Volume 70 October 2023 No. 8

Calendar			
Wed Oct 4	Archives Committee Meeting, Penn Place, 3 rd Fl, 7:30p	Wed Oct 18	Arboretum Committee Meeting, Town Hall, 7p
Wed Oct 4	GP Historic Preservation Committee Meeting, Town Hall, 8p	Sat Oct 21	Chicano Sol Farm Stand, Penn Place, 9a – 1p
Set Oat 7		Sat Oct 21	Porches and Patios
Sat Oct 7	Chicano Sol Farm Stand, Penn Place, 9a – 1p	Sat Oct 28	GIVES Collection, Post Office, 9a – 11a
Sat Oct 7	Large Item Pick-up	Sat Oct 28	Chicano Sol Farm Stand, Penn Place, 9a – 1p
Sat Oct 7	GIVES Collection, Post Office, 9a – 11a	Sat Oct 28	Halloween Parade and Spooky Woods
Mon Oct 9	GP Town Council Meeting, Hybrid, 7:30p	Sun Oct 29	Pumpkin Carving
2 . 2 . 14	•	Tues Oct 31	Halloween!
Sat Oct 14	Chicano Sol Farm Stand, Penn Place, 9a – 1p	Sun Nov 5	GIVES Soup Supper, Town Hall, 5p – 7p

Town Council Meeting Notes

Oh boy! So much to cover! This report deals with the July regular Council meeting, a very short special meeting in August (during the Council's summer hiatus month), the regular September meeting, plus a later special meeting in September for residents to voice opinions on Town Hall renovation options. I cannot possibly fit everything from all these meetings into this short column. Instead, I will focus on two things: the action items over these several months, and renovation of Town Hall.

But first, readers will recall that over the course of a couple Town Council meetings this past spring, Dave Almy proposed to mount a model train backed by some of Dave's drawings of Garrett Park houses in Penn Place. That proposal was accepted and has been carried out. Next time you go to the Post Office, be sure to look up when you enter the building. Thank you, Dave! (Tony Altar and Bob Gifford aided in the installation).

Now, on to action items. The Town Council was quite busy in July, August, and September. Here are the items that required a vote by the Council.

Grotto Property. This is about the property off of Argyle and behind houses facing Rokeby that contained a spring in the 19th century. The Council voted to introduce legislation to receive the gift of the land (July meeting) and then finalized the decision (September meeting).

5G Wireless Equipment. The Council introduced (July meeting) and passed (September meeting) a set of rules for installation of poles and equipment to minimize the intrusiveness of the new equipment for 5G cellphone service.

Permit Fee Schedule. A new set of fees for various town services (e.g., building and other permits) had been discussed earlier in the year and a resolution to change them had been introduced at the June meeting. In July, the new fees were adopted.

Post Office Doors. The Council approved new doors into the Post Office at the July meeting. These will be handicap accessible.

Town Office Renovation. In July, the Council approved money for starting the renovation of the Town offices on the third floor of Penn Place. This first tranche covers construction administration and procurement services by the contractor, Lumber & Light.

Trash Removal. Montgomery County has increased its "tipping fee" for refuse companies dumping their loads at the County's transfer station. Therefore, the Town's trash collector, Key Sanitation, requested an increased payment from the Town. The Council agreed to the increase at the special Council meeting in August.

Leaf Removal. The Town received only one bid for leaf removal, by the firm that has done this for the Town for a long time. Their bid was for a three-year contract at a price that is within the Town funds budgeted. The Council approved the bid, and removal

will occur weekly from mid-October to late December.

Exterior Painting of Penn Place. This job received several bids, which the Town Staff reviewed, recommending a mid-range price from a firm that has a strong record on painting historic buildings. The Council voted to accept this bid.

Change Order Authorization. The demolition of the house at 11321 Kenilworth (the former Yeandle property now owned by the Town) involves cutting and capping the water and sewer lines from the street, but WSSC's locator service provided the contractor with the wrong location information. Since this was not the fault of the contractor, the Town Council voted to compensate for the wasted digging.

Cambria Park Slide. Technically this was "unfinished business" rather than an "action item." At the July meeting, the Council voted to replace the broken slide rather than the whole play structure and approved the money to do so. The new slide will probably be installed in November.

Whew! That was a long list.

Now, your reporter turns to the really big development. The Town Government has been mulling over the idea of major renovations to Town Hall for a long time. The topic popped up on the Council's agenda at least by 2013 (when then-Councilmember Welch was assigned to explore the issues involved), and Councilmember Stephen Paczkowski prepared extensive background materials and held a charette – a meeting where project stakeholder attempted to resolve conflicts and map solutions - at the Town Hall in 2018. Last Spring, the project took a major step forward when Wiedemann Architects was awarded a contract to provide three options (small, medium, and large) for renovation. Their report was presented at the September council meeting by two Wiedemann representatives and two staff members from subconsultant Axias, Inc. Wiedemann Architects is the same one that did the renovation of Penn Place some 20 years ago, and is currently doing the renovation of Noyes Library for Young Children in Kensington. The presentation at the regular Council meeting on September 11 was followed by a special Council meeting on September 19 for residents to express their ideas and reactions to the report.

There is far too much detail from those two September meetings to put it in this column, all of which—including the drawings of the three options—are accessible through the Town website. The only design comment I will include is that all three options included creation of a second, smaller meeting room at the back of the building. The Mayor emphasized that the options are for our discussion and guidance. The town can mix and match various elements, or even go in a different direction, depending on the desires of residents.

