

235 W. Travis Street | La Grange, Texas | July 09, 2021

**EXISTING CONDITIONS**

The purpose of this design report is to address a request for assistance submitted by Stacey Norris - Main Street Manager for the "Campbell Building", located at 235 W. Travis Street in La Grange, Texas. The property owner initially requested design assistance for the addition of a roof-top patio, awning, paint and new user friendly doors to access the building.

After discussion with Texas Main Street regarding the extensive scope of work associated with a roof deck, the owner has elected not to pursue this alteration and designs included in this report do not include this feature. Rather, the report addresses roof drainage issues that are also relevant to any facade rehabilitation.

The owner is also planning to apply for State Historic Tax Credits in order to execute the project. While conceptual designs proposed in this report have been discussed with the THC Tax Credit division, it is important to know that this does not guarantee Tax Credit approval nor do they constitute complete documentation for the application process. This single-story (one-part commercial) structure, constructed circa 1890s, is a contributing property to the local and National Register District, Fayette County Courthouse Square Historic District, highlighted in green on the aerial photograph provided. The building features glass block around the front door area and above the canopy as transom windows. There is a building name and date on the upper wall which is visually obstructed by the sign that reads (19-MIKA-47) on the following page. The canopy has drainage issues and there are three scuppers and downspouts that drain off the front of the building. Several electric wires clutter the upper facade.

It is important to note that no site visit of the property by Texas Main Street was conducted and review is limited to photo analysis.

