side by side properties with separate titles and PINs. Merged and converted circa 1920s to seven residential apartments. A front protrusion was added around the same time to the east face. An extension was added to the back of the building (see pictures 3.2, 3.3, and 3.4). Overall condition has been poorly maintained. Various issues exist structurally which will need to be rectified.



The following map and pictures provide context for adjacent properties to assess existing massing and transitions. The nearby buildings are a mix of structures converted to apartment buildings and single family homes.

This proposal maintains the existing massing and transitions between adjacent buildings.

Grading was assessed by Fairhall, Moffatt & Woodland (included with the site plan control submission) and no issues were identified. Most of the development will be within the building envelope.



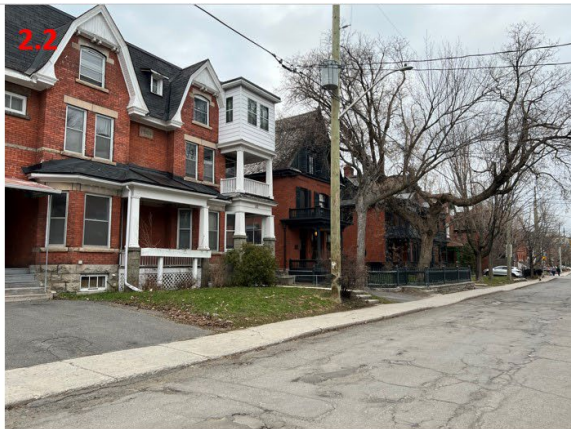


Figure 1 - Nearby Buildings



Public Realm & Heritage

A key element of this restoration project includes significantly enhancing the front façade and publicly viewable landscaping. The following are the highlights for the front façade:

- Aesthetic improvements to the east protrusion by integrating the roof line with the main building.
- Aesthetic improvements to the east protrusion to better integrate with the overall design of the building.
- Adding a protrusion to the west face to provide symmetry
- Adjustment of the dormer rooflines to provide continuity across the design.

- Improve access to the central front door while cleaning up the appearance at ground level.



Figure 2 – Detailed view of front elevation

Significant focus will be put to preserving and enhancing the architectural details of the building and property to conform and accentuate the local neighbourhood. The building is structural brick and has features representative of the turn of the 19th century. In it’s current “as is” form, it detracts from the beauty of the street. Many buildings on this street have been restored including 155 James St (building immediately east of the subject property) and buildings immediately across from the subject property. See also ”Figure 1 - Nearby Buildings”.

The subject property is half a block from The Hollywood Parade:



Figure 3 – The Hollywood Parade

Millwork will be repaired, and details added to enhance the overall historic look of the building. Use of colours to further accentuate the architectural details similar to the following design used by the applicant on a previous project nearby:



Figure 4 – Example of mill work detail and use of colour to accentuate the overall design details

Landscaping and artwork will be added to the front yard both to add visual appeal to the neighbourhood and prevent tenants from being able to use the front yard for parking. It will adopt a design similar to the following one done by the applicant on a previous project nearby:



Figure 5 : Sample landscape design as seen from the street

The detailed landscaping plan is better illustrated by the following diagram:

