

Alterations to a Designated Heritage Property - 160 Gerrard Street East (Allan Gardens)

Date: May 25, 2021
To: Toronto Preservation Board
Toronto and East York Community Council
From: Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, Urban Design, City Planning
Wards: Toronto Centre, Ward 13

SUMMARY

This report recommends that City Council approve the alterations proposed for Allan Gardens at 160 Gerrard Street East, a Part IV designated heritage property. The proposal is for the reinstatement of the central entrance to the Palm House, the alteration of the existing Palm House entrances in the north and south pavilions, the alteration of the existing north and south interior doorways, and the replacement of the wall and window glazing with a new aluminum or fibreglass glazing system.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, Urban Design, City Planning recommends that:

1. City Council approve the alterations to the heritage property at 160 Gerrard Street East (Allan Gardens), in accordance with Section 33 of the Ontario Heritage Act, to allow for the continued use of the greenhouses on the lands known municipally in the year 2021 as 160 Gerrard Street East with such alterations substantially in accordance with plans and drawings dated April 2, 2021, prepared by Zeidler Architecture, and on file with the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning; and the Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA), prepared by AREA, Architects Rasch Eckler Associates Ltd., dated May 4, 2021 and on file with the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, all subject to and in accordance with a Conservation Plan satisfactory to the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning and subject to the following additional conditions:
 - a. That prior to the issuance of any permit for all or any part of the property at 160 Gerrard Street East (Allan Gardens), including a heritage permit or a building permit, but excluding permits for repairs and maintenance and usual and minor works for the existing heritage building as are acceptable to the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, the owner shall:

1. Provide a detailed Conservation Plan, prepared by a qualified heritage consultant that is consistent with the conservation strategy set out in the Heritage Impact Assessment for 160 Gerrard Street East prepared by AREA, Architects Rasch Eckler Associates Ltd., dated May 4, 2021, to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning.
2. Provide building permit drawings, including notes and specifications for the conservation and protective measures keyed to the approved Conservation Plan required in Recommendation 1.a.1 including a description of materials and finishes, to be prepared by the project architect and a qualified heritage consultant to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning.
3. Provide an Interpretation Plan for the subject property, to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning and thereafter shall implement such Plan to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning.
4. Provide full documentation of the existing heritage properties, including two (2) printed sets of archival quality 8" x 10" colour photographs with borders in a glossy or semi-gloss finish and one (1) digital set on a CD in tiff format and 600 dpi resolution keyed to a location map, elevations and measured drawings, and copies of all existing interior floor plans and original drawings as may be available, to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report.

DECISION HISTORY

The property at 160 Gerrard Street East containing Allan Gardens was listed on the former City of Toronto inaugural Inventory of Heritage Properties on June 20, 1973 and designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act on July 20, 1986 by By-Law 418-1986.

At its meeting of September 28, 29, 30 and October 1, 2004, City Council approved amending of the designating By-Law to update the Reasons for Designation to include additional heritage resources, particularly the relocated University of Toronto Greenhouse that is now known as the Children's Conservatory.

At its meeting of October 2, 2012, City Council adopted amending By-Law 1091-2013 to revise the Reasons for Designation in accordance with the Ontario Heritage Act.
<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2012/te/bgrd/backgroundfile-49946.pdf>

On March 10, 2016, City Council approved alterations to Allan Gardens at 160 Gerrard Street East to allow for the replacement of the existing link building between the Palm House and the Boiler House with construction of a new glazed vestibule, the construction of new washrooms in the existing Administrative Building, and the construction of a new glazed addition at the southeast corner of the Administrative Building.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2016.TE14.10>

BACKGROUND

Heritage Property

Established in the mid-19th century, Allan Gardens is a rare surviving example of a botanic gardens and public park. Allan Gardens contains a unique collection of greenhouses associated with a public garden that illustrates the evolution of glass technology from the Edwardian Era to the later 20th century. The site is a prominent landmark with its open space, iconic structures and special features that reflect the history of horticulture in the City.

Area Context

The property is located within Toronto's downtown east neighbourhood. The property defines the northern boundary of the Garden District Heritage Conservation District, which has been adopted by City Council but is currently under appeal to the Local Planning Appeals Tribunal. The area "is a cultural heritage landscape that was planned in the mid-19th century as a residential enclave anchored by Allan Gardens to the north with the Moss Park estate lands to the south" (Garden District Heritage Conservation District Plan, 4.1).

Adjacent Heritage Properties

Allan Gardens is adjacent to the Cabbagetown Northwest Heritage Conservation District, the Cabbagetown Southwest Heritage Conservation District Study area, and a number of properties that are listed on the City's Heritage Register and designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.

The following properties are adjacent to the subject site:

306 Sherbourne Street (formerly 193 Gerrard Street East)

The property located at 306 Sherbourne Street (formerly 193 Gerrard Street East) contains a pair of semi-detached houses. The property is designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act by City of Toronto By-Law 497-2012.

380 Sherbourne Street

The property at 380 Sherbourne Street contains a house constructed for A.M. Orpen, in 1900. This property was listed by the City of Toronto on the Inventory of Heritage Properties (now the Heritage Register) on September 17, 1984.

130 Gerrard Street East

The property at 130 Gerrard Street East contains the Jarvis St. Baptist Church, constructed in 1875 and designed by Langley & Burke. It is designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act by City of Toronto By-Law 281-1999.

189 and 191 Gerrard Street East

The properties at 189 and 191 Gerrard Street East contain a pair of semi-detached houses, constructed in 1880. The properties were listed by the City of Toronto on the Inventory of Heritage Properties (now the Heritage Register) on June 20, 1973.

280-290 Jarvis Street

The properties at 280-290 Jarvis Street contain two pairs of semi-detached houses, constructed in 1890 and 1891. The properties are designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act by City of Toronto By-Law 1124-2019.

300-304 Jarvis Street

The property at 300-304 Jarvis Street contains the Frontenac Arms Hotel, later the Essex Park Hotel, constructed in 1930 and designed by Joseph Thatcher. It is designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act by City of Toronto By-Law 223-1988 and subject to a Heritage Easement Agreement.

314 Jarvis Street

The property at 314 Jarvis Street contains the Dr. Charles Sheard House, constructed in 1865 and altered in 1901. The property is designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act by City of Toronto By-Law 81-1990 and subject to a Heritage Easement Agreement, which has been amended.