**EXISTING**



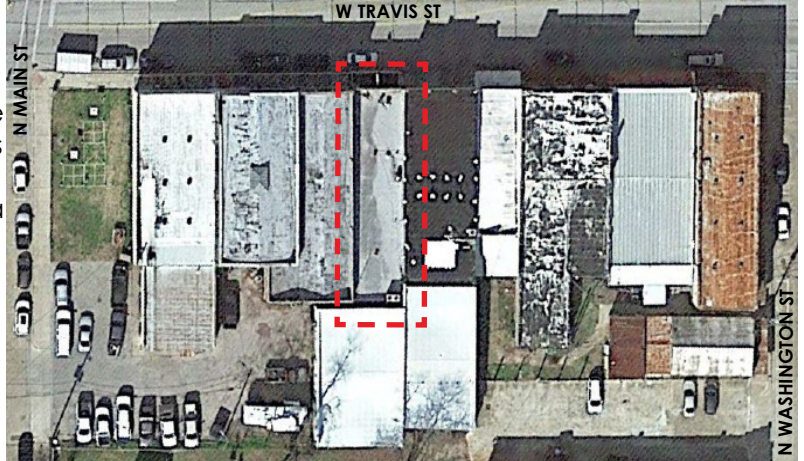
**HISTORIC DISTRICT**



**SQUARE**



**LOCATION**



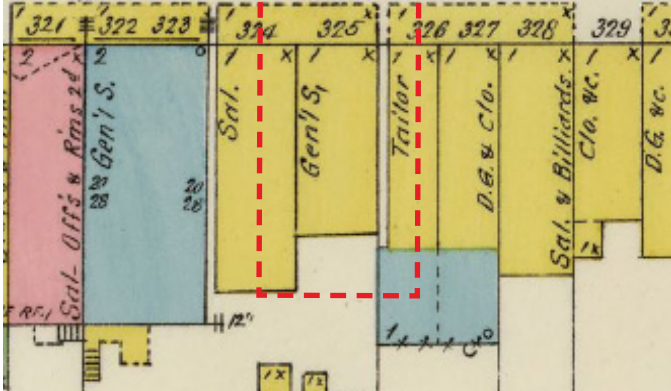
**2017**



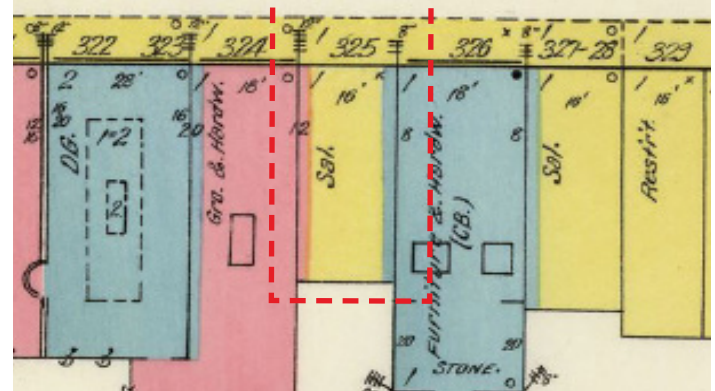
**SANBORN FIRE INSURANCE**

**Sanborn Maps were created from the late 1800s to mid-1900s to determine fire insurance liability in urbanized areas across the United States.** These maps include detailed information about a building including number of stories, openings, and construction materials, unique features, and types of businesses that occupied them. Today, we use these maps to learn more about the history of downtown buildings. The Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps of La Grange 1896 (below images) documents the original building's footprint, a single-story wood structure used as a grocery and general store. 1912 image shows the property maintained a similar footprint and changed use, a saloon. 1921 image shows east party wall as stone and west party wall as brick. The building was used as a confectionery. 1938 image documents the use of the building as a store. Today, the single-story structure appears modified with a building addition at the south end of the property. The exact date of these alterations is unknown. However, there is historical documentation that suggests the majority of these alterations were executed by the 1940s. Refer to the historic photograph below. Photos related to the maps below were not readily available.

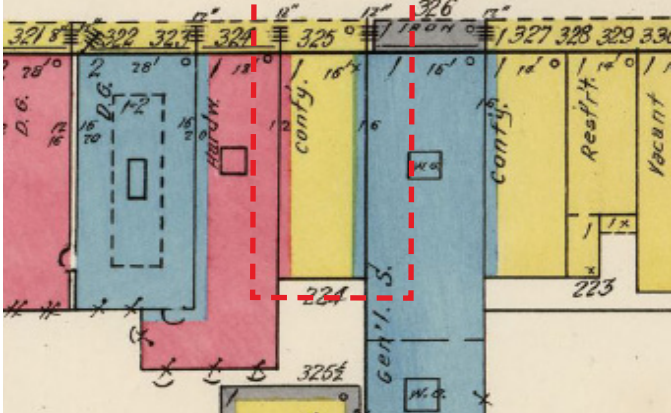
**1896**



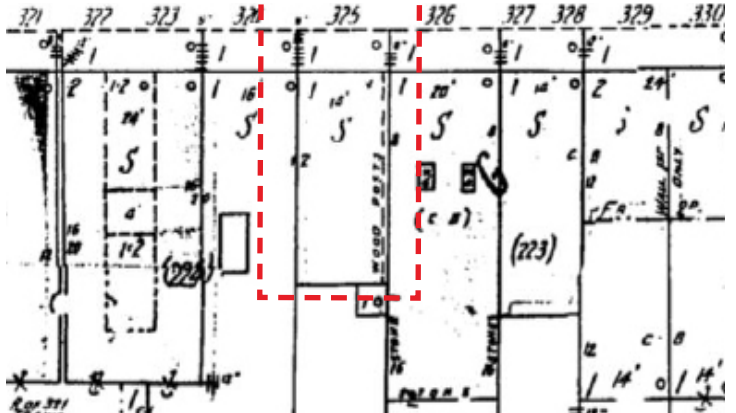
**1912**



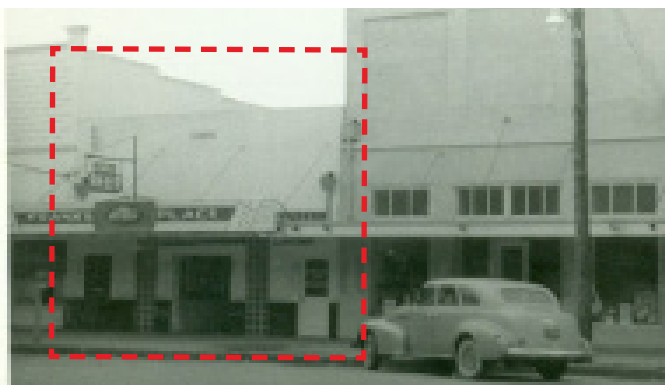
**1921**



**1938**



**1940s**



**EXISTING**



### Preservation Recommendations.

When rehabilitating a historic building, the Secretary of Interior's Standards for the treatment of historic properties should be considered. The [Standards for Rehabilitation](#) are a series of concepts about maintaining, repairing and replacing historic materials, as well as designing new additions or making alterations. They provide a framework and guidance for decision-making about work or changes to a historic property. All changes, additions, and building modifications to the building should comply with the Standards for Rehabilitation, including [the local design guidelines](#).

