



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: February 18, 2011 REPORT NO. HRB-11-012

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board
Agenda of February 24, 2011

SUBJECT: **ITEM #10 – Linda Vista Tenant Activity Building**

APPLICANT: City of San Diego Redevelopment Agency represented by Urbana
Preservation & Planning

LOCATION: 6909 Linda Vista Road, Linda Vista Community, Council District 6

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the Linda Vista Tenant Activity Building
located at 6909 Linda Vista Road as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the Linda Vista Tenant Activity Building located at 6909 Linda Vista Road as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1943-1953 under HRB Criteria A and C. This recommendation is based on the following findings:

1. The resource is a special element of Linda Vista and San Diego's historical, cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, and architectural development and retains integrity. Specifically, the resource represents historic development patterns and methods in the WWII era of San Diego' planning and development history when comprehensively constructed communities were financed and built by the federal government to meet wartime housing needs; and the building functioned as the social center of the largest single defense housing project and the largest low-income housing development in the



City Planning & Community Investment
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world at the time it was built. As an adapted military structure, the 800 Series Field House, the structure is a rare example of military and defense construction adaptively used for civilian purposes.

2. The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of 800 Series Field House building type and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its period of significance. Specifically, the resource exhibits the 800 Series Field House form with the prominent barrel-roof; the glue laminated timber trusses; the incised grid incinerator wall with fireplaces at the former courtyard on the south elevation; the apron wall and vertical wood slat siding at the north elevation; the south facing, second level gable (barrel) vents with original louvered wood slats; and boarded clerestory windows on the west wall.

BACKGROUND

This item is being brought before the Historical Resources Board in conjunction with a proposed building modification or demolition of a structure of 45 years or more, consistent with San Diego Municipal Code Section 143.0212. The building is located at the northeast corner of Linda Vista Road and Comstock Street in the community of Linda Vista.

The historic name of the resource, the Linda Vista Tenant Activity Building, has been identified consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and reflects the historical name given to it by the members of the community it served.

ANALYSIS

A historical resource technical report was prepared by Urbana Preservation & Planning, which concludes that the resource is significant under HRB Criteria A and C. Staff concurs that the site is a significant historical resource under HRB Criteria A and C. This determination is consistent with the *Guidelines for the Application of Historical Resources Board Designation Criteria*, as follows:

CRITERION A - Exemplifies or reflects special elements of the City's, a community's or a neighborhood's historical, archaeological, cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering, landscaping or architectural development.

The American military and industrial build-up leading into World War II created a population boom and severe housing shortage in San Diego by 1940. In response to this shortage, the U.S. government enacted the Lanham Defense Housing Act in October of that year to aid in the finance and construction of defense housing throughout the country. The 1,200 acres of vacant land at the southwestern corner of Kearny Mesa was the preferred location of the Linda Vista, or "Beautiful View", housing project, so named for its view of the San Diego city and bay. The housing project was designed utilizing the principles of the garden city and the "Neighborhood Unit Theory", the latter of which focused on size, boundaries, open spaces, institutions, local shops and an internal street system, with an underlying theory that an urban neighborhood should be regarded both as a unit of a larger whole and a distinct entity in itself. The project resulted in

the construction of 3,001 permanent residential units by May 1941 and an additional 1,845 temporary units by 1943. Construction was designed to be efficient, low-cost and functional.

The federally sponsored housing developments constructed under the 1940 Lanham Act only provided for the funding of housing and did not account for funding or construction of commercial and civic facilities to serve the residents of wartime housing projects. In addition, developers were reluctant to invest in communities designed to be temporary. This left a vacuum of public services and amenities for the residents of Linda Vista and other similar wartime housing developments. As a result, in 1941 the Lanham Act was amended to provide for public work grants that could be used for the construction of community facilities. The original plan for the Linda Vista Housing Project set aside a large block along Linda Vista Road for the construction of a commercial and administrative center, which had remained vacant. In August of 1943 the construction of a community building began on the southwest corner of this site. The building, designed consistent with guidelines established by the Federal Public Housing Authority, was completed in 90 days and was promptly used as the first multi-use recreational and civic facility for Linda Vista.