Wiedemann also hired a sub-contractor to provide cost estimates for the three options. These ranged from \$2.7 million for option one to \$3.7 million for option three. However, so-called "soft costs" (detailed architectural/engineering work, permitting fees, and construction administration services) could add as much as 25 percent to these prices.

The week following the presentation of the report came the special Council meeting. Under the Mayor's rules for conduct of the meeting, with the exception of occasional questions, Councilmembers simply listened to the various comments. Residents were restricted to four minutes each. Altogether, 15 residents offered comments. Your reporter would like to offer a small editorial comment. Given the history of large Town projects generating rancorous discussion at such meetings, this one was respectful, and comments were intended to be helpful in guiding the Council as it proceeds with this project—even when they were critical of aspects of the three options.

I only have space to offer here a few summary observations on this meeting.

- Even though the focus of the meeting was supposed to be on design rather than cost, there was considerable sticker shock and a few residents questioned of the accuracy of the highcost estimates.
- There was no interest or support in having a second, smaller meeting room; having the ability to hold two simultaneous, separate meetings was not desired.
- All three options include a hallway running through the building, but a number of speakers emphasized that the current arrangement, with wide openings between rooms, is critically important because it facilitates the flow of people and food throughout the building during the kind of large events that are held at the building.
- The idea of a commercial kitchen (rather than a warming kitchen) had no support.
- Locating the main storage area in a new basement had no support. The idea of having to schlep tables and chairs up and down an exterior stairway was a nonstarter.
- Presentations favored moving the bathrooms in order to restore the front façade of the building to its original appearance.

The big picture? Those who commented at this meeting appeared to be supportive of repair, upgrading, and some structural improvements/changes without changing the basic interior design of the building very much.

Every house in Town received a note on their front door the same day as the special meeting inviting residents to comment on the options. Once those comments have been added to those at the September meeting, the Council will get down to the hard task of sorting out exactly what we want.

Ed Lincoln Bugle Reporter

The *Garrett Bugle* is a newsletter publication by the Citizens Association of Garrett Park and published 10 times a year. Publication is supported by member dues. All residents of Garrett Park are members of the Citizens Association. Yearly dues (\$25 per family or \$15 per individual per address) can be sent to Citizens Association, Box 456, Garrett Park, MD 20896. Articles, ads and other content for the *Garrett Bugle* can be emailed to garrettbugle@gmail.com*
Citizens Association Officers

Steve Welker, President ~ Thomas DiChiara, Vice-President ~ Rory Smith, Treasurer ~ Betty Fout, Secretary

Co-Editors: Steve Welker and Aaron Brand (garrettbugle@gmail.com)

Audience Engagement Editor: Meghan Wendt

Reporter: Ed Lincoln (Box 348)

Advertising: Margaret Goldsborough (gandgantiques@aol.com)

Calendar: Rachel Faulkner

*Editor and staff reserve the right to edit submissions for length and clarity. Unsigned <u>Letters to the Editor</u> will not be printed.

Town Manager's Notes

Important Dates:

- Saturday, October 7, 2023 Large item collection
- Monday, October 9, 2023 Town Council meeting at 7:30 pm

Thank You to All Community Members – Town Hall Renovation Concept Designs

My heartfelt appreciation to everyone who offered feedback on the conceptual designs developed by Wiedemann Architects for the possible renovation of Town Hall. We had a great response to the online survey, and about 15 community members addressed the Mayor and Town Council during the public hearing section of the Special Town Council meeting on September 19.

Your input is important, so I'll hope everyone stays engaged as the Mayor and the Town Council discuss the next steps in the process. Their next discussion will take place at the October 9 Town Council meeting.

Former Yeandle Property (11321 Kenilworth Avenue)

In 2006, Laetitia Yeandle gifted the property located at 11321 Kenilworth Avenue to the Town of Garrett Park. As set forth in the Deed of Conservation Easement, the property is to be used as a public park and/or a wildlife sanctuary.

In June 2023, the Town Council authorized execution of a contract with RemacUSA, Inc. for demolition of the single-family home on the property. Since that time, RemacUSA, Inc. undertook certain activities required before the firm could file the demolition permit application with Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services. Those activities were recently completed.

The Department of Permitting Services advised me that the average time for processing a demolition permit application is 80 business days. So, we're still a way off from the house being demolished.

Upcoming Work at Penn Place

At the Town Council meeting on September 11, the Town Council awarded a contract for the exterior painting of the Penn Place building. The project will include carpentry work associated with the repair/replacement of rotted wood. Access to the Post Office, the Gallery, and Black Market will be maintained during the work.

We're in the process of finalizing contract documents, so we don't have a project start date yet.

Fall Leaf Collection

The Town has contracted with Bethke Landscaping to provide once a week collection of leaves beginning the week of October 15 and continuing through mid-December. Leaves will be collected as early in the week as possible, but rain or inclement weather will delay their pickup.

Leaves should be placed in rows alongside the street side of the curb so that they are accessible for pickup by truck. Please be mindful of the placement of the leaves to avoid blocking storm drains.

Any sticks, rocks, trash, and other debris should be removed from the leave piles as they can damage machinery and will not be collected by Bethke.

Shredded leaves and grass clippings should be bagged and put out for the regular yard waste collection on Mondays.

Parents, please discourage your children from playing in the leaves along the curb.