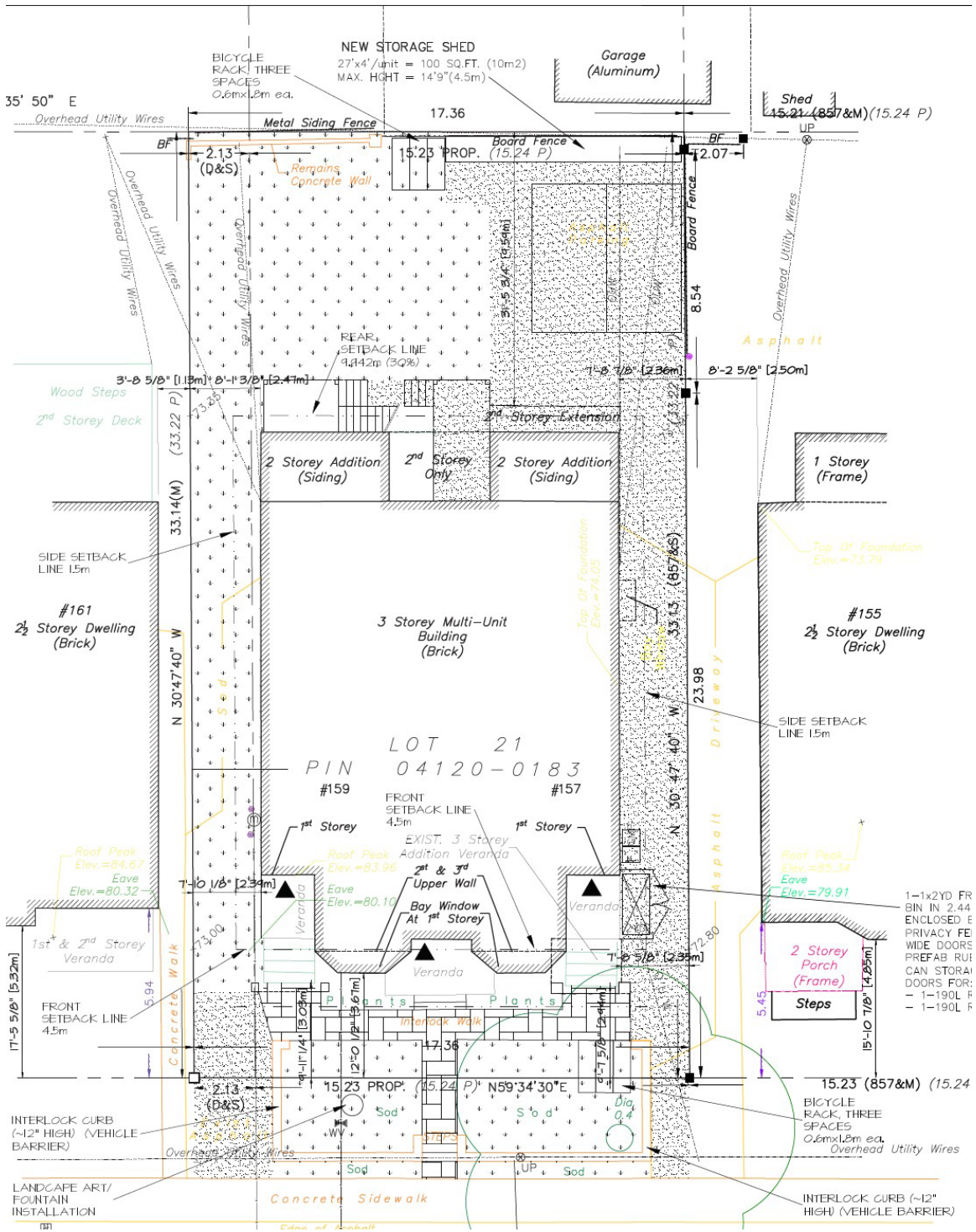


Figure 6 : Landscape plan

Exterior Amenities:

The existing property has limited ground level amenity space but much of the existing yard will be converted from its existing hardscape to softscape and amenity space. Further, the project will add balcony space to most of the units for the benefit of the tenants and enhancing the visual appeal of the front face.

In the redesign, the following improvements will be made:

- Expansion of the soft and hard amenity area in the rear yard for improved tenant enjoyment. Features will include significant landscaping improvements, a common area for socialization and a BBQ area.
- Improved front yard landscaping to improve the aesthetic appeal of the property.
- New bicycle parking spots in excess of the minimum required. At the applicant's other properties in the area, bicycle parking has proven to be important.
- New dedicated garbage and recycling storage including space for each bin type.
- Addition of storage sheds for landlord and tenant use (such as winter bicycle storage)

Parking is still an important requirement for tenants though not as much as it would be in the suburban environment. The applicant supports the city's strategy to maximize tenant amenity space and limit parking. As such, only 2 parking spots will be retained.

Most of the development will occur within the existing building envelope with the following exceptions:

- The third-floor structure will be extended towards the back to create more interior space but will stay within the existing building footprint.
- A new protrusion will be added to the west front face of the building to provide symmetry in the front face architecture as well as adding amenity and living space to the residents.
- The roofline of the current eastern front face protrusion will be modified to make it more visually appealing.

