

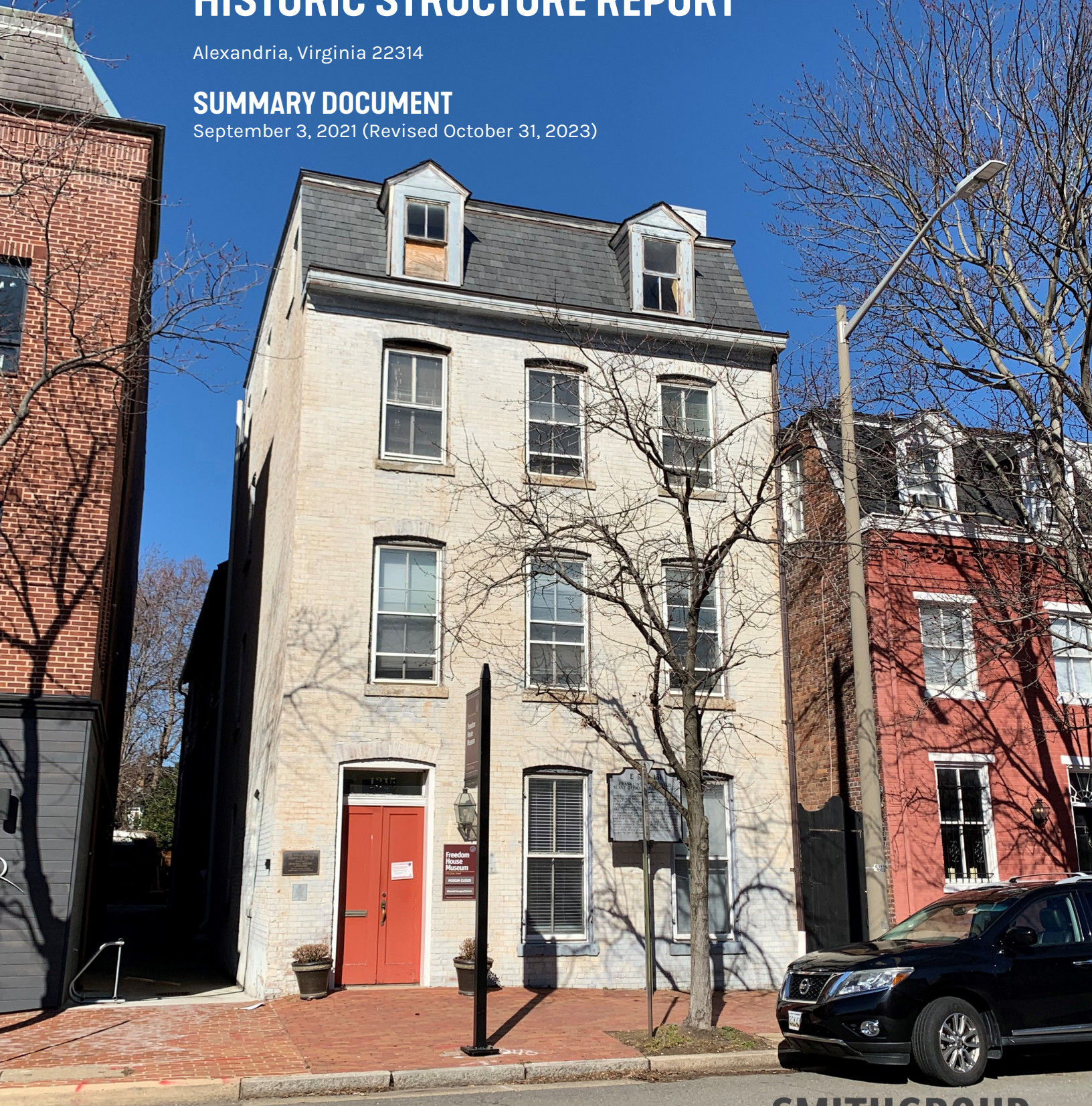
City of Alexandria, Virginia - Department of Project Implementation