The Linda Vista Tenant Activity Building is an adaptation of an 800 Series FH-A Field House, which was designed and built by the U.S. military for temporary and permanent use, primarily for indoor activities and sports from 1941-1942. The 800 Series Field House typically featured steel or glue laminated timber trusses that ascend to a height of 32 feet installed 20 feet apart, with an average building width (including side wings) of 110 feet and a length of 155 feet. Steel shortages resulted in the use of laminated wood trusses for the oversized structural arches that formed the ribs of the Field Houses. Single story wings, clerestory windows and ventilation slats were also common to the 800 Series Field Houses. Variations to these specifications appeared to have occurred according to the programmatic needs and environmental constraints of each building. The Linda Vista Tenant Activity Building was designed with similar dimensions (175 feet by 200 feet) and built with glue laminated timber arches 32 feet high at center. Clerestory windows were present at the ground floor of the east, south and north walls, as well as above the flat roofline on the east and west walls. Wood louver vents were constructed at either end of the barrel vault. The building's intended use as a community center resulted in some adaptations from the 800 Series Field House type, including a rectilinear courtyard lined with full-height window walls at the south end; and an incinerator wall, which housed three fireplaces at the interior, also at the south end and incorporated into the courtyard.

The interior of the building accommodated a number of activities. The main vaulted portion of the building housed a gymnasium/auditorium with a stage at the north end. A social area and reading room sat at the south end of the gymnasium next to the incinerator wall. The rooms at the south end of the courtyard were designed for smaller activities and gatherings. Rooms at the east and west wings accommodated storage; a kitchen; men's and women's locker rooms and bathrooms; and club rooms. The Linda Vista Tenant Activity Building served the social and recreational needs of the community from its construction in 1943 until the building was decommissioned as a federally owned building and sold into private ownership in 1953.

Modifications that have occurred since 1953 include the addition of breezeways at the northwest and northeast corners of the building between 1953 and 1956; the removal of the entire south

courtyard space between 1961 and 1965 (the north wall of the courtyard, delineated by the incinerator wall, remained); construction of a 24' x 107' storage space at the northern portion of the east wall in 1961; interior renovations in 1965 (including installation of windows); interior remodeling and reinforcement of "X" bracing between the ribs in 1975/76; and removal of the added northwest breezeway between 1969 and 1980. At some point, the south end of the lot was subdivided. The City of San Diego Redevelopment Agency owns the parcel at the corner of Linda Vista Road and Comstock Street; however, a portion of the original site that contained a portion of the south courtyard is currently under separate ownership and is occupied by a car wash. Extensive renovations occurred in 1983 to accommodate the needs to the tenant, and involved stripping the Tenant Activity Building down to its shell and installing the proper features of a roller rink, such as a skate rental space, a pro shop, a game room, a snack bar, private offices, a mini-rink that is now a party area, and outward-facing retail shops that share the east and west walls of the centrally located, barrel-vaulted rink. Most of the modifications were made to the interior of the building, with few changes to the building envelope. Exterior changes included filling in the northeast corner of the building and adding an overhang to the new entrance located at the southwest corner. During this time, the clearstory windows on the east and west walls were likely removed and replaced with storefront windows. The second-level clearstory windows that filtered light into the center of the building appear to have been filled in at the east wall and boarded over at the west wall. Boards installed at the upper level of the west interior wall appear to be covering the clearstory windows or the former clearstory window location. These modifications are discussed in detail and illustrated in the Historical Resource Technical Report included under separate cover.

Despite the extent of the modifications, the significant character defining features of the 1943 design remain, and include the Field House form with the prominent barrel-roof; the glue laminated timber trusses; the incised grid incinerator wall at the former courtyard on the south elevation; the apron wall and vertical wood slat siding at the north elevation; the south facing, second level gable (barrel) vents with original louvered wood slats; and the boarded clerestory windows on the west wall.

The Linda Vista Tenant Activity Building is the result of a unique and defining moment in the development of Linda Vista and San Diego -- the build-up and preparation for American entry into World War II. It represents historic development patterns and methods in the WWII era of San Diego's planning and development history when comprehensively constructed communities were financed and built by the federal government to meet wartime housing needs; and the building functioned as the social center of the largest single defense housing project and the largest low-income housing development in the world at the time it was built. As an adapted military structure, the 800 Series Field House, the structure is a rare example of military and defense construction adaptively used for civilian purposes. The Linda Vista Tenant Activity Building exemplifies special elements of Linda Vista and San Diego's historical, cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, and architectural development. Further, the building retains the critical character defining features of the 1943 design and conveys the relevant aspects of integrity, including location, setting, feeling, association, and to a large extent design and materials. Therefore, staff recommends designation of the Linda Vista Tenant Activity Building under HRB Criterion A. The designation shall not exclude any elements of the building;

however, the extant plans from the original construction and the subsequent remodels will be used in the future to determine the elements of the building that retain integrity to the 1943-1953 period of significance.

CRITERION C - Embodies distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period or method of construction or is a valuable example of the use of natural materials or craftsmanship.