The existing units will be demolished, and new units constructed to provide significantly more appealing accommodations, better use of space, and focus on affordability. The majority of the units will be one-bedroom units with one bachelor and one two bedroom unit. This aligns with current and evolving demands in the area.

As the building has outdated infrastructure, questionable insulation and in some cases structural issues, the existing interior will be completely removed and reengineered.

Detailed designs are available in the accompanying architecture documents but are reproduced in this document for the reader's convenience.



Figure 7 - Front Elevation

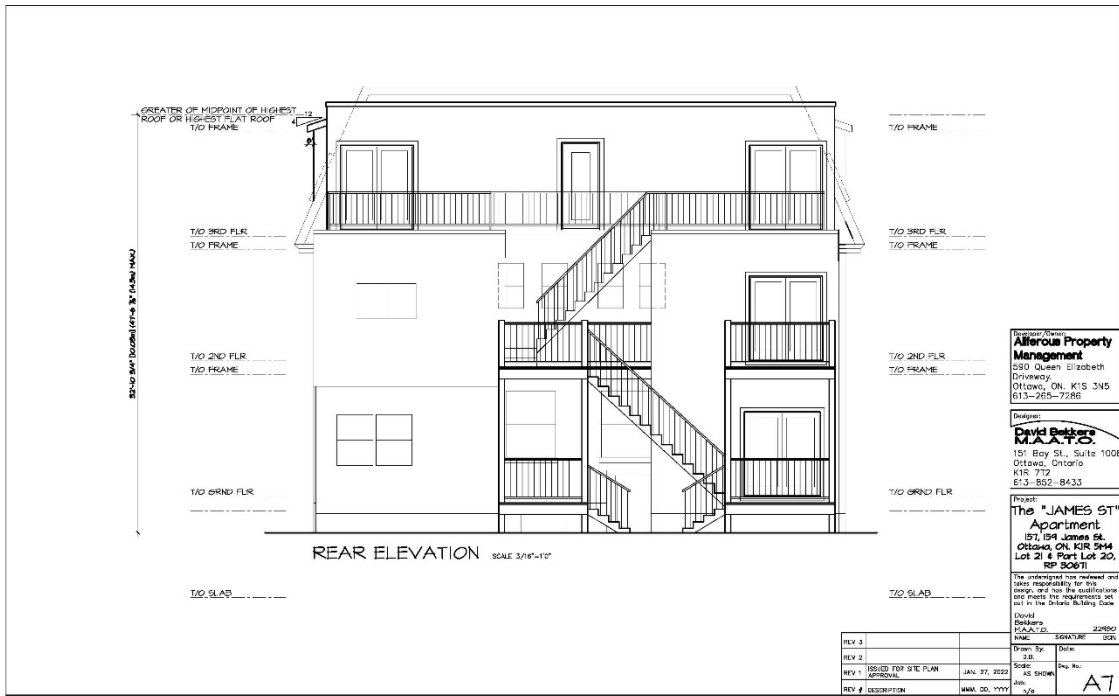


Figure 8 - Rear Elevation



Figure 9 - West Elevation

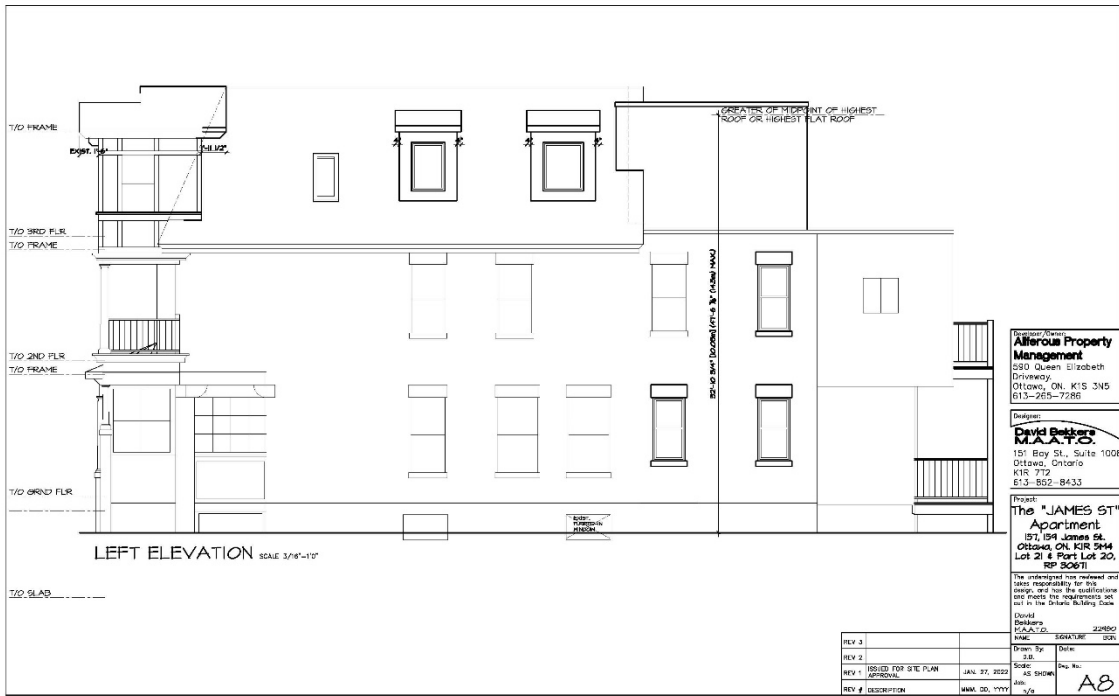
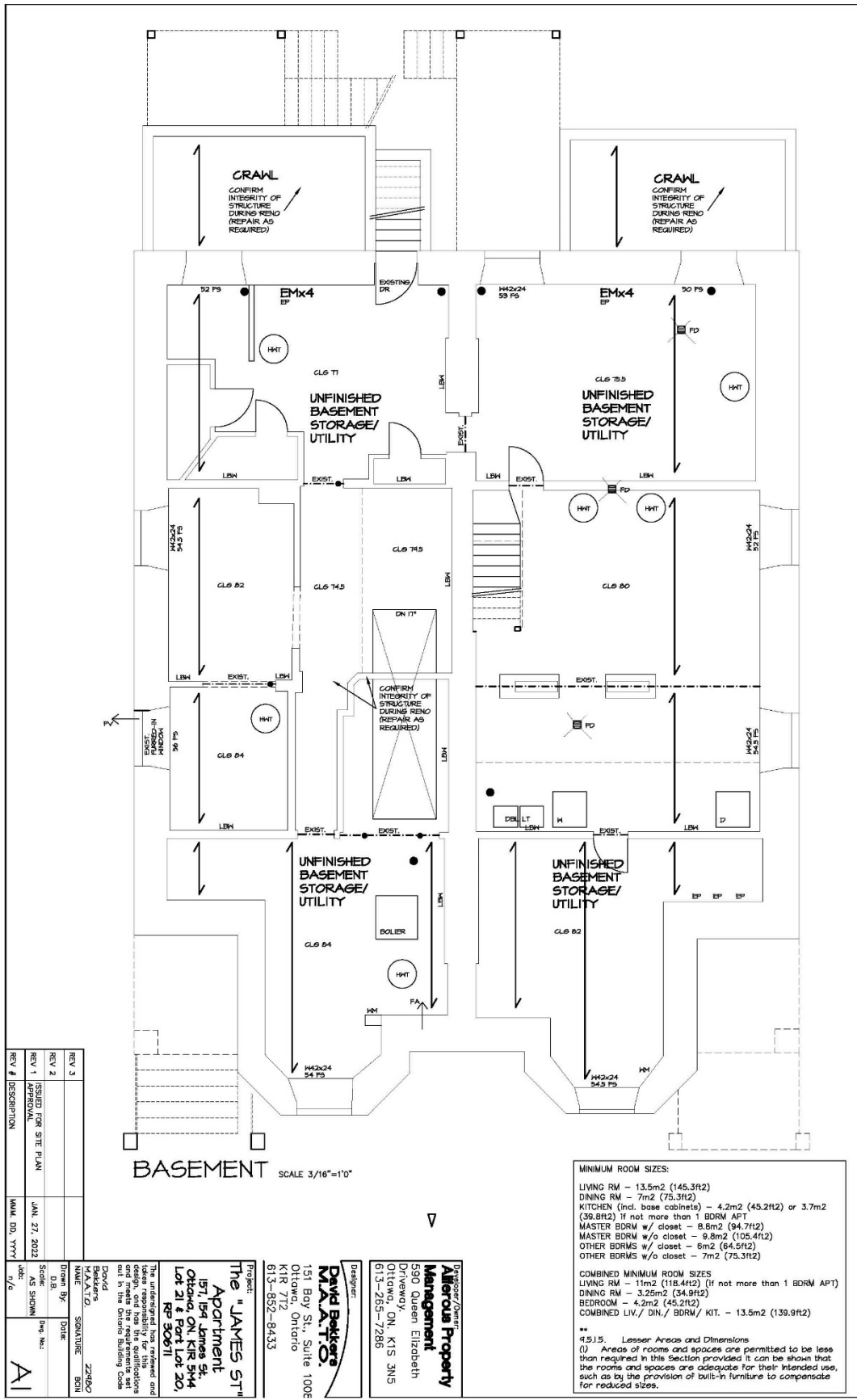