# 1315 DUKE STREET HISTORIC STRUCTURE REPORT

Alexandria, Virginia 22314

## SUMMARY DOCUMENT

September 3, 2021 (Revised October 31, 2023)



SMITHGROUP

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## BUILDING DATA

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<b>Preferred Structure Name:</b>	1315 Duke Street
<b>Other Historic Names Used:</b>	Franklin & Armfield Office Freedom House
<b>Property Location:</b>	1315 Duke Street Alexandria, VA 22314
<b>Property Owner:</b>	City of Alexandria, VA
<b>National Register Information:</b>	June 2, 1978; Record Number 78003146
<b>National Historic Landmark Listing:</b>	June 2, 1978
<b>Virginia Historic Landmark Listing:</b>	October 16, 1979
<b>VDHR Architecture ID:</b>	100-0105
<b>Archaeological Resource Site Number:</b>	44AX0075
<b>Original Construction Date:</b>	c. 1812 -1813
<b>Period of Significance:</b>	1828-1861
<b>Architectural Style:</b>	Federal/ Second Empire
<b>Current Use:</b>	Museum/ Office
<b>Building Gross Square Feet:</b>	Basement: 922 sf First Floor: 2,639 sf Second Floor: 2,639 sf Third Floor: 2,639 sf Fourth Floor/ Mezzanine: 922 sf TOTAL: 9,761 sf

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## INTRODUCTION

In January of 2021, the City of Alexandria, Virginia Office of Historic Alexandria (OHA) contracted SmithGroup to provide a Historic Structure Report (HSR) for 1315 Duke Street (also known as Freedom House) located in Alexandria, Virginia. 1315 Duke Street once served as the headquarters of Franklin & Armfield, the largest domestic slave trading firm in the United States. OHA plans to use this HSR as a road map for the future rehabilitation of the building to become a museum dedicated to telling the history of slave trade on this site as well as the legacy of domestic slavery in the Chesapeake Region and across the nation.

## BUILDING BACKGROUND

The three-story brick townhouse at 1315 Duke Street was constructed in 1812 as the residence of Robert Young, Brigadier General of the second Militia of the District of Columbia. By 1828, it was leased by Isaac Franklin and John Armfield and used as a warehouse for slaves being extracted from Northern Virginia and sent to the deep south to enter a life of slavery. Franklin and Armfield were in this business until 1837, exploiting over 8,500 persons and sending them to cotton and sugar plantations to live as slaves, supporting that southern agricultural economy.

Subsequent firms continued trafficking persons of color on this site. A sign seen in Civil War era photographs has the name of Price, Birch & Co., a firm that continued Franklin & Armfield's line of business. During the Civil War the building and surrounding site were used by the Union Troops as a military prison for deserters, the L'Ouverture Hospital for black soldiers, and the barracks for those persons who fled the confederate states and sought refuge with Union troops. The building was subsequently converted to a multi-occupant boarding facility and modified yet again to become office space.

1315 Duke Street is currently being used as an office building with a small Museum located in the basement. The City of Alexandria purchased the property in March 2020 when it was being used as the headquarters of the Northern Virginia Urban League (NVUL). The NVUL created the basement exhibit on the history of the site in 2008. It is the intention of the OHA to renovate the building and to maintain it as a Museum.

## TEAM ASSEMBLY

To prepare this HSR a comprehensive team of consultants was assembled to address all aspects of analyzing the existing historic resource. The team assembled to complete this work included the following consultants:

**SmithGroup** - Architecture, Historic Preservation, Mechanical/ Electrical/ Plumbing Engineering, Fire and Life Safety Engineering, Landscape Design

**Robinson & Associates, Inc.** - Architectural and Regional History

**Silman** - Structural Engineering

**Jablonski Building Conservation, Inc.** - Materials Conservation & Analysis

## PROJECT SCOPE

Per the Scope of Work provided by the City of Alexandria, the HSR was to include a full analysis of 1315 Duke Street that augmented the historic research already developed by the City of Alexandria Office of Historic Alexandria Staff. This research was to support a comprehensive historical background and context regarding the property along with a chronology of its development and use. Additionally a full assessment of the building and its current systems was to be provided followed by recommendations to mitigate deficiencies that were identified. The HSR was guided by the identification of a Period of Significance to establish work recommendations and options for treatment and use.