Interested in Going Greener?

On May 1, the Town launched a one-year pilot program to assess community interest in a municipally supported household organic waste composting program. There is available funding for 113 households to participate in the pilot program. Enrollment currently stands at 70, so there's plenty of room for more participants.

You can sign up for the pilot program at www.Compostcrew.com. If you have any questions, please reach out to Assistant Town Manager Kayla Buker at Kayla.Buker@garrettparkmd.gov or at (301) 933-7488.

Town Permits

Just a reminder that a Garrett Park building permit is required when a new structure is to be built, including houses, additions, sheds, garages, decks, porches, and driveways. The Town permit is in addition to any required Montgomery County permit.

To avoid any delay in the process, complete your Garrett Park permit application and submit it along with your plat and drawings to the Town Office before requesting a County permit. Permit applications and payment can be completed online at www.garrettparkmd.gov/government/operations/permits.

If you live in the designated historic district, please keep in mind that some projects may require a County Historic Area Work Permit. For more information, you can reach out to the Garrett Park Historic Preservation Committee or the Town Office. **New Town Residents**

Are you new to Garrett Park? If so, welcome to our community! Take a break from unpacking boxes and contact the Town Office at (301) 933-7488. We'd love to get you up to speed with what you need to know about living in Garrett Park.

As always, please reach out to the Town Office with any questions or concerns. You can reach me at (301) 933-7488 or at

Barbara.Matthews@garrettparkmd.gov.

Barb Matthews, Town Manager



Save the Date! Porches and Patios, Sat. Oct. 21, 2023

Think about hosting, just a quick sweep outside and you are ready for your neighbors!

Sign up registration deadline is Monday, October 16th. The price is \$15.00 per person to participate. Contact Lillian Del Priore at Lillian@delpriore.com or 240-994-3631 with any questions.

Don't just take my word for it





Citizens Association Notes

Another Successful 4th of July

Buying?

Selling?

Call me.

GPers kicked off the 4th of July at 7:30 am with a two(ish)-mile fun run. Garrett Park's version of Roger Bannister – CA Vice President Tommy DiChiarra - paced all runners and his seven-year-old son, Chace DiCiarra, showed that the future of distance running in Garrett Park is strong, setting the standard for the under 12 category. The Bugle's own

Audience Engagement Editor, Meg Wendt, was the fastest woman. Hot coffee was served at the finish line, and to no one's surprise, none of it was drunk. So, we lugged it on to the next event!

The highlight of the day is the Garrett Park parade. This year, the CA challenged the Town to get its creative juices going with the theme: "Freedom to Laugh". Challenge met. Middle Schoolers dressed as disgraced former President Trump's missing files. Check. A family dressed as the Garrett Park Mail Delivery Service. Check. Kids dressed as Laffy Taffy. Check. The list goes on. But we must apologize for an unnamed judge accidentally tore up our sheets containing the winners so we are unable to announce them here.

The parade concluded as usual with a gathering at the Town Hall field where the Town's long-time rockers Border State treated residents to a rundown of classic rock hits and local politicos Mayor Welch, Sen. Waldstreicher, and more mingled with the crowd.

The post-Parade party segued to even more entertainment at the GP Pool where GPers were treated to an afternoon of relay races, tug-of-war, water balloon tosses, and the main event: the belly flop contest. This year's belly flop contest was no disappointment with flyweight Eli Brand taking the under 12 category, stunning the crowd, and his proud father, your Bugle's co-Editor. Kudos to Miles LaCroix, aka *The Great Floppino*, who wowed the crowd with his creative costume.

The belly flop contest set the stage for the annual Garrett Park Prickle v. Garrett Park Estates Trash Pandas softball game. But no such luck. Despite a valiant late-game comeback, the Prickle (did you know that's the adorable collective noun for porcupines?!) came up two runs short (not to mention a down-to-the-wire loss in the seventh-inning Flip Cup Stretch). The Prickle had plenty to feel good about, though, as they improved dramatically from their ~20-run shellacking in 2022.

Garrett Park's July 4th is always jam-packed with fun, tradition, and revelry and this year was no different. Let's start the planning for 2024!



Additional Information about the Town Hall Renovation and a Plea for Constructive Debate

Town residents would be forgiven for tuning out of public discussions held on email listservs due to the rancorous displays of incivility toward fellow neighbors that seem to appear all too frequently. This is frequently in stark contrast to the generally respectful in-person and virtual Town Council meetings. And it is not difficult to understand why: it's much easier to hurl insults from the safety of one's keyboard. We urge everyone to take a beat before sending off an angry email to the public listserv and consider whether they would be willing to speak similarly to the recipient's face (indeed, that advice is well taken for all aspects of life). After all, your elected officials are your neighbors and worthy of respect as much as anyone else.

In the interest of ensuring maximum understanding among the Town residents about the state of the anticipated remodeling of Town Hall, we are publishing Town Manager Barbara Matthews' FAQ on the Town Hall renovation. Finally we are printing interior spaces shown by the three proposed development plans from Wiedemann Architects.

Q1. What guidance was provided to Wiedemann Architects prior to their development of the final conceptual designs?