337 Jarvis Street

The property at 337 Jarvis Street contains the Samuel Platt House, constructed in 1849-1850. The property is designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act by City of Toronto By-Law 282-1999.

383 Jarvis Street

The property at 383 Jarvis Street contains St. Andrew's Church, constructed in 1878 and designed by Langley & Burke. This property was listed by the City of Toronto on the Inventory of Heritage Properties (now the Heritage Register) on March 31, 1980.

Alteration Proposal

The applicant proposes to make a number of alterations to the historic Palm House, located within Allan Gardens, to support its continued use as a greenhouse. The proposed alterations include changes to a number of entrances to increase functionality and accessibility, including the restoration of the central entrance to the Palm House, the alteration of the existing Palm House entrances in the north and south pavilions, and the alteration of the existing north and south interior doorways. Due to deterioration, the existing glazing is proposed to be replaced with new glazing with aluminum or fibreglass frames for increased durability.

Heritage Planning Framework

Provincial Policy Statement and Planning Act

The Planning Act and the associated Provincial Policy Statement guide development in the Province. The Act states that municipalities must have regard for matters of provincial interest. Section 2(d) specifically refers to "the conservation of features of significant architectural, cultural, historical, archaeological or scientific interest."

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS 2020) issued under the authority of Section 3 of the Planning Act provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. The PPS sets the policy foundation for regulating the development and use of land. Key objectives include: building strong communities; wise use and management of resources; and protecting public health and safety. The Planning Act requires that City Council's decisions affecting land use planning matters "be consistent with" the Provincial Policy Statement.

Policy 2.6.1 of the PPS directs that "Significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes shall be conserved." Properties included on the City's Heritage Register are considered to be significant in this context. "Conserved" is defined in the PPS as "the identification, protection, use and/or management of built heritage resources in a manner that ensures their cultural heritage value or interest is retained under the Ontario Heritage Act."

Policy 2.6.3 of the PPS directs that "planning authorities shall not permit development and site alteration on adjacent lands to protected heritage property except where the proposed development and site alteration has been evaluated and it has been demonstrated that the heritage attributes of the protected heritage property will be conserved."

Growth Plan

A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020) builds upon the policy foundation provided by the PPS and provides more specific land use planning policies to address issues facing the GGH region. The policies of the Growth Plan (2020) take precedence over the policies of the PPS to the extent of any conflict, except where the relevant legislation provides otherwise.

In accordance with Section 3 of the Planning Act all decisions of Council in respect of the exercise of any authority that affects a planning matter shall conform to the Growth Plan. Comments, submissions or advice affecting a planning matter that are provided by Council shall also conform to the Growth Plan.

Policy 4.2.7.1 of the Growth Plan states that “Cultural Heritage Resources will be conserved in order to foster a sense of place and benefit communities, particularly in strategic growth areas.”

City of Toronto Official Plan

This application has been reviewed against the policies of the City of Toronto Official Plan. The Plan provides the policy framework for heritage conservation in the City. Relevant policies include the following:

3.1.5.3 Heritage properties of cultural heritage value or interest, including Heritage Conservation Districts and archaeological sites that are publicly known will be protected by being designated under the Ontario Heritage Act and/or included on the Heritage Register.

3.1.5.4 Properties on the Heritage Register will be conserved and maintained consistent with the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, as revised from time to time and as adopted by Council.

3.1.5.5 Proposed alterations, development, and/or public works on or adjacent to, a property on the Heritage Register will ensure that the integrity of the heritage property’s cultural heritage value and attributes will be retained, prior to work commencing on the property and to the satisfaction of the City. Where a Heritage Impact Assessment is required in Schedule 3 of the Official Plan, it will describe and assess the potential impacts and mitigation strategies for the proposed alteration, development or public work.

3.1.5.26 New construction on, or adjacent to, a property on the Heritage Register will be designed to conserve the cultural heritage values, attributes and character of that property and to mitigate visual and physical impact on it.

Parks Canada Standards and Guidelines for Conservation of Historic Places in Canada

The Parks Canada Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada (Standards and Guidelines) is the official document guiding planning, stewardship and conservation approach for all listed and designated heritage resources within the City of Toronto. The General Standards (1-9) and the Standards for Rehabilitation (10-12) apply to this project.

<http://www.historicplaces.ca/en/pages/standards-normes.aspx>

Garden District Heritage Conservation District Plan

The Garden District Heritage Conservation District Plan has been adopted by City Council and is currently under appeal to the Local Planning Appeals Tribunal. As emerging policy, staff consider the consistency of development proposals with the Garden District Heritage Conservation District Plan. Section 8.1 of the District Plan on Allan Gardens refers to the Part IV designation By-Law for the property and clarifies that, "While Allan Gardens is identified as a contributing property in the Garden District HCD, the policies and guidelines contained in Section 6.0 of this Plan are not applicable to this property."

COMMENTS

Proposed Alterations

Alterations are proposed to the historic Palm House, located within Allan Gardens, to support its continued use and to address a number of concerns related to accessibility, safety, functionality and material deterioration.

Central Entrance

The original central east front entrance to the Palm House was removed in 1957 and replaced with entrances in the north and south pavilions. Now, the City proposes to reinstate the central entrance in its original location. The new entrance comprises a new projecting entry bay with double doors. The design of the new central entrance is inspired by the design of the original 1909-1910 entrance and portico but is subtly differentiated so that it is legible as a modern alteration and it is more functional. The original entrance had a single door with a segmental arch while the new entrance will have a double-door with a flat arch. The larger opening will allow for barrier-free access, will accommodate large heavy machinery and construction vehicles, and will enhance formal events like weddings. The materials and design of the proposed central entrance will closely match those of the Palm House.

Pavilion Entrances

The existing entrances within the north and south pavilions are proposed to be altered. The entrances were created in 1957 when the original central entrance was removed. While not original, the pavilion entrances have acquired heritage value and they are identified as heritage attributes of the property in the 2013 Reasons for Designation. The existing entrances are proposed to be altered to meet current accessibility standards. The existing doors and adjacent windows will be replaced with reproductions. The design of the replacement doors will complement the original design of the central entrance.

Interior Doorways

The existing north and south interior doorways were constructed to link the Palm House to the South Conservatory, constructed in 1956, and the North Conservatory, constructed in 1924. The two doorways are very similar in design and they have

deteriorated significantly over time due to moisture and water leakage. The proposal is to replace the deteriorated doorways with new door assemblies and to minimally enlarge the doorways to allow heavy machinery access to the greenhouses. The design of the doorways will complement the design of the surrounding windows through the number and location of divisions.