#### EXISTING FRONT FACADE



1. **Stucco.** The exterior wall appears to be stucco finished on brick according to photos and field observation by the Main Street Manager. The three existing water outlets should be closed, patched and repaired using the same wall material. The wall repairs should match existing wall material and texture. The exterior wall should be cleaned and repainted. Refer to: [Preservation Brief #22 "Preservation and Repair of Historic Stucco"](#)

2. **Paint.** Before painting, the wall should be prepared by cleaning and washing with low-pressure water, supplemented by scrubbing with soft natural bristle brushes. It is important to prepare the surface using low-pressure water to remove dirt and loose paint, then repair any areas that are chipped or cracked with stucco mortar before applying two coats of primer and a finish paint coat. Organic plant material, such as algae, mold and metal stains should be removed with appropriate solvents. Refer to: [Preservation Brief #1 "Assessing Cleaning and Water Repellent Treatments for Historic Buildings"](#). It should be necessary to conceal any repairs and imperfections of the wall by painting the entire front facade of the building.

3. **Parapet walls.** The top of the exterior front and back walls need weather protection. Stucco appears applied over the top of the exposed facade wall. The back wall has a roofing material not adhered to the wall. It could lead to potential damage due to moisture infiltration. In both cases, consider the installation of a metal wall cap & drip edge to protect the top of the wall from water and moisture.

4. **Electrical.** Existing exposed electrical wires at the upper exterior wall are a hazard. Exposed light fixtures and wires should be re-routed and concealed if possible. It is important to consult with a licensed electrician to remove and re-route electrical wires. Any damage to structural and historical features should be avoided or minimized. It is also recommended to consult with local code officials early in the rehabilitation process.

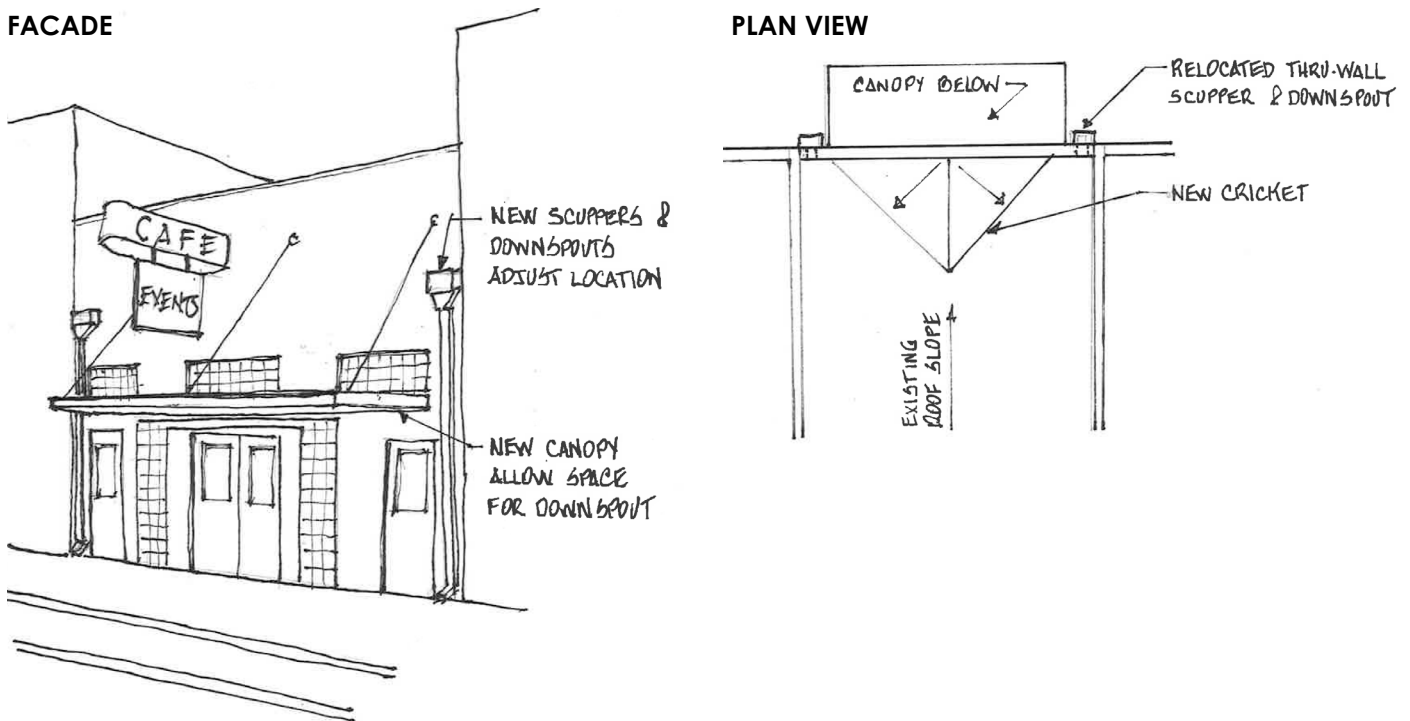
5. **Roof** currently slopes towards the front of the property to the existing collection boxes and downspouts. In the images provided on the following pages, the roof shows deterioration of membrane, which appears to lack adhesion and protection from support elements (parapet cap, drip edge, flashing). (5a)The roof membrane appears not properly installed, facilitating deterioration due to the exposure to wind, water, ultraviolet rays, and debris that could be puncturing the roofing material. (5b)The absence of a wall cap at the facade and back parapet walls increases the possibility for damage due to water infiltration. (5c) There is no flashing at party walls to protect from water. (5d) There appears to be evidence of water ponding in this area. Concerns due to ponding need to be investigated for hidden damage.