As discussed in detail in the analysis of Criterion A, the Linda Vista Tenant Activity Building is an adaptation of an 800 Series FH-A Field House, which was designed and built by the U.S. military for temporary and permanent use, primarily for indoor activities and sports from 1941-1942. At the time of its construction, the Tenant Activity Building displayed the character defining features of the 800 Series Field House, including glue laminated timber trusses, single story wings, clerestory windows; and ventilation slats; as well as adaptations specific to its use as a community center, including the rectilinear courtyard lined with full-height window walls at the south end; and an incinerator wall, which housed three fireplaces at the interior, also at the south end and incorporated into the courtyard. In regard to the building's integrity, the character defining features of the 800 Series Field House remain largely intact.

Modifications and missing features primarily impacted the adaptations. In addition, the report notes that although it is not known precisely how many of these structures were constructed as part of defense housing efforts; the relatively small number of community facilities constructed, coupled with the large number of federal housing developments that have been demolished since WWII, significantly decreases the likelihood of extant examples of similar community facilities nation-wide. In regard to integrity, National Register Bulletin 15 states, "The property must have the essential physical features that enable it to convey its historic character or information. The rarity and poor condition, however, of other extant examples of the type may justify accepting a greater degree of alteration or fewer features, provided that enough of the property survives for it to be a significant resource." The Tenant Activity Building continues to convey the key character defining features of an 800 Series Field House, including the prominent barrel-roof; the glue laminated timber trusses; the incised grid incinerator wall at the former courtyard on the south elevation; the apron wall and vertical wood slat siding at the north elevation; the south facing, second level gable (barrel) vents with original louvered wood slats; and the boarded clerestory windows on the west wall. Therefore, staff recommends designation under HRB Criterion C as a resource that embodies the distinctive characteristics of the 800 Series Field House building type.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

If the property is designated by the HRB, conditions related to restoration or rehabilitation of the resource may be identified by staff during the Mills Act application process, and included in any future Mills Act contract.

CONCLUSION

Based on the information submitted and staff's field check, it is recommended that the Linda Vista Tenant Activity Building located at 6909 Linda Vista Road be designated with a period of

significance of 1943-1953 under HRB Criteria A as a special element of Linda Vista and San Diego's historical, cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, and architectural development; and HRB Criterion C as a resource that embodies the distinctive characteristics of the 800 Series Field House building type. Designation brings with it the responsibility of maintaining the building in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. The benefits of designation include the availability of the Mills Act Program for reduced property tax; the use of the more flexible Historical Building Code; flexibility in the application of other regulatory requirements; the use of the Historical Conditional Use Permit which allows flexibility of use; and other programs which vary depending on the specific site conditions and owner objectives.



Kelley Stanco
Senior Planner



Cathy Winterrowd
Principal Planner/HRB Liaison

KS/cw

Attachment(s):

1. Draft Resolution
2. Excerpts from Original Plans and Renovation Plans
3. Applicant's Historical Report under separate cover

RESOLUTION NUMBER N/A
ADOPTED ON 2/24/2011

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 2/24/2011, to consider the historical designation of the **Linda Vista Tenant Activity Building** (owned by City of San Diego Redevelopment Agency, 1200 Third Avenue, 14th Floor, San Diego, CA 92101) located at **6909 Linda Vista Road, San Diego, CA 92111**, APN: **431-320-19-00**, further described as BLK 54 LOT 5 NLY 221.65 FT OF in the City of San Diego, County of San Diego, State of California; and

WHEREAS, in arriving at their decision, the Historical Resources Board considered the historical resources report prepared by the applicant, the staff report and recommendation, all other materials submitted prior to and at the public hearing, inspected the subject property and heard public testimony presented at the hearing; and

WHEREAS, the property would be added to the Register of Designated Historical Resources as **Site No. 0**, and

WHEREAS, designated historical resources located within the City of San Diego are regulated by the Municipal Code (Chapter 14, Article 3, Division 2) as such any exterior modifications (or interior if any interior is designated) shall be approved by the City, this includes but is not limited to modifications to any windows or doors, removal or replacement of any exterior surfaces (i.e. paint, stucco, wood siding, brick), any alterations to the roof or roofing material, alterations to any exterior ornamentation and any additions or significant changes to the landscape/site.