Glazing

The existing wall windows are wood and have deteriorated to the point that they cannot be reasonably repaired. The micro-climate within the greenhouses accelerates the deterioration of wood components. The proposal is to replace wood frames with a more durable material, either aluminum or fibreglass. The replacement windows will replicate the original profiles of the frames, sashes, rails, stiles and muntin bars. The design will be based on the original 1909 drawings.

The vertical windows in the clerestory bands at the base of the Palm House dome are proposed to be replaced with a combination of operable vents and fixed sashes. Eight operable vents are proposed to allow for passive cooling of the greenhouse. Both the operable vents and fixed sashes will be aluminum or fibreglass and designed to replicate the Union Jack pattern of the original windows.

The existing overhead glazing in the dome and cupolas is proposed to be replaced with laminated glass panels to address safety concerns. The existing plate glass panes have occasionally fallen, posing a risk of injury. The overhead glazing is not original; it was replaced in 1975 with aluminum frames due to the deterioration of the previous wood frames. The proposed replacement glazing will be engineered so that it can be walked on, allowing for maintenance of the greenhouse. The glazing will have a ceramic frit pattern to diffuse sunlight. Currently, the overhead glazing is whitewashed in the summer to diffuse light and the frit pattern would eliminate the need for whitewashing going forward. The frit pattern is expected to have minimal heritage impact as it will be virtually transparent.

Adjacent Heritage Resources

The proposal conserves the cultural heritage value of the adjacent Heritage Conservation Districts, Part IV heritage designated properties and listed heritage properties. The alterations to the existing Palm House building are minor and they are not expected to have any impact on adjacent heritage properties.

Conservation Plan

Should Council approve the proposed conservation strategy, prior to the issuance of the first permit for the alterations, the applicant is required to submit a Conservation Plan for the work described in the Heritage Impact Assessment prepared by a qualified heritage professional to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning. The Conservation Plan should detail all of the recommended interventions and conservation work including: any recommended restoration work; a detailed plan describing how the heritage building will be protected during construction; a schedule of short and long-term maintenance requirements; and an estimated costs for all conservation work.

Heritage Interpretation Plan

Should Council approve the proposed conservation strategy, prior to building permit approval for the proposed development, the applicant should be required to submit a Heritage Interpretation Plan to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning. The interpretation strategy should focus on contextualizing the proposed alterations and the describing the changes to the Palm House over time.

CONCLUSION

Heritage Planning staff has reviewed the proposed alterations to the Part IV designated heritage property of Allan Gardens at 160 Gerrard Street East and is satisfied the proposal meets the intent of the Planning Act, the Provincial Policy Statement, the Growth Plan (2020) and the City of Toronto's Official Plan heritage policies in conjunction with the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada. Overall, Staff supports the proposed conservation strategy and conclude that it meets the intent of Policy 3.1.5.27 as the cultural heritage value of the property will be conserved and the heritage impacts of the proposal are minor and appropriately mitigated.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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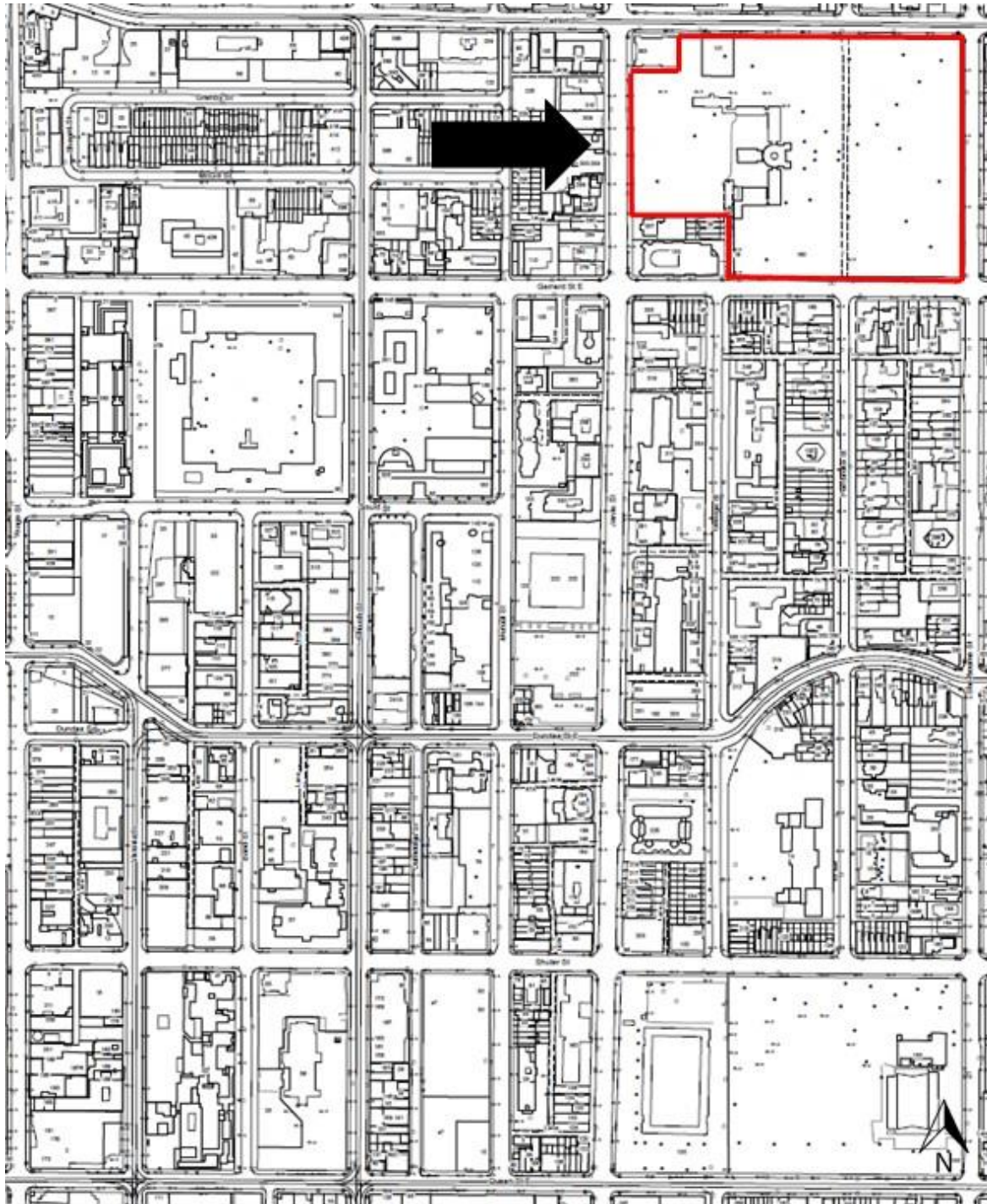
ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 - Location Map
Attachment 2 - Selected Drawings