Per Secretary of Interiors Standards for Rehabilitation, it is recommended: "Evaluating the overall condition of the roof and roof features to determine whether more than protection and maintenance, such as repairs to roof features, will be necessary". Also per same source, Secretary of Interiors Standards, it is not recommended: "Leaving a leaking roof unprotected so that accelerated deterioration of historic building materials (such as masonry, wood, plaster, paint, and structural members) occurs".

When alterations to the roof are necessary, consider those that are the least invasive. These include changes that are reversible, compatible with existing design elements and materials, and located on sides of the building not seen from public streets or sidewalks. In addition, avoid alterations that may not be historically accurate. Such alterations are not desirable as they often present a false sense of history. Use materials that match the original in size, shape, texture, patterns, color and thickness. Further investigation of the existing roof attic is required in order to determine roofing materials, roof framing, and roof construction techniques. It is important to determine the magnitude of the issues and the cost of repairs, with the assistance of a licensed roofing contractor.

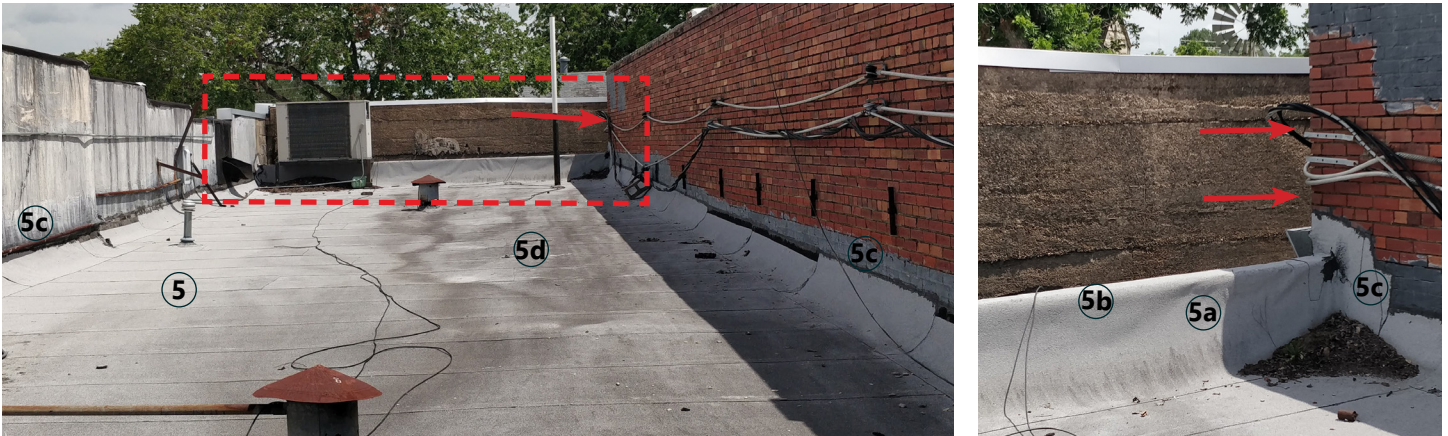
Based on review of existing conditions from photographs there appears to be three roof options that can work with overall design recommendations for facade rehabilitation, signage and paint.