The firm's contracted scope of work was based on the bid documents issued by the Town in January 2023. The bid package was developed based on parameters established at a Special Town Council meeting held on August 31, 2022. Wiedemann Architects was asked to assess the current condition of Town Hall, with a focus on any code deficiencies and exterior maintenance needs. The contracted scope of work also called for preparation of 3 conceptual designs, with an estimated project budget for each conceptual design scenario. In the bid documents, the Town outlined specific areas of interest, including options for upgrading the kitchen, ways to address building storage needs, upgrades to MEP and other systems, and possible fire suppression measures. The Town also wanted to explore the ability to hold more than one event in Town Hall at the same time. In June, the Mayor, Town Council, and Town staff had the opportunity to review and comment on preliminary diagrammatic floor plans. Wiedemann Architects asked for this feedback to ensure they were on the right track.

Q2. Did the Town ask Wiedemann Architects to prepare a baseline option?

As noted above, the contracted scope of work included an assessment of Town Hall that focused on resolving code deficiencies and addressing exterior maintenance needs, such as siding and windows. That assessment yielded Year 1 program costs of \$292,500. This figure does not include cosmetic interior upgrades, such as painting and flooring. The cost to bring Town Hall up to code and address the identified exterior maintenance needs was factored into the three conceptual renovation options developed by Wiedemann Architects.

Q3: Please provide information on the cost estimation process, including who prepared them and the underlying assumptions. What's not included in the cost estimates?

Axias, LLC was a project subconsultant and part of the Wiedemann team. It performed the building assessment and provided cost estimation services. Axias employs a team of 20+, full-time professional cost estimators who provide design-state cost estimates, review and negotiate bids, and analyze change orders from contractors on behalf of developers, the federal government, and local governments.

The Axias team measured items where possible from the drawings provided by Wiedemann Architects. For the remainder, Axias used parametric measurements in conjunction with references from similar projects recently estimated. As part of its analysis, Axias considered the actual time required to perform activities, establishing relevant crews and equipment needed to complete the task. Axias conducted a wage rate analysis using local rates or prevailing wages as inputs. The Axias team looked at materials costs, reaching out to suppliers where possible and ensuring that the rates reflect sometimes small quantities.

The Axias cost estimates incorporate several markups. The Design Contingency of 15% is an allowance to cover the unknowns at this very early, conceptual state of design. A factor of 18% is included for General Conditions/Requirements. Contractor Insurance and bonds (builder's risk insurance and payment/performance bonds) are included at 2.50%. Contractor's fee is assumed to be 3.50%. Finally, escalation to the anticipated midpoint of construction is at 13%, based on an anticipated site date start of April 2025 and a 12-month construction duration.

The Axias cost estimates do not include design costs for developing the detailed drawings required for permitting and bidding purposes, project permitting fees, or construction administration services.

Q4. Some residents have raised questions about the validity of the estimates, suggesting that the projected costs for the three renovation options are extraordinarily high. Please help me to reconcile the information cited by these residents and the Axias cost estimates for the Town Hall renovation options.

Recent list serv postings attempt to equate the square footage cost for historic home renovations to Town Hall, citing information from various websites. Something important to keep in mind is that Town Hall is not a historic home, but rather a public building that is subject to different codes. Additionally, the functional space of Town Hall requires a different level of finish and a higher level of lighting, HVAC, and plumbing systems compared to a single-family home.

Another line of discussion cited the cost of specific items from the detailed Axias report – including an ADA-compliant sink. The resident

quoted a cost of \$280 for this item, while the Axias report reflects an estimate of \$1,699. While the origin of the \$280 figure wasn't cited in the post, it likely doesn't include other items that the Axias estimate does – faucets, rough-in piping, labor costs for installation, and any subcontractor markups.

There also appears to be some confusion regarding the unit of measurement applied by Axias for estimates of various items. One of the examples cited on the Town Forum concerned the cost of pipe. As Axias mentioned during its presentation at the September 11 Town Council meeting, its estimates were based upon the measurement of quantities, where possible, from the floor plans provided by Wiedeman Architects. In the absence of the same, Axias used parametric measurements in conjunction with references from similar projects recently estimated by the firm. For example, given that there are no piping layouts shown on any of the Wiedemann drawings, Axias used its judgement to formulate a cost, which is represented in the estimate as an allowance per square foot based upon the gross area of the building. The pricing indicated in the Axias cost estimate is not stating that there is 2,433 linear feet of piping, and the firm is not saying that its anticipated cost is \$10/linear foot. Rather, what the Axias report is trying to convey is that, based on the present level of conceptual design, the total cost of domestic water piping is projected to be \$24,330, which equates to \$10/gross square foot. The Axias estimate factors in related costs such as insulation. waste from cutting, plumber labor costs, fittings/connections, and subcontractor markups – not just the cost of the pipe material.

Q5. What funding is currently dedicated to the renovation of Town Hall? And what other sources exist?

In 2022, the Town Council set aside a portion of its funding received under the federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) for the Town Hall renovation project. Once the Wiedemann Architects contract is closed out, the balance in this line item will be approximately \$723,000. This amount assumes that the firm is not requested to perform additional work, including the preparation of additional conceptual designs.

The Town has also been accumulating funds over the years to apply to the project. Available, non-ARPA capital funds designated for the Town Hall project total \$524,833.

As noted in a recent Town Forum post, the Town's carryover from fiscal year 2023 to fiscal year 2024 exceeded the budgeted amount. The carryover amount was \$327,036 (this figure was misstated in the resident post) compared to the budgeted amount of \$136,000. How this additional \$191,036 will be allocated will be determined by the Town Council at a future date.