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED, the Historical Resources Board based its designation of the Linda Vista Tenant Activity Building on the following findings:

(1) The property is historically significant under CRITERION A as a special element of Linda Vista and San Diego's historical, cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, and architectural development and retains integrity. Specifically, the resource represents historic development patterns and methods in the WWII era of San Diego's planning and development history when comprehensively constructed communities were financed and built by the federal government to meet wartime housing needs; and the building functioned as the social center of the largest single defense housing project and the largest low-income housing development in the world at the time it was built. As an adapted military structure, the 800 Series Field House, the structure is a rare example of military and defense construction adaptively used for civilian purposes. This finding is further supported by the staff report, the historical research report, and written and oral evidence presented at the designation hearing.

(2) The property is historically significant under CRITERION C as a resource that embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of 800 Series Field House building type and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its period of significance. Specifically, the resource exhibits the 800 Series Field House form with the prominent barrel-roof; the glue laminated timber trusses; the incised grid incinerator wall with fireplaces at the former courtyard on the south elevation; the apron wall and vertical wood slat siding at the north elevation; the south facing, second level gable (barrel) vents with original louvered wood slats; and boarded clerestory windows on the west wall. This finding is further supported by the staff report, the historical research report, and written and oral evidence presented at the designation hearing.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, in light of the foregoing, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego hereby approves the historical designation of the above named property. The designation includes the parcel and exterior of the building as Designated Historical Resource **Site No. 0**.

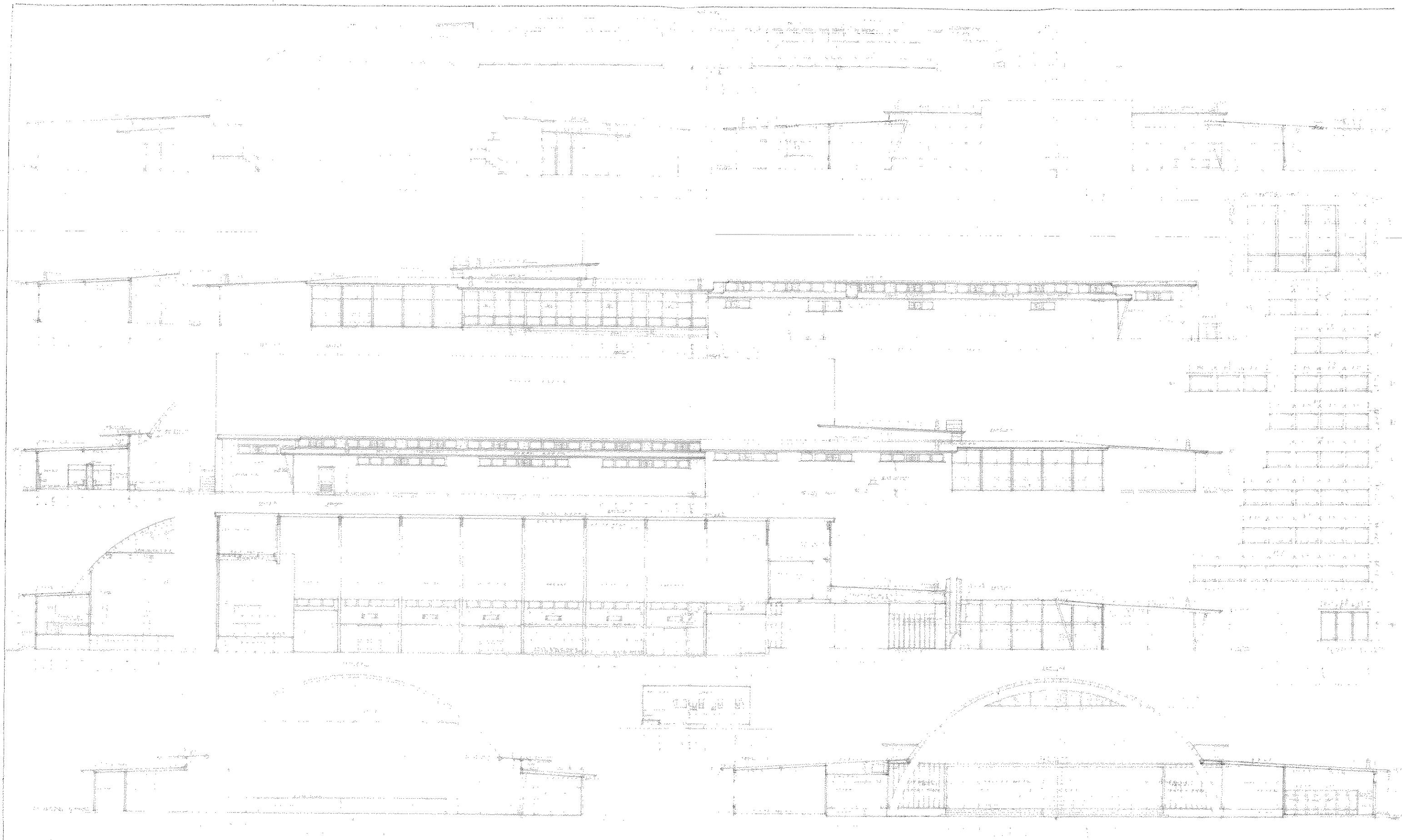
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Secretary to the Historical Resources Board shall cause this resolution to be recorded in the office of the San Diego County Recorder at no fee, for the benefit of the City of San Diego, and with no documentary tax due.