**Roof Option 1.** This option is the least invasive and more cost effective. Maintain exterior drainage at front facade, adjusting the location of scuppers and downspouts and eliminating the drain at the center of the building. In this option the new canopy's width needs to be adjusted to allow space for vertical downspouts.

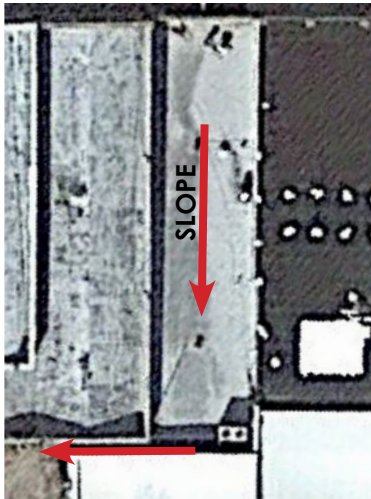


**Roof Option 2.** The owner has expressed an interest in the roof draining to the alley. This option might not be cost effective, further investigation of existing conditions and evaluation of other options is necessary. Redirecting water toward the south will require the design and installation of a new roof drainage system. This will require the reconfiguration of the entire roof slope, connection to collection box, horizontal and vertical downspouts to the ground level at the rear of the property. In order to change the roof slope, it is recommended to carefully install tapered insulation with membrane on top, altering slope of building from front to the back without adding additional roof framing. A new roof membrane would be placed on top of tapered insulation per manufacturers recommendations and roofing best practices. (Red arrows) Existing gaps between buildings at south end of the property suggest a possibility for horizontal downspout. It would require an agreement with adjacent property owners and approval from the city to drain the water this way. It is **not** recommended to build a new roof on top of existing in order to change the slope towards the back.