Town staff has researched possible federal and state capital funding programs. Awards are made through a competitive application process, so funding through these programs is not a given. Staff has also been in touch with the Maryland Local Government

Infrastructure Program staff, should the Mayor and Town Council decide to pursue a bond issuance.

Q6. What are the next steps? How will the resident feedback be compiled and shared?

The renovation of Town Hall will be discussed at the October 9 Town Council meeting. The Mayor's goal is to try and get a better sense of what potential project elements should no longer be considered and which are still of interest. As part of the background materials for that discussion, staff will provide the results of the online survey. The feedback from the September 19 public hearing will be included in the agenda packet in the form of meeting minutes.

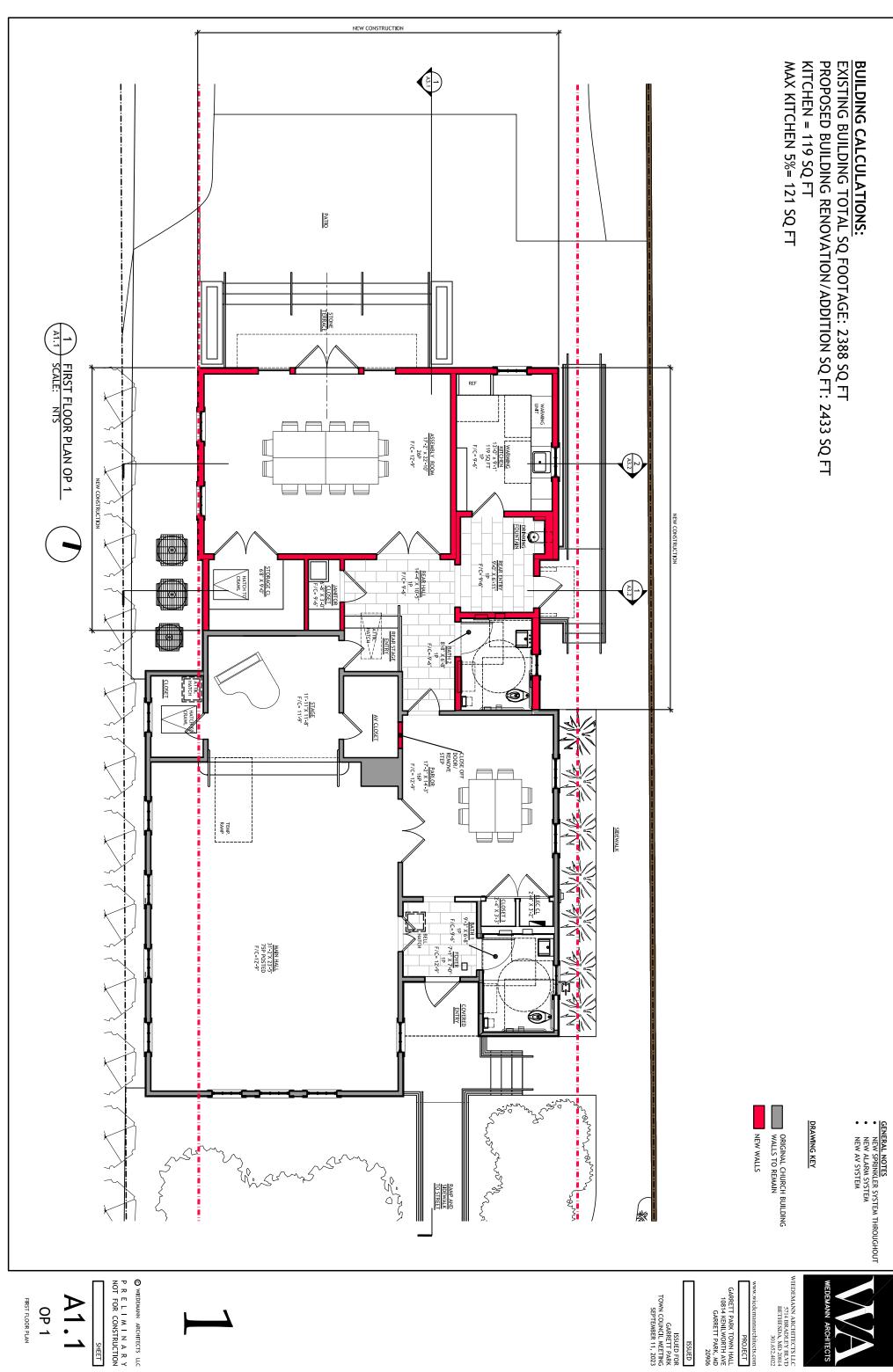
The Town's contract with Wiedemann contemplated the possibility of an additional concept design, and it includes pricing for that. Whether there is a fourth concept design and what would be included in one have not been determined. This will likely be one of the discussion points at the October 9 Town Council meeting.