Vote: N/A

BY: _____
JOHN LEMMO, Chair
Historical Resources Board

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND
LEGALITY: JAN I. GOLDSMITH,
CITY ATTORNEY

BY: _____
NINA FAIN
Deputy City Attorney



REVISIONS
NO. 1
DATE

DATE: 11/1/51
PROJECT: 41

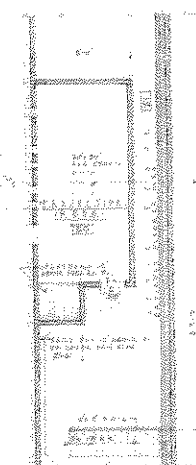
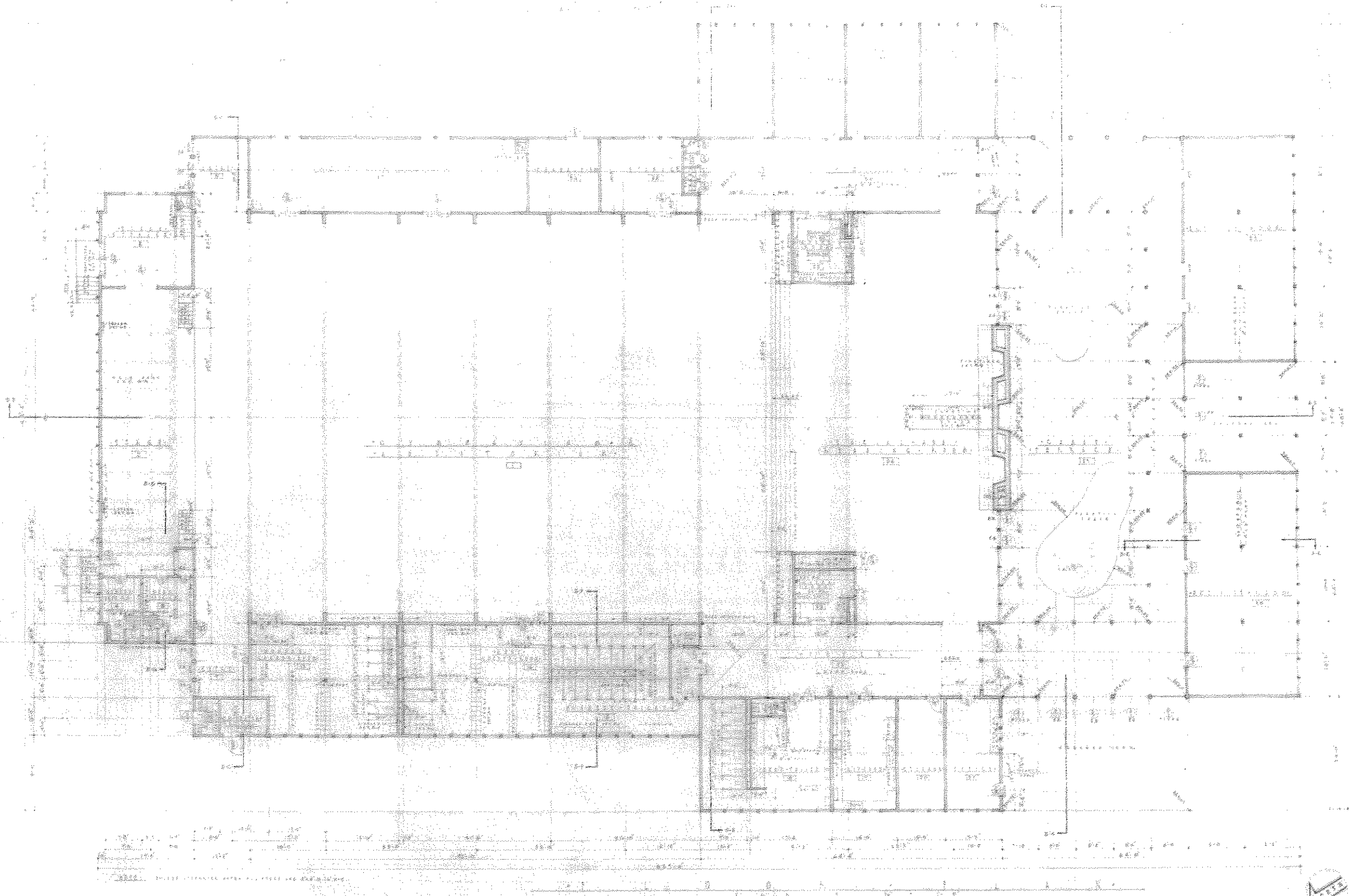
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UNITED STATES PLANT AND ANIMAL QUARANTINE SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D. C.