LOCATION MAP

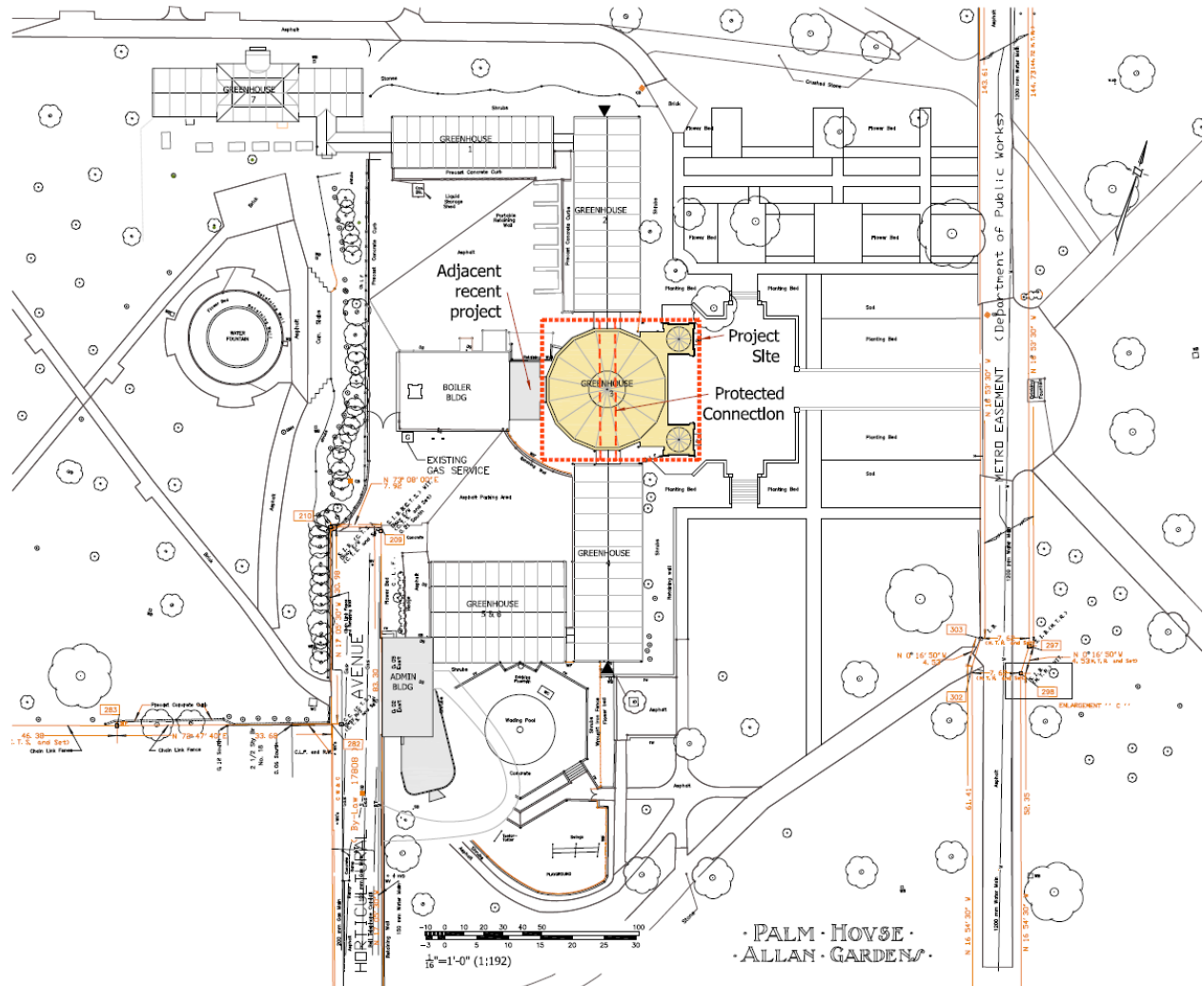
ATTACHMENT 1

160 GERRARD STREET EAST (ALLAN GARDENS)



Location Map, showing the property at 160 Gerrard Street East (Allan Gardens), indicated by the arrow. The property boundaries are approximate. (Property Data Map, City of Toronto)