EXISTING FIRST FLOOR DIAGRAM

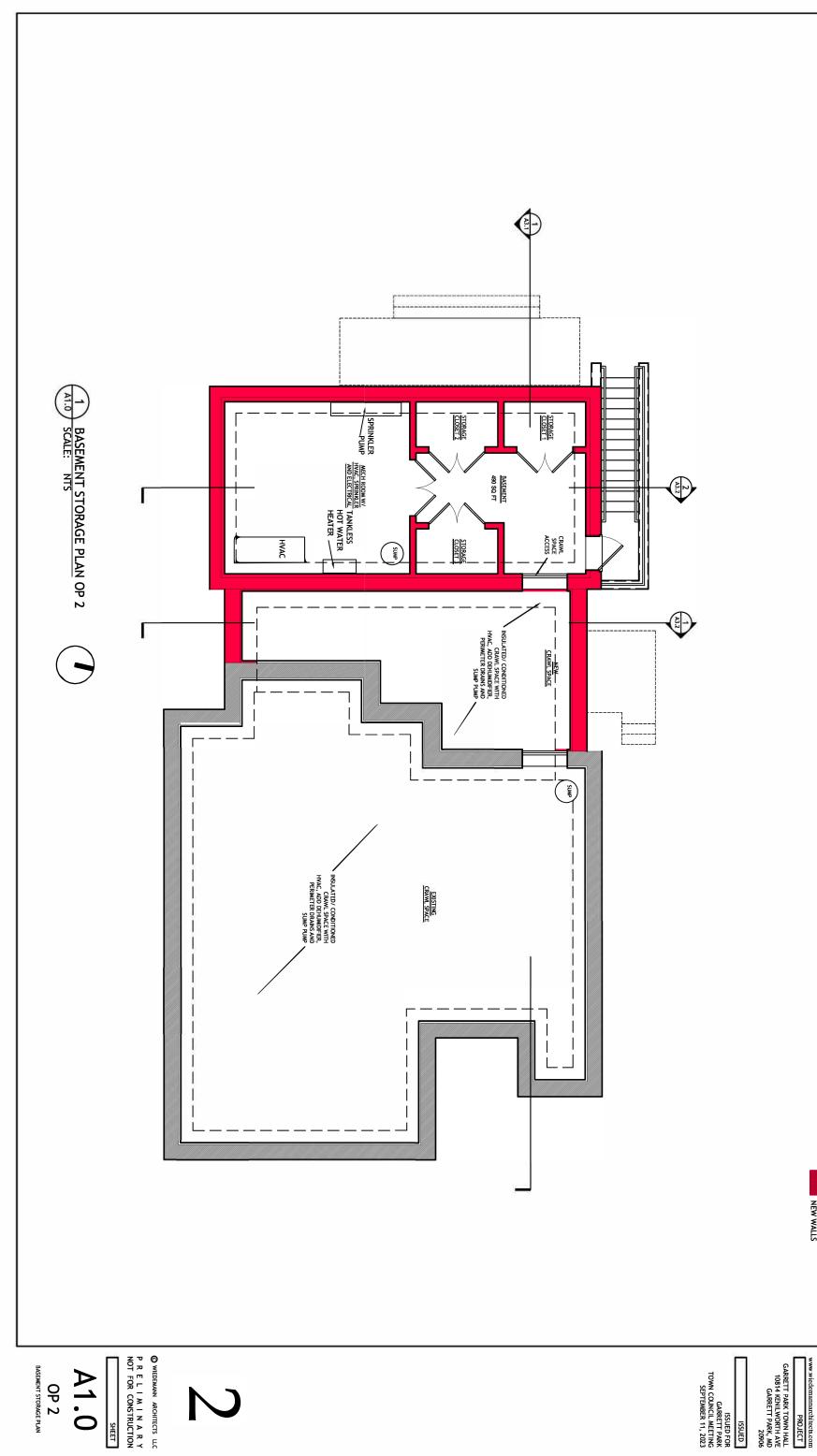
EX1.1

WIEDEMANN ARCHITECTS LLC 5714 BRADLEY BLVD BETHESDA, MD 20814 301.632.4022



ISSUED FOR GARRETT PARK TOWN COUNCIL MEETING SEPTEMBER 11, 2023

WIEDEMANN ARCHITECTS LLC 5714 BRADLEY BLVD BETHESDA, MD 20814 301.682.4022



DRAWING KEY

GENERAL NOTES

NEW SPRINKLER SYSTEM THROUGHOUT