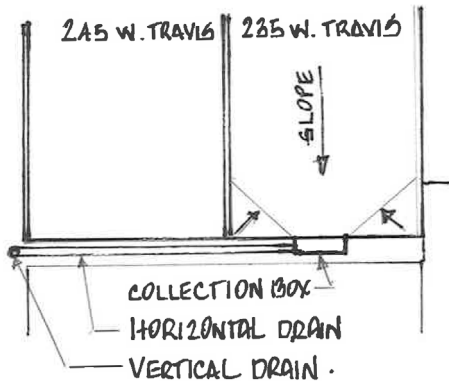
**EXISTING ROOF - BACK**



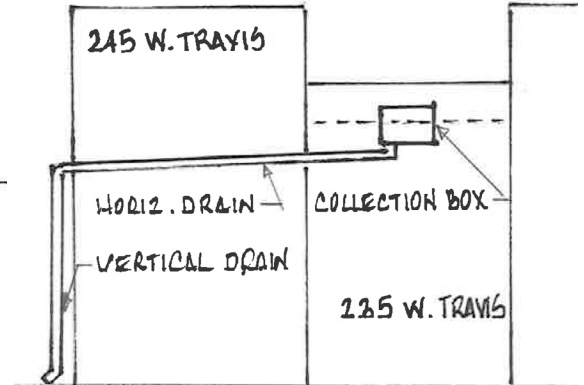
**AERIAL VIEW**



**DRAIN - PLAN VIEW**

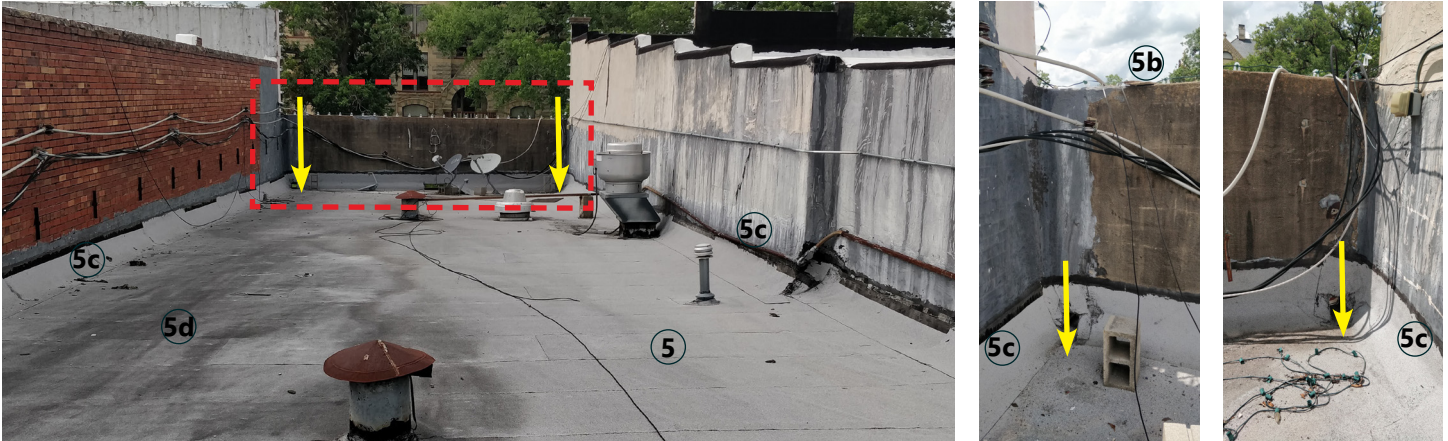


**DRAIN - REAR ELEVATION**

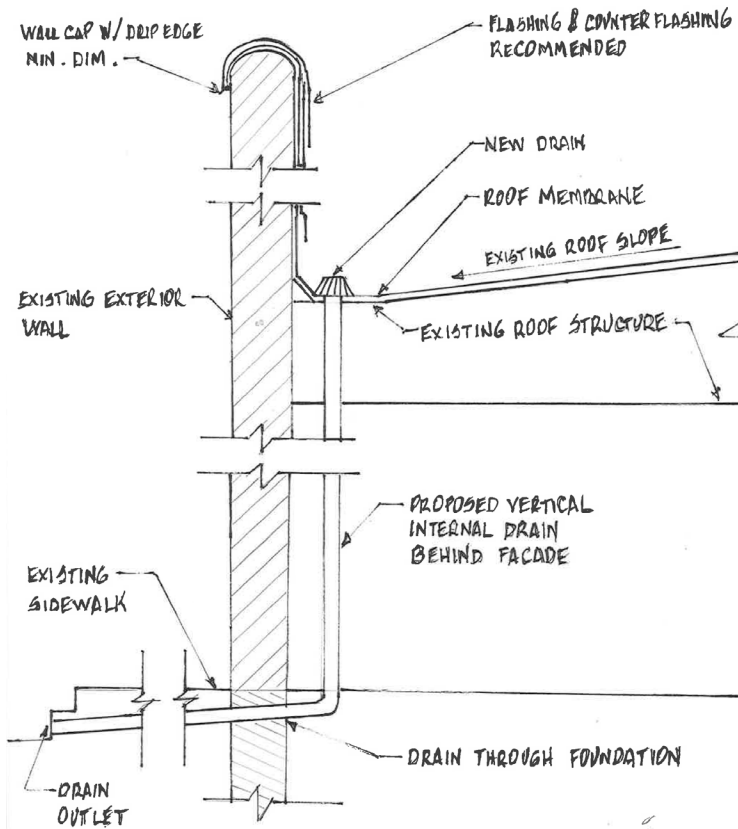


**Roof Option 3.** This option is likely the most invasive and expensive. (Yellow arrows) At corners of the property behind walls suggest the possibility of internal drainage that would include a drain pipe at interior of space (not inside facade wall), passing through the floor, foundation underground and continuing under the sidewalk to the storm sewer (or daylighting at the curb and gutter). Existing conditions should be reviewed with contractor prior to any work to determine best option available. Refer to: [Preservation Brief #4 "Roofing for Historic Buildings"](#)