Research and physical investigations were to clarify the following areas of the building's history:

- Building sequence of alterations through history
- Significance of the site
- Similarities to other Slave Pens in the Chesapeake Region

Documentation of the team research was to be provided in the following format:

- Existing building configuration in drawing format
- Digital scans that can translate to future 3D drawings and models
- Photographs that document existing conditions
- Bibliography that identifies primary sources

The conditions assessment was to identify deficiencies in building components and systems and make recommendations for correcting noted deficiencies for the following items:

- Exterior and interior building materials
- Exterior and interior building features and finishes
- Structural systems and building stability & per floor load capacity evaluation
- Interior space use and conditions
- Mechanical/Electrical/Plumbing systems
- Fire Alarm/Fire Protection/Life Safety Systems
- Materials testing and lab analysis
- Accessibility
- Code compliance

The HSR was to conclude with recommendations for specific treatment and use to prepare the building for appropriate interpretation as a Museum regarding slave trade on site and the significant role it played as part of domestic slavery in the Chesapeake Region.

## PRIOR RESEARCH AND DOCUMENTATION

OHA provided several previous studies and resources that served as the basis for the SmithGroup team's initial evaluations and analysis of both the physical fabric of the building and the developmental history. These resources included the following list items:

- [Building Property and History, Benjamin Skolnik, PhD, 2021](#)
- [Alexandria Slave Pen - Archeology of Urban Captivity, Artemel, et al. 1987](#)
- [National Register Nomination, 1976](#)

A more comprehensive list of all resources and documents that were used to develop historic content for the report can be found in Appendix C of the HSR.

## RESEARCH GOALS AND QUESTIONS

The scope of services included the requirement to address the following questions to the greatest extent possible in the research, analysis and documentation as part of the HSR development:

- Establish the general building sequence (construction/use/demolition/renovation).
- Establish if there is surviving fabric from the original residence and how much original fabric associated with the Period of Significance survives.
- Determine as best as possible what the original floor plan of the existing structure was.
- Use of the Basement during the Slave Pen era.
- How the First Floor functioned as a show room during the Slave Pen era.
- Determine the building alterations post-1861 to present.
- Determine as best as possible what surviving fabric survives from the slave pen period.
- Categorize remaining elements of the building and its modifications to periods.
- Explore possibility of returning south facade to its original appearance.

## PROCESS

The following steps were taken to inform the team of the history and evolution of the site and its surroundings. All of these exercises provided building forensics data that informed shaping a more accurate developmental history of the structure and site.

### SITE VISITS

The SmithGroup team visited the site multiple times to collectively document and analyze existing conditions and to try to synthesize historic research with on site conditions observations. These site visits were a critical part of the building forensics required to understand how the building evolved over time.

## REVIEW OF EXISTING DOCUMENTATION

In addition to reviewing the historic research documents provided by OHA, the SmithGroup team also reviewed many other existing documents that helped the team understand the evolution of the property over time. The documents included:

- Historic photographs ranging in date from 1836-1900
- Historic maps ranging in date from 1861 to 2019
- Drawings reflecting alterations to the building such as the 1985 renovation drawings created by Vello Dines AIA Architects as well as permit records from 1937-2011
- Previous reports that reviewed such things as hazardous materials and the fire alarm system
- Additional research on the slave trade such as A History of the Slave Trade In Washington, DC by Mary Beth Corrigan (2001) and John Armfield, Slave-Trader by Isabel Howell (1943)

## LASER SCANNING

As a means of documenting the site and the historic structure at 1315 Duke Street, SmithGroup used laser scanning technologies to obtain three dimensional data of existing conditions. This technology, in conjunction with hand measurements, is often used to gather highly accurate data for existing and historic properties. The scanner used for the documentation was a FARO 3D laser scanner. It is a surveying device (phase based) primarily suited for interior or close-up exterior scanning. The resulting point cloud images were able to support the creation of very accurate floor plans and elevations that were used as the basis for annotating observations during the conditions assessment. The point cloud that was the resulting byproduct of the scanning was also used to create a 3-D Revit model that was the basis for the developmental chronology diagrams to be used in the report. This point cloud also revealed some significant shifts in the structure that have put floor levels out of alignment around the existing central stair.