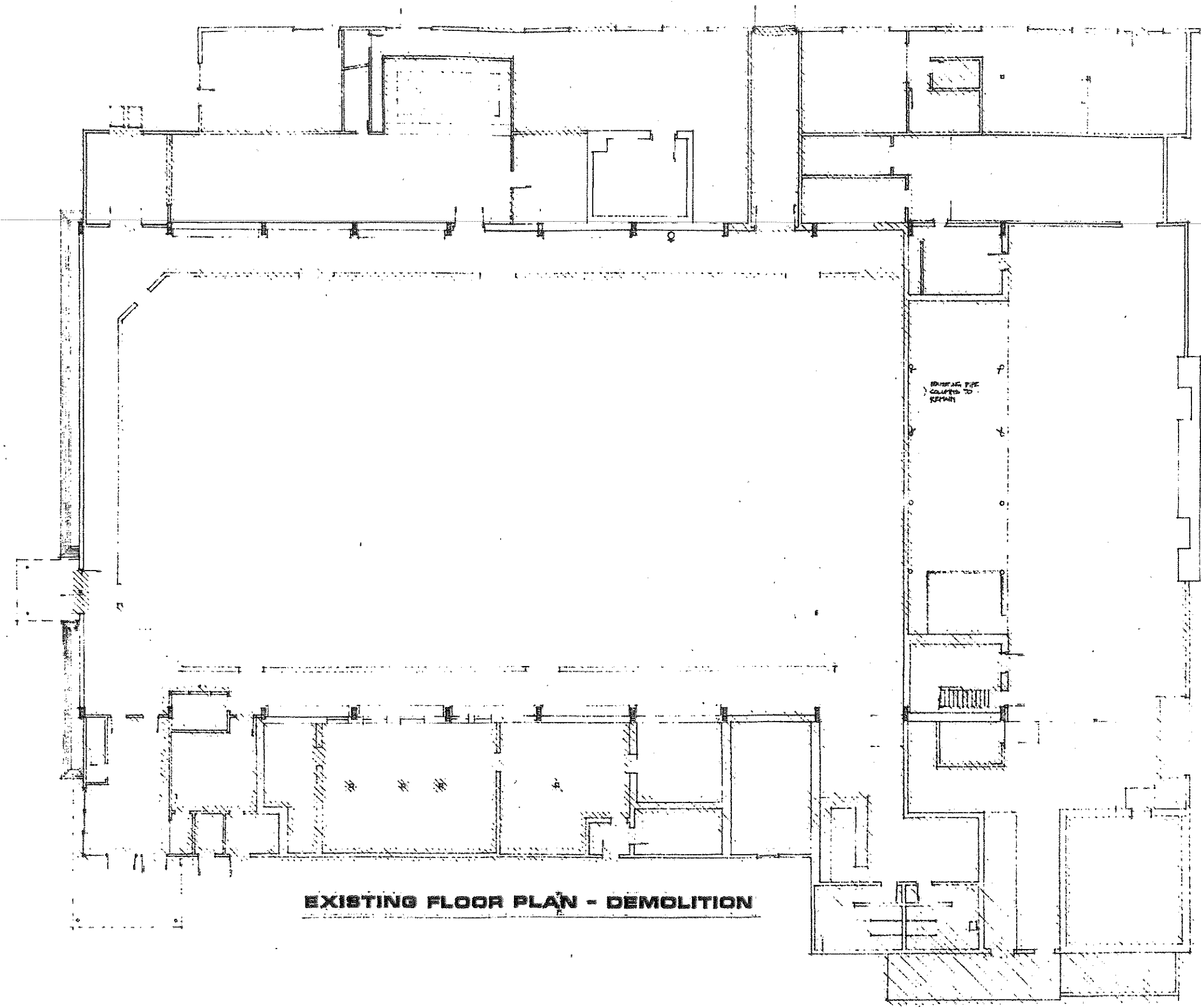
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CAL-4092-TEN



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3	RESTROOM	300
4	STAIR	400
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EXISTING FLOOR PLAN - DEMOLITION