Figure 10 - East Elevation



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|-------|----------------------|---------------|--------------|
| REV 3 | ISSUED FOR SITE PLAN | JAN. 27, 2023 | MM, DD, YYYY |
| REV 2 | AS SHOWN | | |
| REV 1 | APPROVAL | | |
| REV # | DESCRIPTION | | |

BASEMENT SCALE 3/16"=1'0"

MINIMUM ROOM SIZES:

LIVING RM - 13.5m² (145.3ft²)
DINING RM - 7m² (75.3ft²)
KITCHEN (incl. base cabinets) - 4.2m² (45.2ft²) or 3.7m² (39.8ft²) if not more than 1 BDRM APT
MASTER BDRM w/ closet - 8.8m² (94.7ft²)
MASTER BDRM w/o closet - 9.8m² (105.4ft²)
OTHER BDRMS w/ closet - 8m² (84.5ft²)
OTHER BDRMS w/o closet - 7m² (75.3ft²)

COMBINED MINIMUM ROOM SIZES

LIVING RM - 11m² (118.4ft²) (if not more than 1 BDRM APT)
DINING RM - 3.25m² (34.9ft²)
BEDROOM - 4.2m² (45.2ft²)
COMBINED LIV./ DIN./ BDRM/ KIT. - 13.5m² (139.9ft²)

** 4.5.1.5. Lesser Areas and Dimensions
(i) Areas of rooms and spaces are permitted to be less than required in this Section provided it can be shown that the rooms and spaces are adequate for their intended use, such as by the provision of built-in furniture to compensate for reduced sizes.

Designer/Owner:
Meroux Property Management
590 Queen Elizabeth Driveway,
Ottawa, ON, K1S 3N5
613-265-7286

Designer:
David Bekker M.A.S.P.O.
151 Bay St., Suite 1006
Ottawa, Ontario
K1R 7T2
613-852-8433

Project:
The "JAMES ST" Apartment
151 Bay James St.
Ottawa ON, K1R 5M4
Lot 21 & Port Lot 20,
RP 30671

The undersigned has reviewed and taken responsibility for this design and/or construction set out in the Ontario Building Code