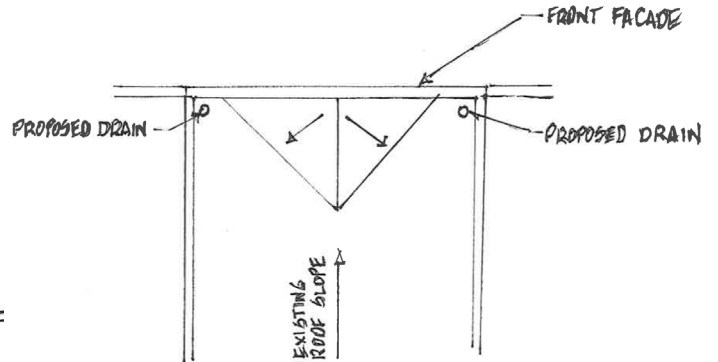
**EXISTING ROOF - FRONT**



**SECTION DETAIL**

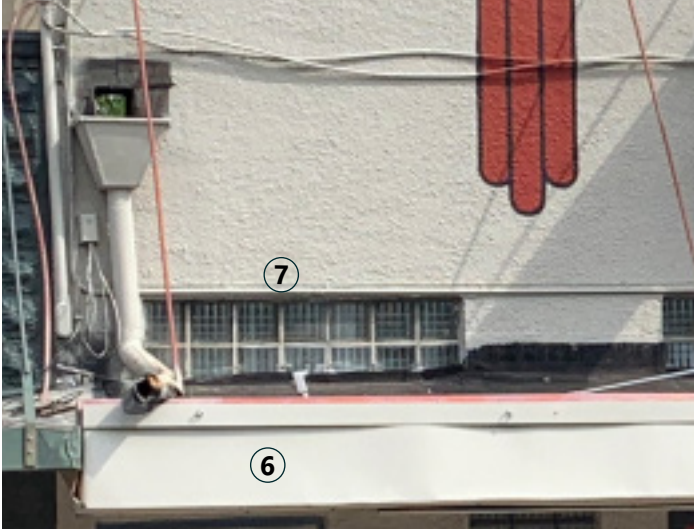


**PLAN VIEW**



ANALYSIS + RECOMMENDATIONS

TRANSOM

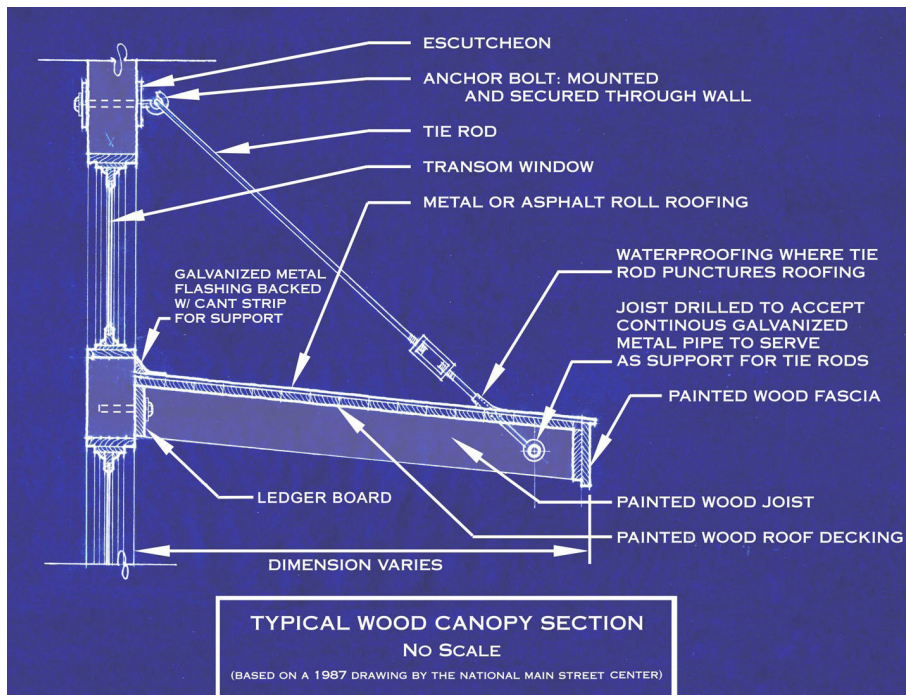


CANOPY



6. **Tie Rod Canopy** appears severely deteriorated. Connection to wall appears higher than transom window sills, this configuration obscures the transom and raises concerns for water infiltration. The existing wooden canopy should be replaced in kind with a new tie rod canopy. It should be installed lower than transom window sills to direct water away from the building. A typical tie-rod canopy is illustrated below and proposed connection points should be evaluated on the building for applicability, structural connection and reinforcement.