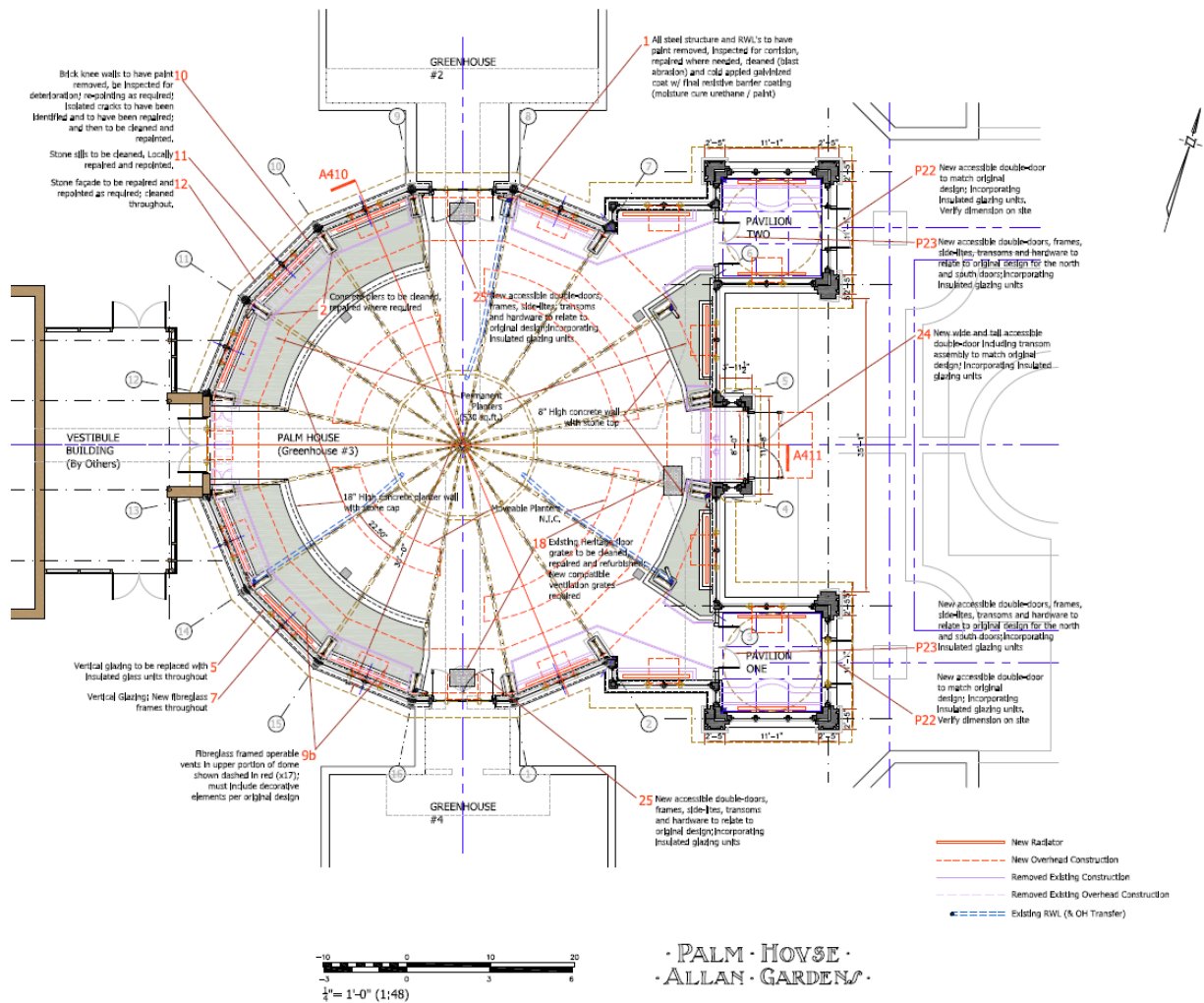
160 GERRARD STREET EAST (ALLAN GARDENS)



Site Plan

SELECTED DRAWINGS

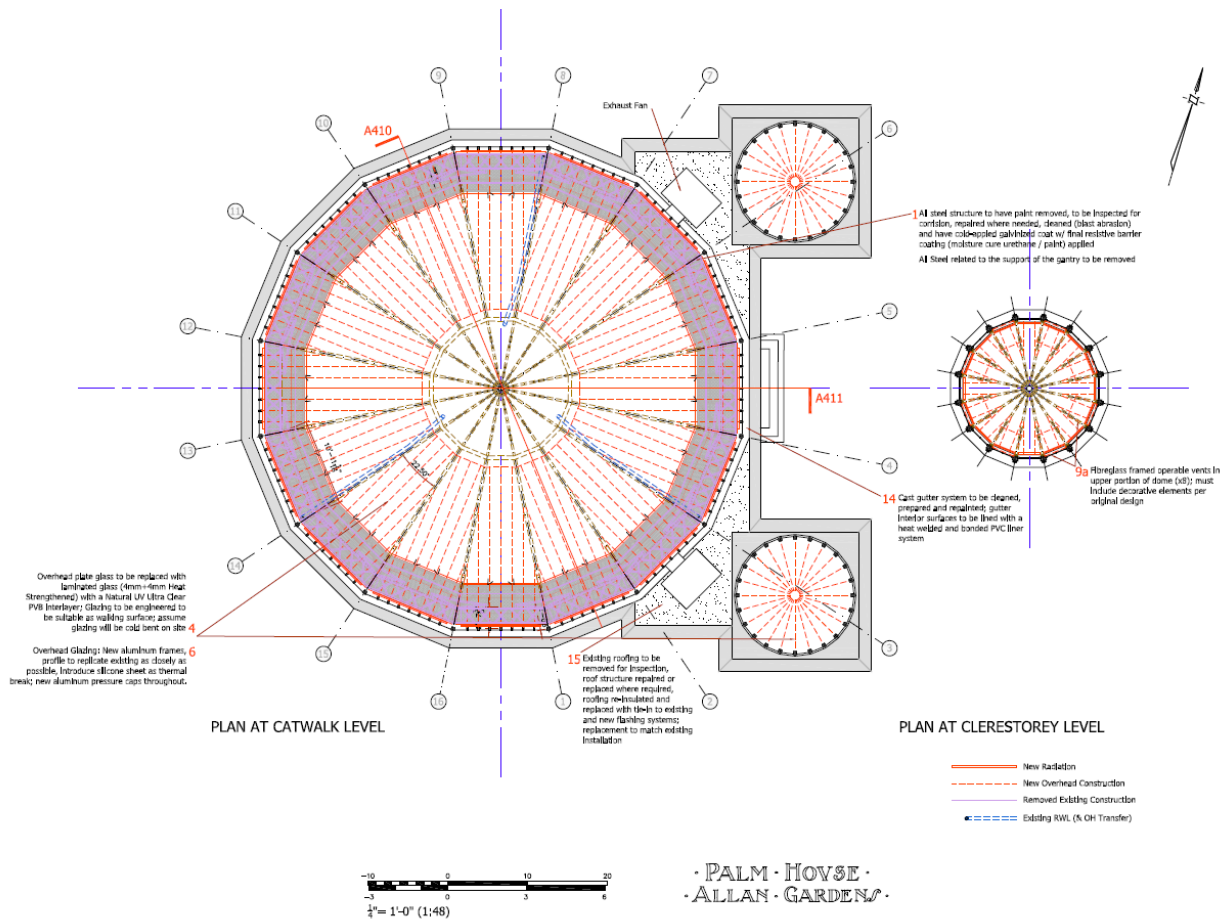
160 GERRARD STREET EAST (ALLAN GARDENS)