DEMOLITION NOTES

1. REMOVE ALL ELECTRICAL WORK EXCEPT MAIN PANEL.
2. REMOVE ALL EXISTING PLUMBING FIXTURES AND CONDUIT.
3. EXERCISE CARE SO AS NOT TO DAMAGE SPRINKLERS AND LINES.
4. REMOVE ALL CARPET FROM WALLS.
5. ALL DEBRIS CREATED BY THE DEMOLITION SHALL BECOME THE PROPERTY OF THE CONTRACTOR AND SHALL BE DISPOSED AWAY FROM THE SITE.
6. SCHEDULING OF DEMOLITION WORK SHALL BE SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE OWNER.
7. THE CONTRACTOR SHALL NOTIFY OWNER AT LEAST THREE (3) DAYS IN ADVANCE PRIOR TO END OF DEMOLITION WORK.
8. THE CONTRACTOR SHALL ARRANGE WITH THE TELEPHONE AND UTILITY COMPANIES AND OTHER SERVICE AGENCIES FOR COMPLETE REMOVAL OF THE LINES, ETC. AS REQUIRED. THE CONTRACTOR SHALL INCLUDE ANY SUCH CHARGES IN HIS BID.
9. SAW CUT CONCRETE OR BREAK OUT TO NEAREST JOINTING LINE AND REMOVE.
10. REMOVE WALLS, CEILINGS, SCOFFS, LIGHT FIXTURES, DUCTS, ELECTRICAL WORK, PLUMBING ETC. AS REQD FOR NEW WORK.
11. REMOVE ALL EXISTING FLOORING MATERIALS AND BASE AT AREAS TO RECEIVE NEW FLOORING AND BASE.
12. REMOVE EXISTING ON AND OFF-SITE WORK AS REQUIRED BY NEW WORK, INCLUDING EXISTING PAVING UNDER NEW ADDITIONS.
13. REMOVE ALL BROKEN PIECES OF PAVING AND ALL BASE MATERIAL FROM DEMOLISHED PAVING AREAS BEING CONVERTED TO PLANTERS.
14. CONTRACTOR SHALL CONFORM TO ALL FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL ORDINANCES RELATING TO THE PROTECTION OF THE PUBLIC AND CONTRACTOR'S PERSONNEL AND THE FLOW OF TRAFFIC. PROVIDE PROTECTION FOR PERSONS AND PROPERTY THROUGHOUT THE PROGRESS OF THE WORK.
15. OWNER TO VERIFY ALL SPO OF WORK IS NOT TO BE CONSIDERED SETTLEMENT.
16. OWNER TO REMOVE ALL SALVAGE ITEMS FROM DEMOLITION THEREAFTER ALL DEBRIS, MATERIALS BECOME THE PROPERTY OF THE CONTRACTOR.



Skate world roller rink
activity center commercial complex
 4477 La Jolla Village Drive, San Diego, CA 92161