7. **Glass Block** appears to have been installed by the 1940s. This is evident in the historic photographs provided. If required, consider carefully cleaning and repairing any missing or significantly damaged units. It also appears that at one point in time, the glass blocks along the right side of the door were removed and replaced by an aluminum window. An exact date of this installation is unknown. The grout shows signs of deterioration in numerous areas. Consider carefully repointing with a compatible grout mixture. The glass block is a distinctive architectural feature that should be preserved.



## ANALYSIS + RECOMMENDATIONS

## EXISTING SIGN



## FACADE



8. **Wood Doors** appeared to resemble the configuration in the 1940s photographs and current images show the doors in good condition. The left door appears to be a false door that swings outward and it has a plywood dutch-door behind. The plywood door behind should be removed to bring back access and natural light into the building. It is important to repair, repaint and weather strip air gaps around all the existing doors. It is recommended to keep and maintain all front facade doors, door framing, including jambs, sills and headers. Primary doors are very important and contribute to maintain the integrity of the building. Replacement is considered only when doors are deteriorated beyond repair. Replacement doors should be compatible in design to the original in style, materials and glazing.

Refer to: The [Secretary of interiors Standards for Rehabilitation](#), including [the local design guidelines](#).

9. **Signage.** Per the Signage section on the Local Design Guidelines, it is highly recommended to "Maintain and/or repair any original signage as it greatly contributes to the character of the building." However, the existing sign appears to obstruct the building name. If feasible, consider reinstalling at a lower height. Per owner's request, the new blade sign will be hanging below the existing sign. In addition, consider consulting with an experienced sign maker on appropriate materials and installation. Historical photos show evidence of blade sign hanging below the cafe sign.

## SIGNAGE EXAMPLES



**CONCEPT 1** WHITE, NAVY BLUE & BLACK.



235 W Travis Street | La Grange, Texas, June 2021  
Drawn By: Christian Priddy not for regulatory approval, permitting or construction

The concept above illustrates the repairing and repainting of the existing exterior facade. The glass block at the transom and around the main door should be cleaned, repaired and replacement blocks should match existing blocks in size and configuration. This option shows a new wood structure tie rod canopy. The existing sign should be preserved, reinstalled lower to clear the building name and proportional to the space between building name and transom. A new blade sign (preferred by owner) should be hanging below the existing sign. Historical photos show evidence of blade sign hanging below existing coffee sign. Conceptual and not for regulatory approval design recommendations shown reflect the intent (or goal) of the property owner and Main Street manager's initiative for the building.

**SIGNAGE EXAMPLE**



**CONCEPT 2** PINK, WHITE & GRAY.

The concept above illustrates the repairing and repainting of the existing exterior facade. Preserved wood doors would allow natural light in the building. Retaining the doors is important and contribute to maintain the integrity of the building. This option shows a new wood structure tie rod canopy. Consider installing lighting under and throughout the tie rod canopy. The existing sign should be preserved, reinstalled lower to clear the building name and proportional to the space between building name and transom. This option shows a new sign with metal lettering at the edge of the canopy that is in a September, all bold, capitalized font.

Please refer to the following preservation briefs for additional recommendations and best practice approaches related to this project.

**Preservation Brief 25:** [The Preservation of Historic Signs.](#)

**Preservation Brief 47:** [Maintaining the Exterior of Small and Medium Size Historic Buildings.](#)

(See sections for Exterior walls, Roof and Building components).

### **NOT FOR REGULATORY APPROVAL, PERMITTING, OR CONSTRUCTION**

The purpose of this report is to provide ideas and schematic designs for projects. Main Street Staff works with the plans of business and property owners to provide designs that meet their objectives while still respecting the historic building. For official [tax credit review](#), a separate process must be followed and may involve modified design plans to meet the criteria. Prior to making any improvements to the building facade(s), the building owner should perform a thorough review of the major structural components including the roof, walls, and foundation. All mechanical and electrical systems should be well maintained in conformity with applicable codes and ordinances. Building uses and interior arrangements of program spaces should also be in conformity with applicable codes and ordinances.

REPORT PREPARED WITH ASSISTANCE OF MAIN STREET DESIGN TEAM BY:



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