Ground Floor Plan

SELECTED DRAWINGS

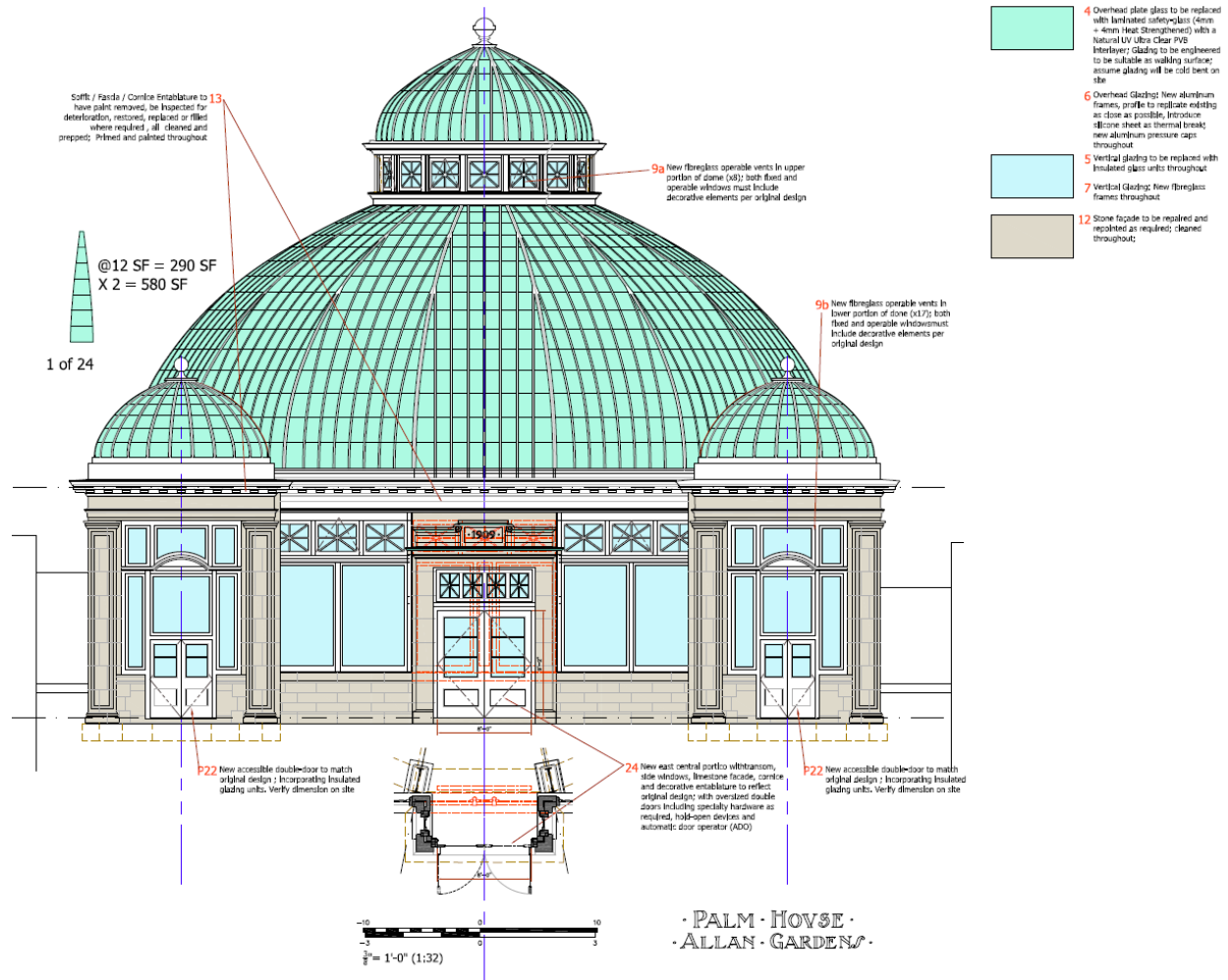
160 GERRARD STREET EAST (ALLAN GARDENS)



Upper Level Plans

SELECTED DRAWINGS

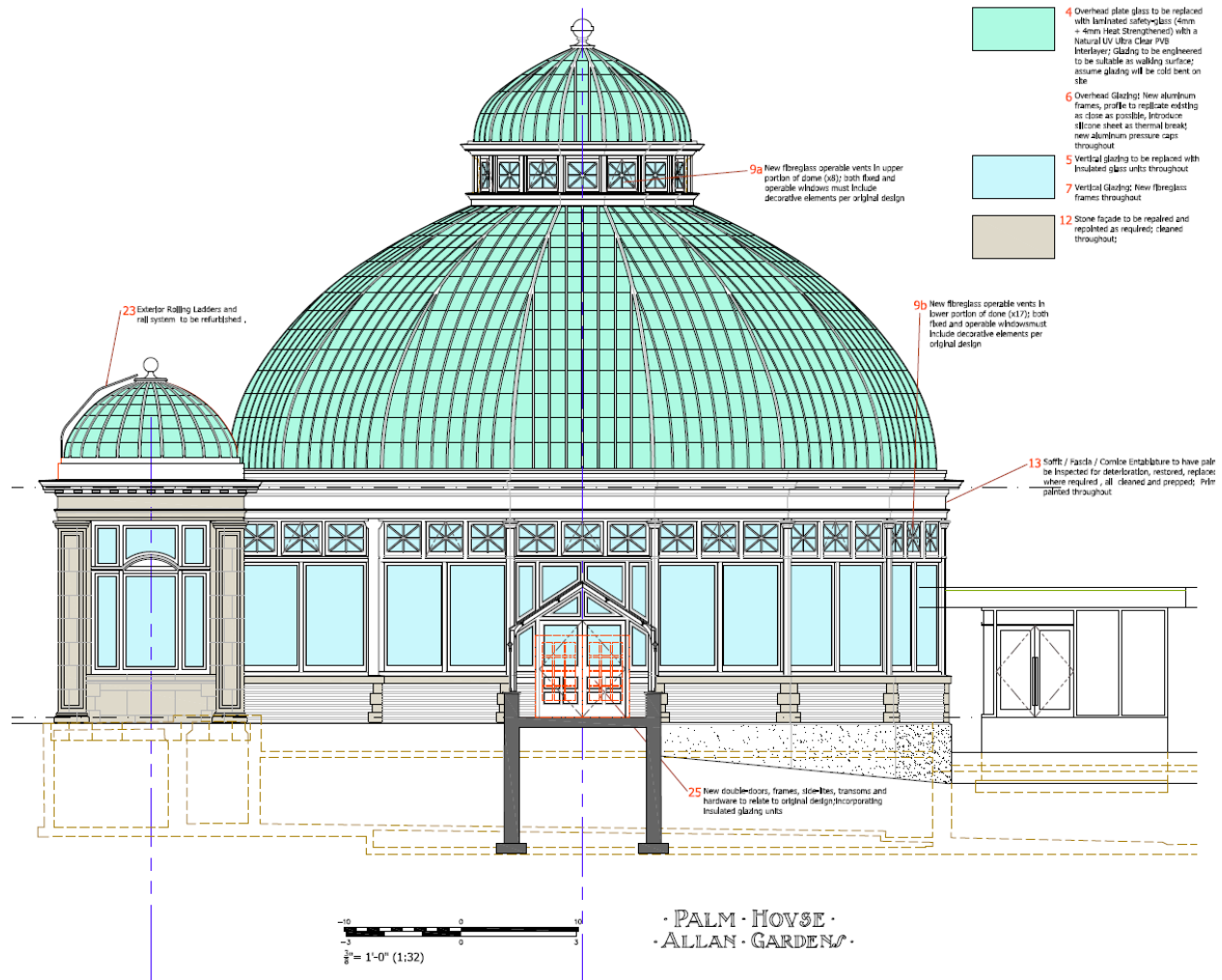
160 GERRARD STREET EAST (ALLAN GARDENS)