pbd architects associated
 343 6th Avenue San Diego ca. 92101 239-0337



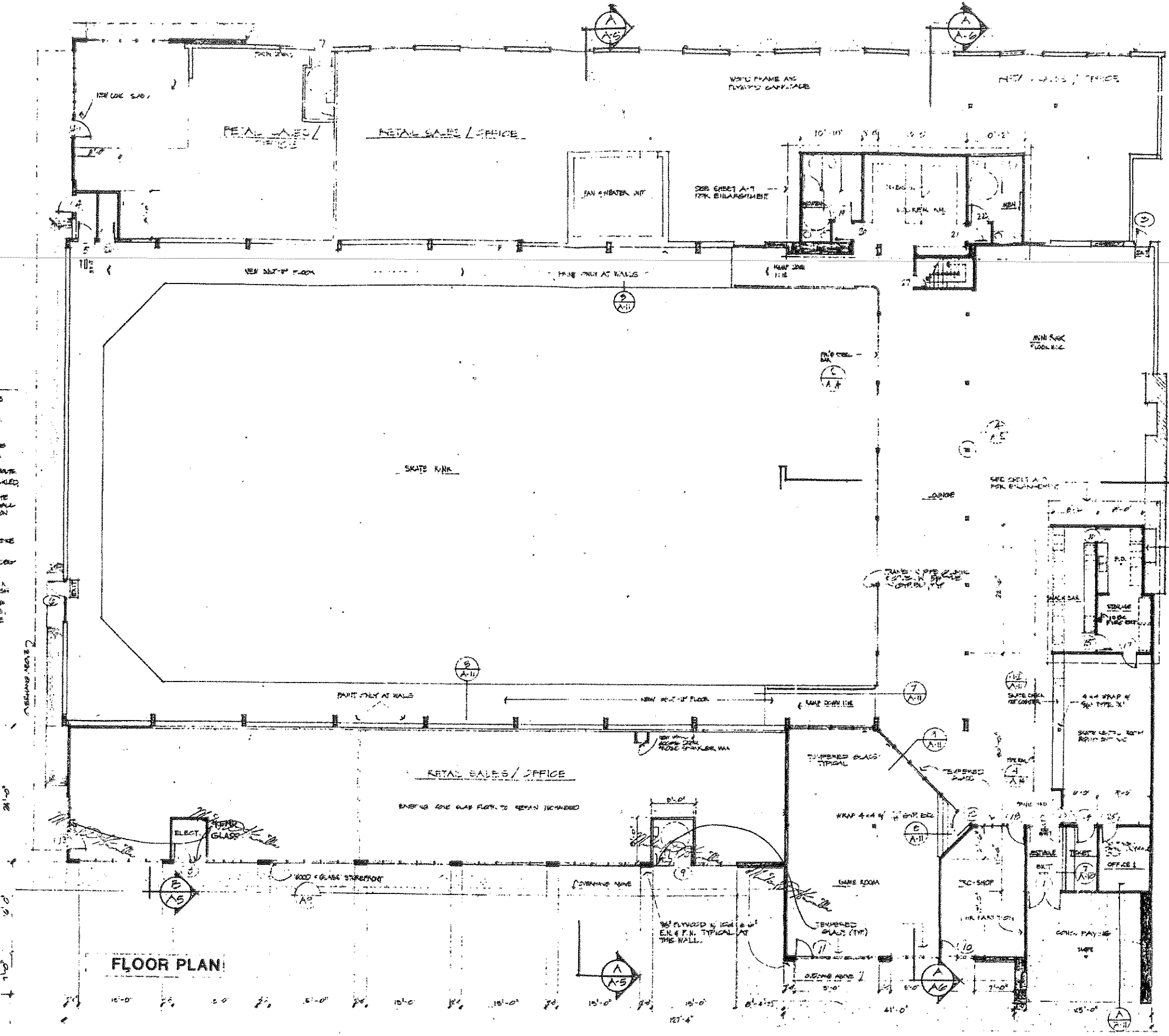
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LEGEND

- NEW 2" X 4" WALLS WITH 1/2" TYPE 'X' GYPSUM BOARD ON BOTH SIDES
- EXISTING 2" X 4" WALLS WITH 1/2" PLASTER ON BOTH SIDES
- EXISTING 2" X 4" BLOCK WALL WITH 1/2" GROUT
- NEW 1/2" GLASS VEST FRONT OR REFRIG. ENCLOSURE

NOTES

1. ALL CONSTRUCTION, NEW AND EXISTING, IS TO BE DONE NOW.
2. ALL WORK IS TO CONFORM TO LOCAL CODES AND TO THE IBC.
3. WRITTEN DIMENSIONS SHALL TAKE PRECEDENCE OVER SCALED DIMENSIONS.
4. ALL ENTRIES TO BE SCREENED FROM WINDS WITHOUT THE USE OF A KEY OR SPECIAL HARDWARE; NO SLIDING DOORS OR DEAD BARS.
5. THE BALCONY IS TO BE COMPLETELY SPRINKLED. PLANS FOR ALL FIXED FIRE PROTECTION EQUIPMENT SHALL BE SUBMITTED BY THE INSTALLING CONTRACTOR. THESE PLANS SHALL BE APPROVED BY THE FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU PRIOR TO INSTALLATION.
6. ALL ROOF PENETRATION MUST BE PROVIDED FROM THE FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU BEFORE THE BUILDING IS OCCUPIED.
7. ALL SPLITTING IS TO BE DONE AS TO THE ST. AND DEPTH AS NOTED.
8. ALL CONCRETE SHALL BE 5,000 P.S.I. MIN. 2000 PSI 3/4" DIA. - BRUSH FINISH.
9. VENTILATION IS TO BE PROVIDED TO LOBBY, SKATE RINK RESTROOMS, OFFICE, PRO SHOP, BACK OFFICE, INFINITE PEOPLE, AND TICKET OFFICE.
10. ALL SLACING TO BE CLEAN J.O.B.



FLOOR PLAN

REVISIONS	BY
skate world roller rink	
skate world center commercial complex	
ped architects associated	
303 1/2 W. MARKET STREET, SUITE 200, CHICAGO, ILL. 60601	
DATE	20.02.83
SCALE	1/4" = 1'-0"
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