NEW ALARM SYSTEM

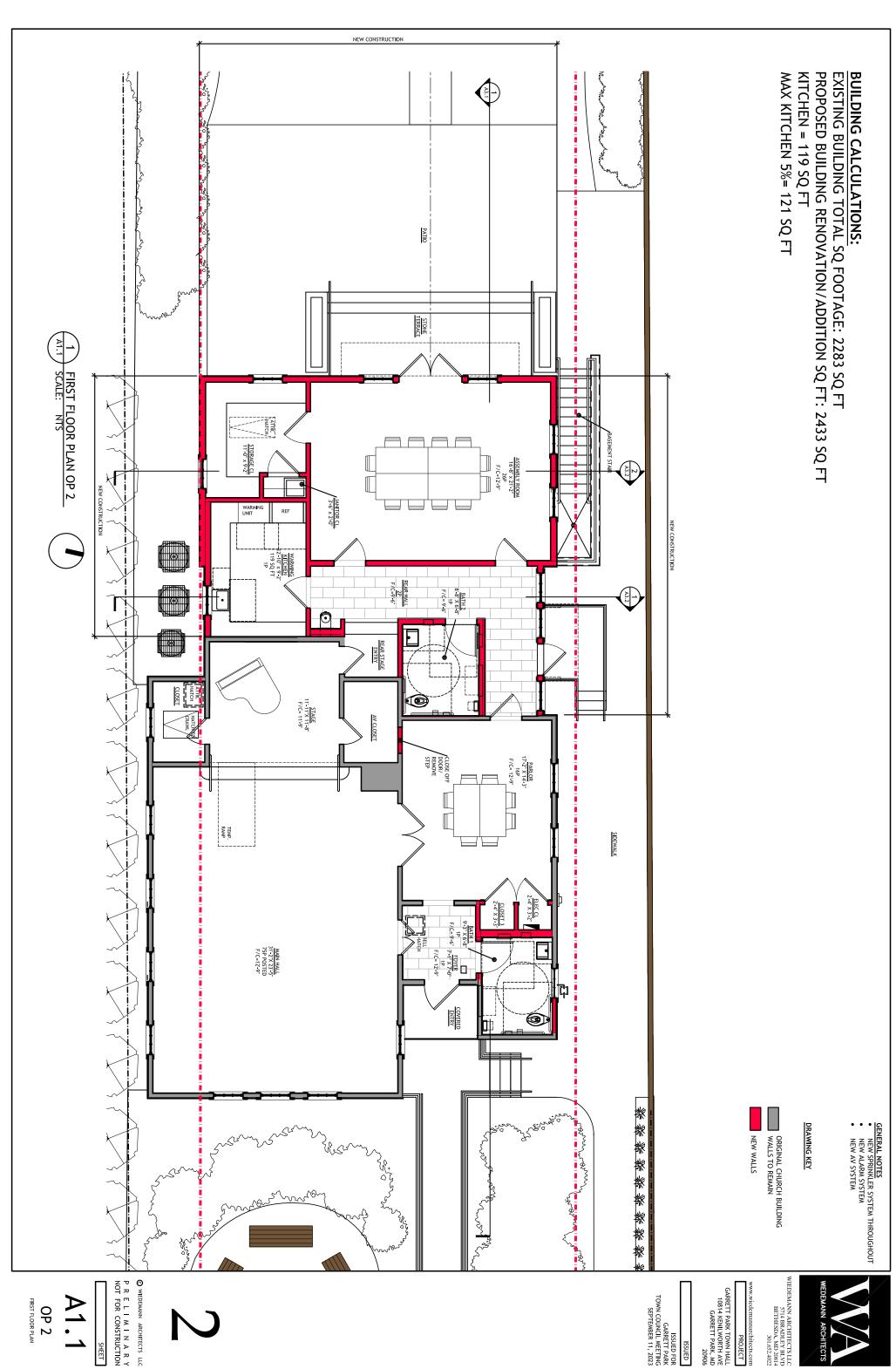
NEW AV SYSTEM

ORIGINAL CHURCH BUILDING
WALLS TO REMAIN

NEW WALLS

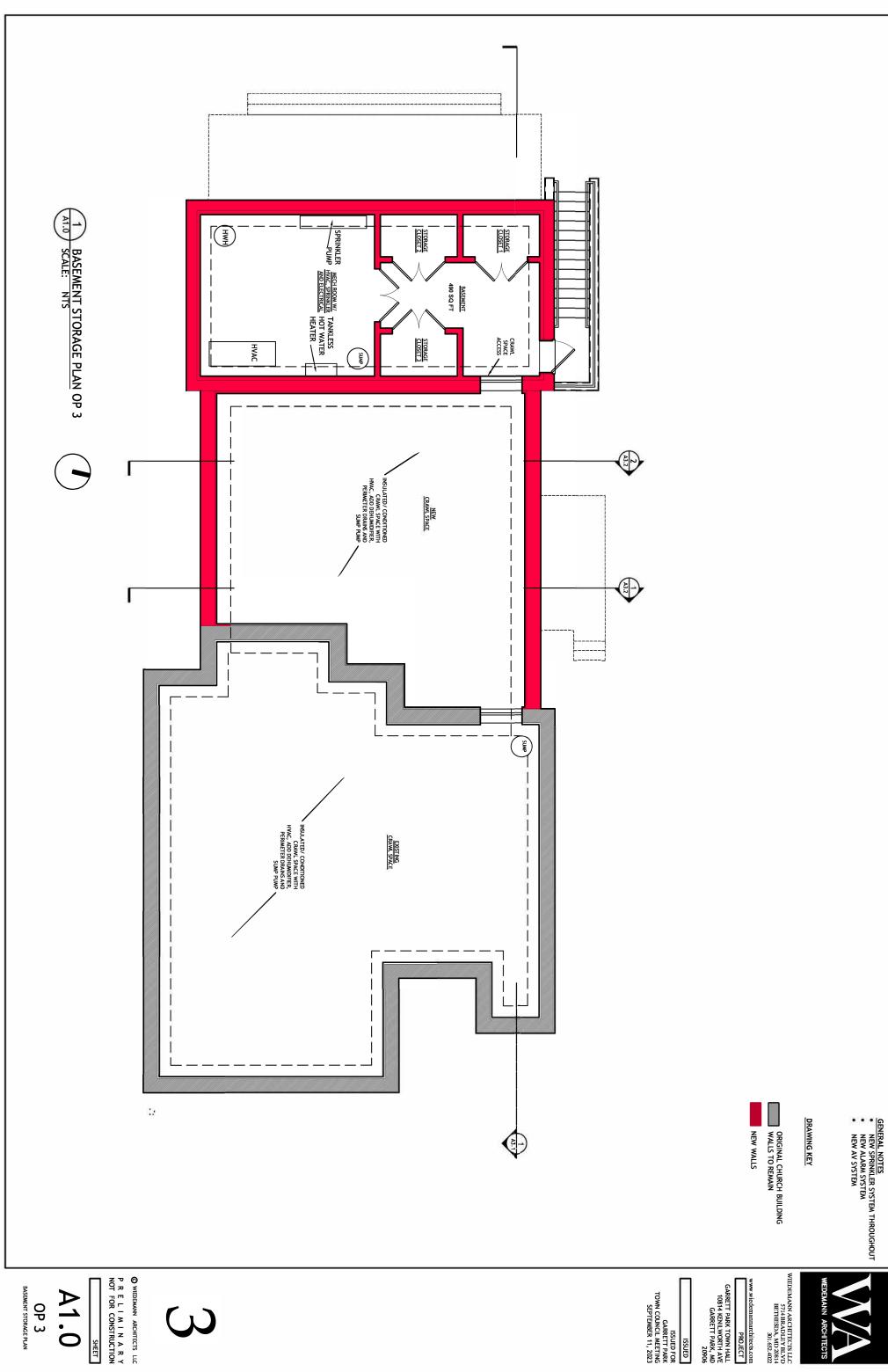
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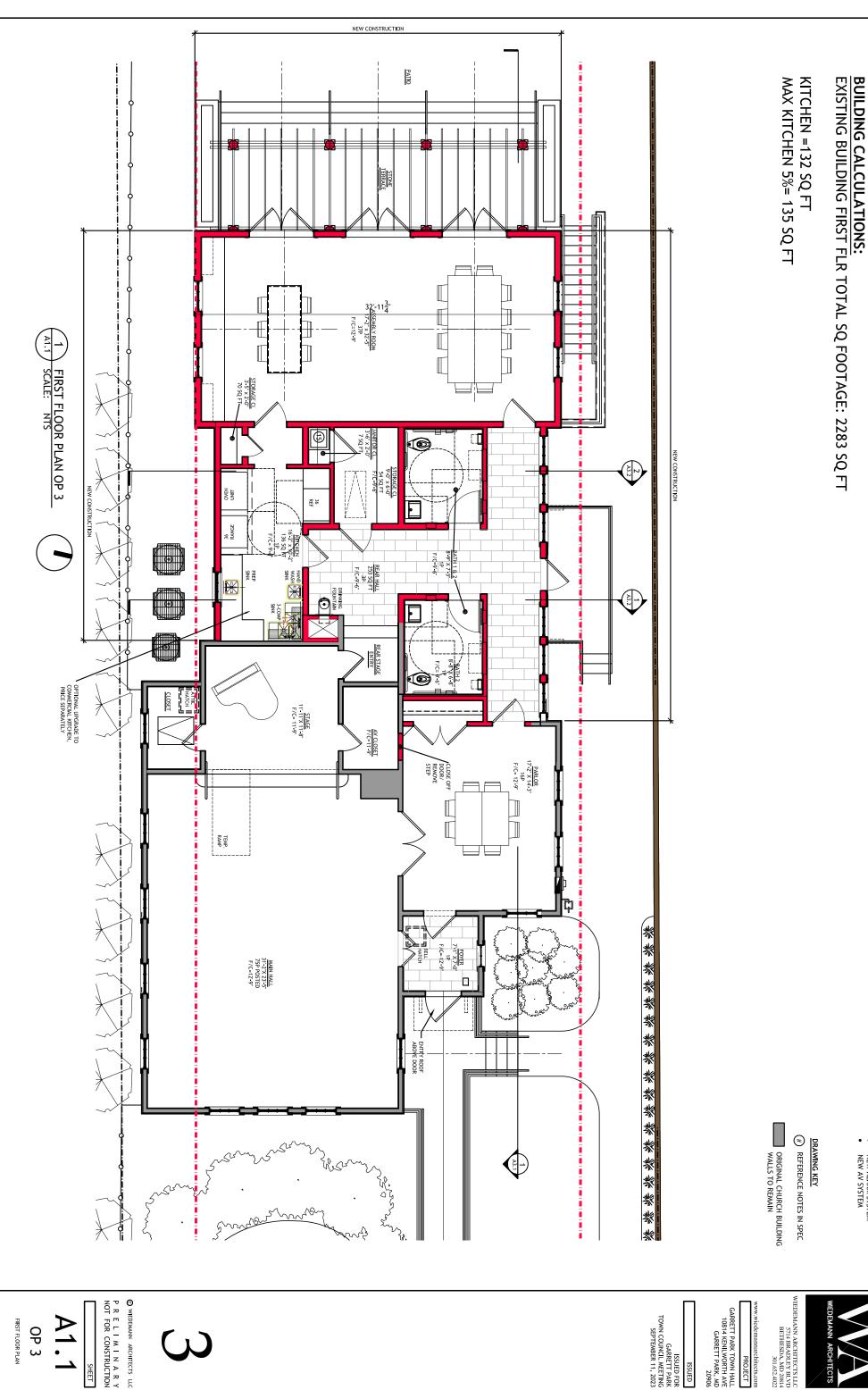
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ISSUED FOR GARRETT PARK TOWN COUNCIL MEETING SEPTEMBER 11, 2023

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NEW SPRINKLER SYSTEM THROUGHOUT
 NEW ALARM SYSTEM
 NEW AV SYSTEM

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GARRETT PARK TOWN HALL 10814 KENILWORTH AVE GARRETT PARK, MD 20906

ISSUED FOR GARRETT PARK TOWN COUNCIL MEETING SEPTEMBER 11, 2023

OP 3