East Elevation

SELECTED DRAWINGS

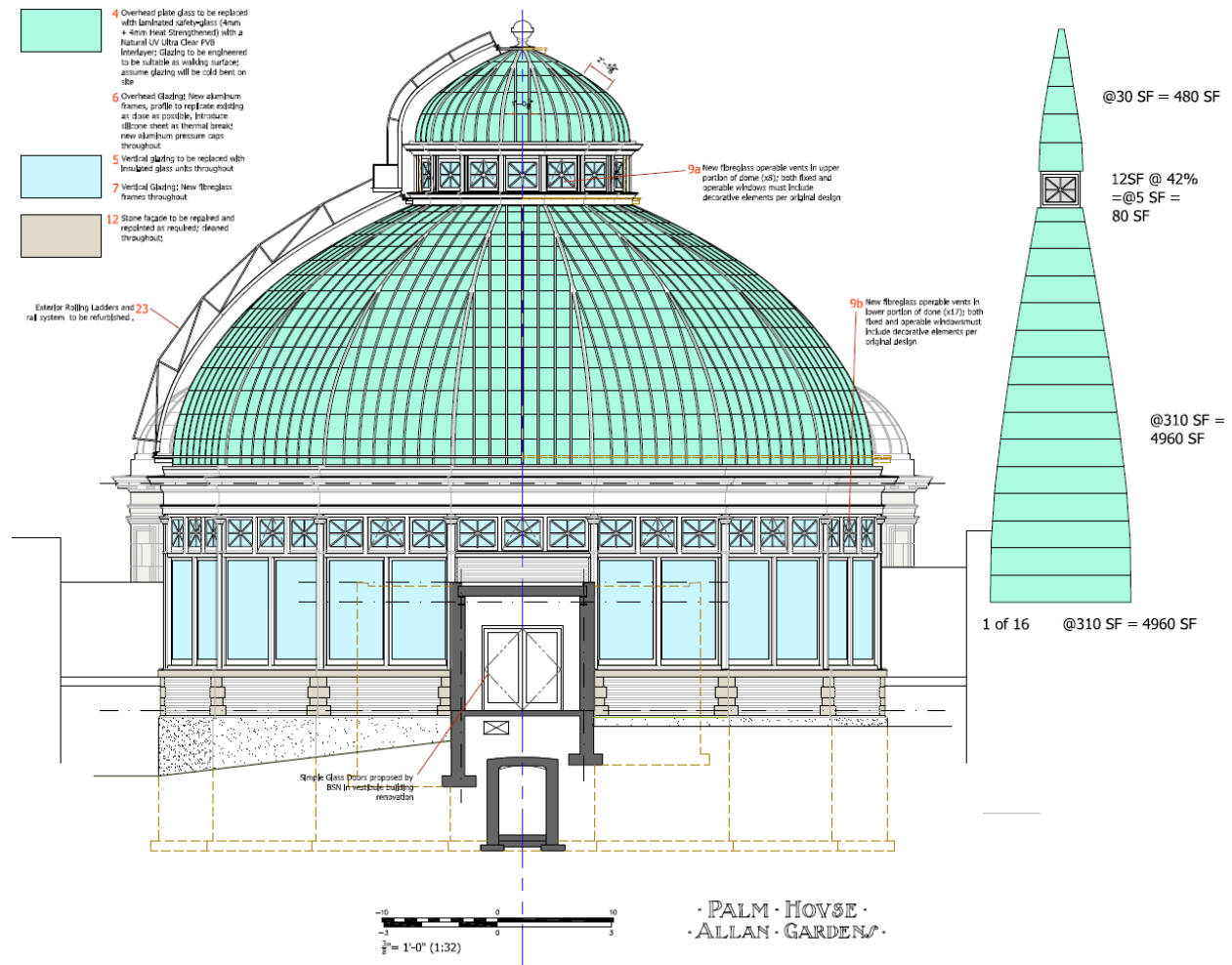
160 GERRARD STREET EAST (ALLAN GARDENS)



North Elevation (South Similar)