Figure 11 – Basement Plan

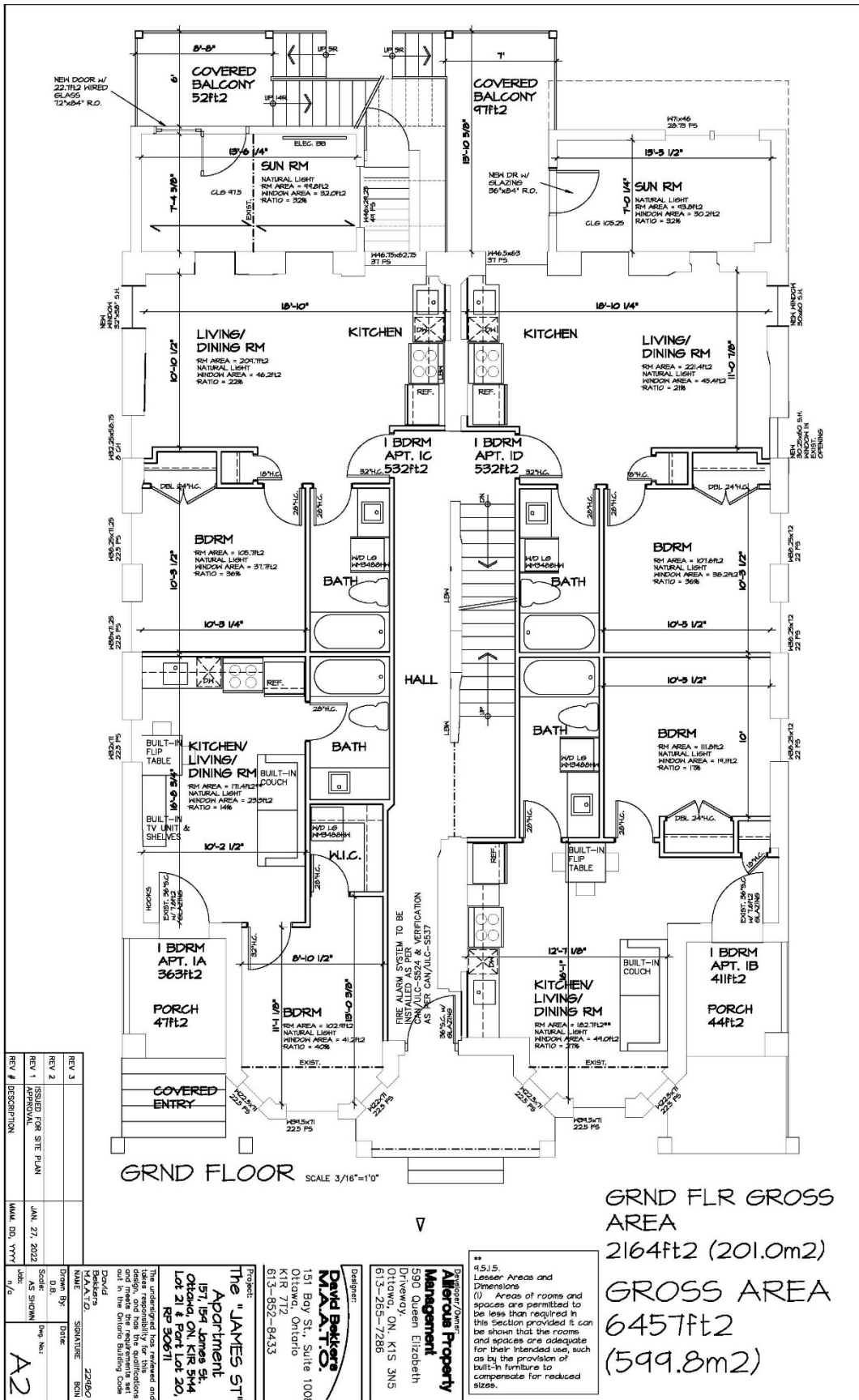


Figure 12 - First Floor Plan

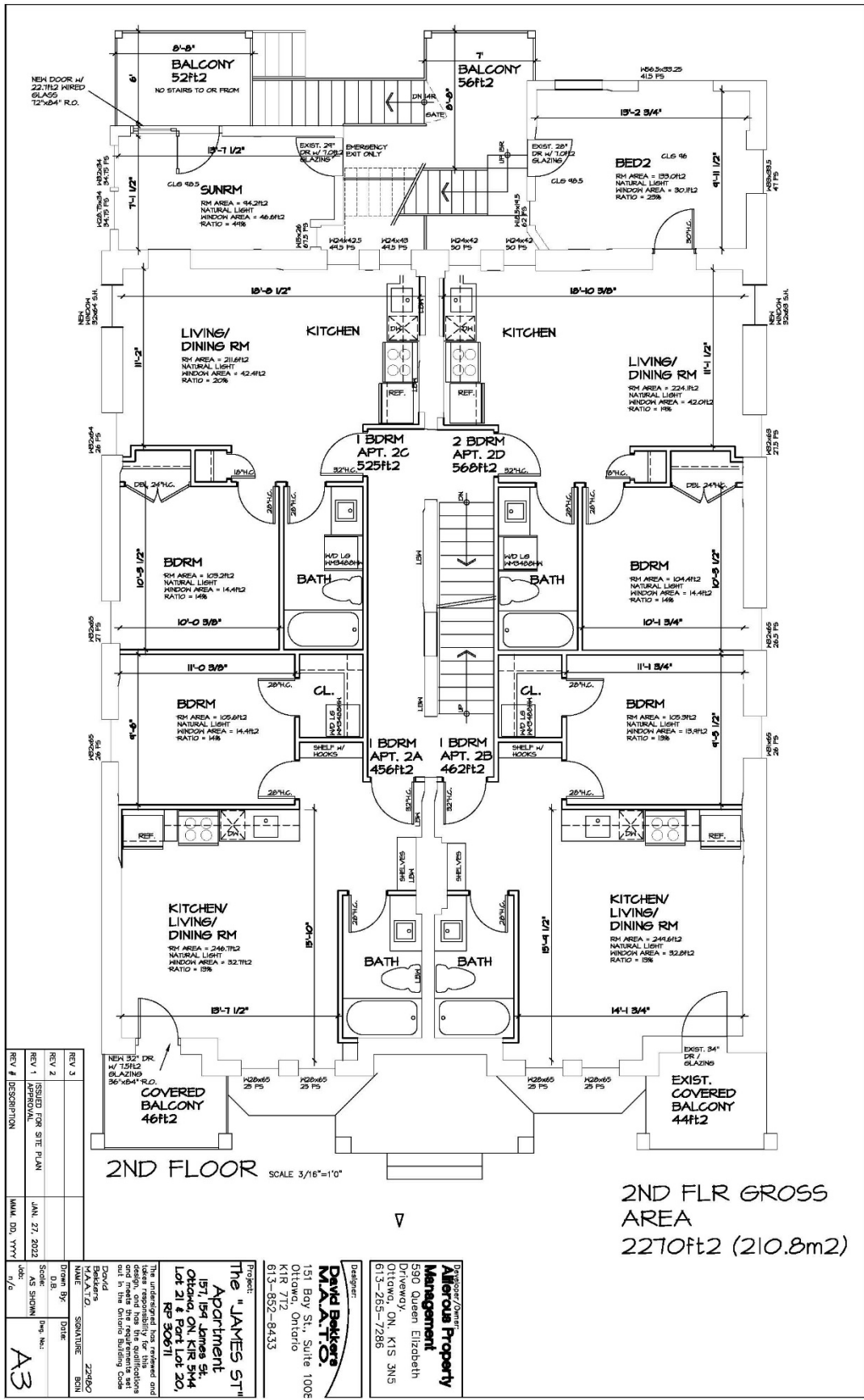


Figure 13 - Second Floor Plan

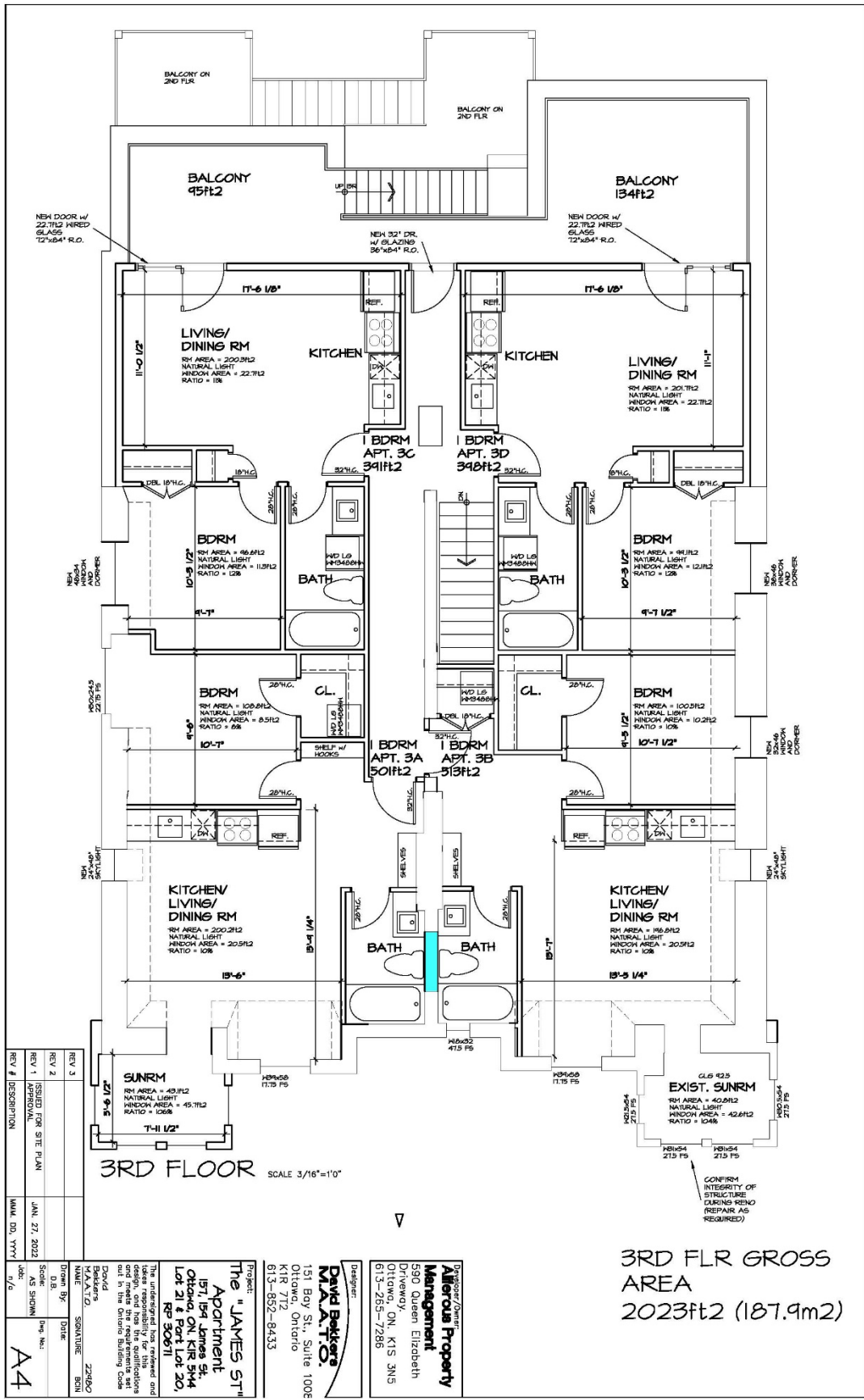


Figure 14 - Third Floor Plan

Summary of Sustainable Elements:

Through the redevelopment of this 122 year old building, the applicant will be preserving and augment an heritage building within Centretown while improving aspects of environmental sustainability. To summarise the key sustainable elements:

- Through the complete removal of the interior, thermal and sound insulation can be brought to modern building code and beyond.
- Upgrade of the power infrastructure to enable the conversion of heating from carbon based fuels to heat pumps.
- Conversion of hard scape to soft scaping to reduce run off to city infrastructure and improve on the city heat island effect. It also significantly augments the tenant amenity area.
- The addition of a significant amount of bicycle parking
- Dedicated space to support all recycling types (black, blue, green)
- If supported by Hydro Ottawa's capacity on James street, charging stations for electric vehicles.

Plan Review with city officials:

Initial plans have been reviewed in their various aspects with the following city planning staff and their feedback has been incorporated into this application:

- Moe Nadeau (building code)
- Jean-Charles Renaud (planning)

Approval of this plan will bring additional and more affordable high quality rental units into the Centretown market meeting the market demand while also retaining and improving a building which will contribute to Centretown's heritage objectives.