SELECTED DRAWINGS

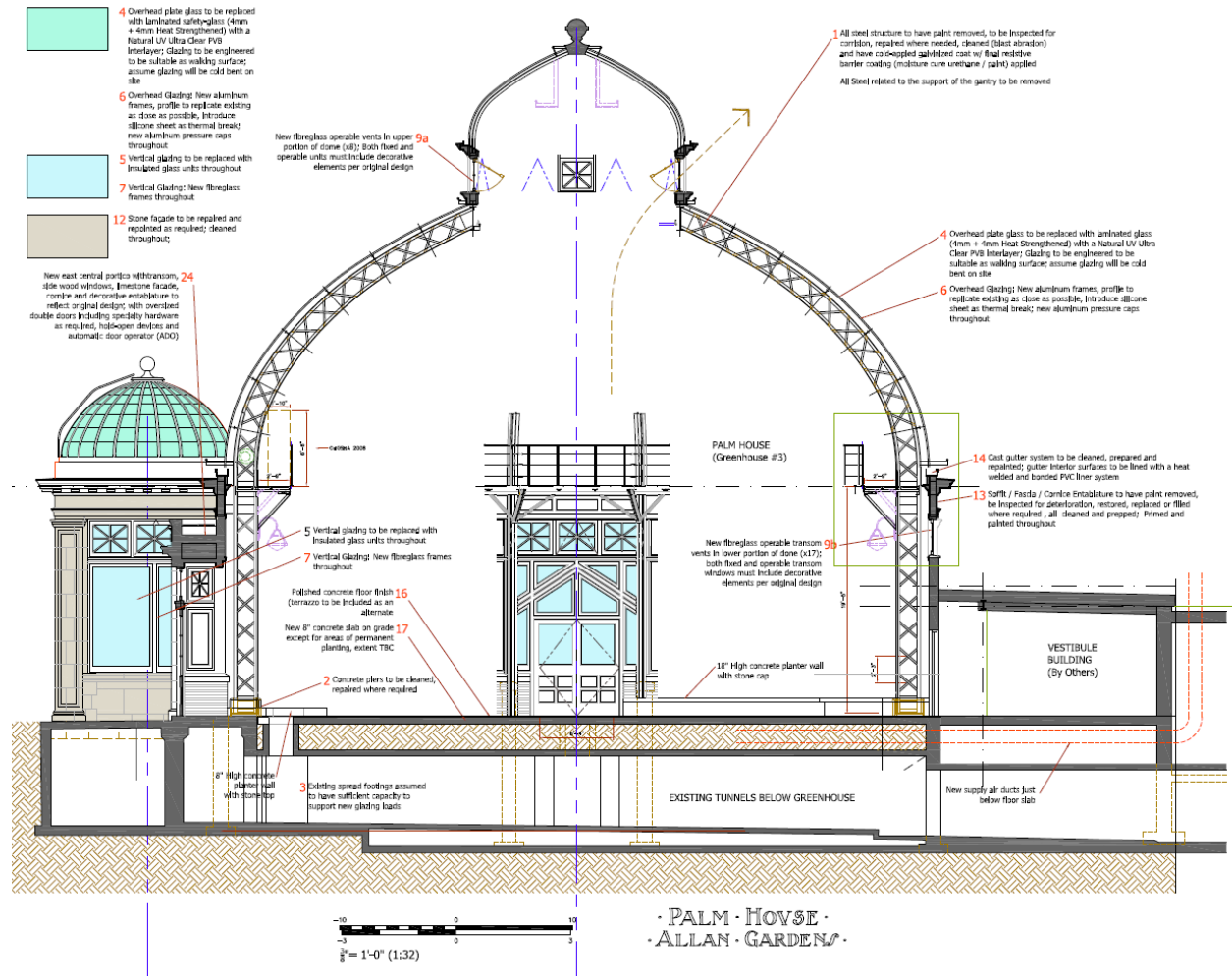
160 GERRARD STREET EAST (ALLAN GARDENS)



West Elevation

SELECTED DRAWINGS

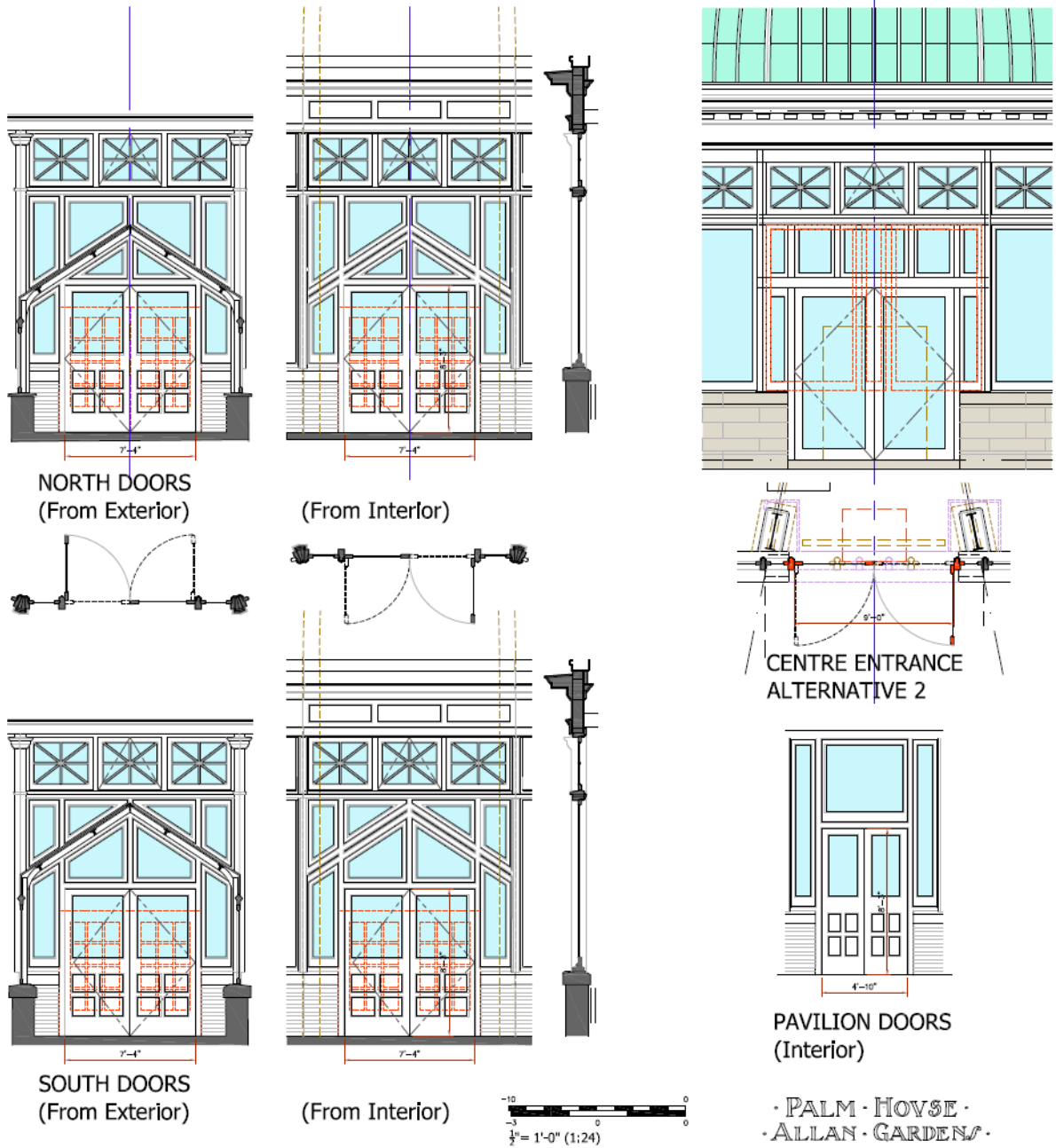
160 GERRARD STREET EAST (ALLAN GARDENS)



East/West Section

SELECTED DRAWINGS

160 GERRARD STREET EAST (ALLAN GARDENS)



Entrance Details