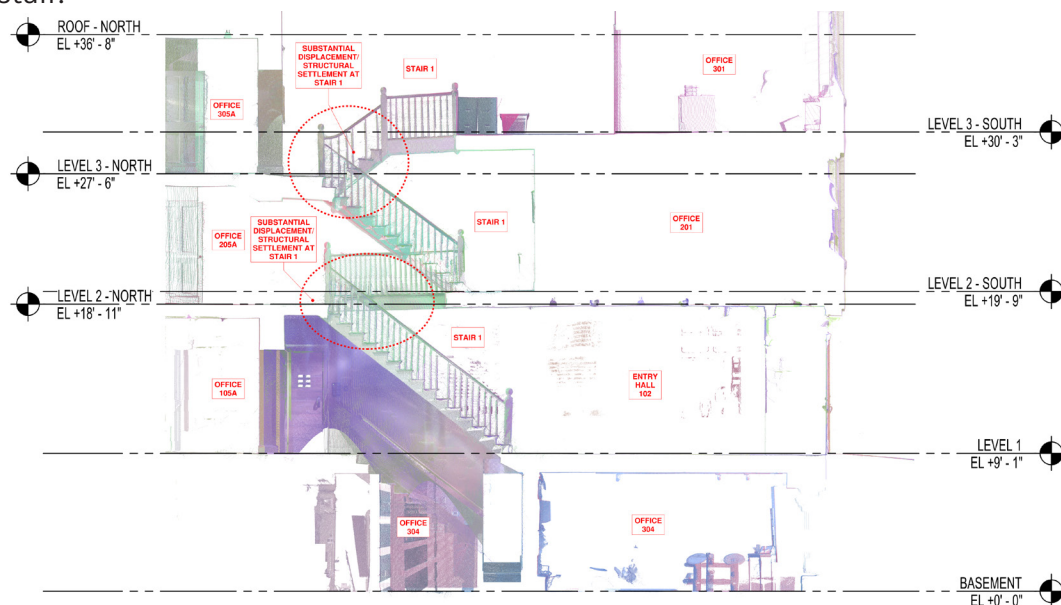


Figure 01: Section view of laser scan showing extent of structural deformation and settlement at Stair 1.



## INVESTIGATIVE PROBES

The SmithGroup team worked collectively to define investigative probes on site that would strategically remove existing building fabric to potentially expose older and more historic materials and finishes. The intent was for these probes to reveal more information about what historic fabric might still remain from earlier periods of construction and occupancy. Nineteen probes were implemented that cut openings in walls and peeled back finished on floors. The probes revealed doors that were covered over, existing structural framing, historic plaster finishes and older wood flooring. They also allowed for the team architectural conservator to obtain materials samples for analysis that would otherwise have not been available.



Figure 02: Images showing process of investigating behind existing modern drywall finishes to uncover evidence of historic 3-coat plaster.

## HISTORIC FINISHES ANALYSIS

Jablonski Building Conservation, Inc (JBC), as an integral part of the SmithGroup team, analyzed a limited number of paint and mortar samples from the interior and exterior of 1315 Duke Street. The purpose of this analysis was to assist with verifying construction history of the building through paint archaeology and mortar analysis. The analysis of the mortar was somewhat inclusive as the entire building was re-pointed in 1985 as part of a comprehensive restoration. However analysis of the exterior paint samples taken from brick and wood and the interior samples taken from plaster and wood confirmed that some of these finishes date to the 1870's or early 1900's.

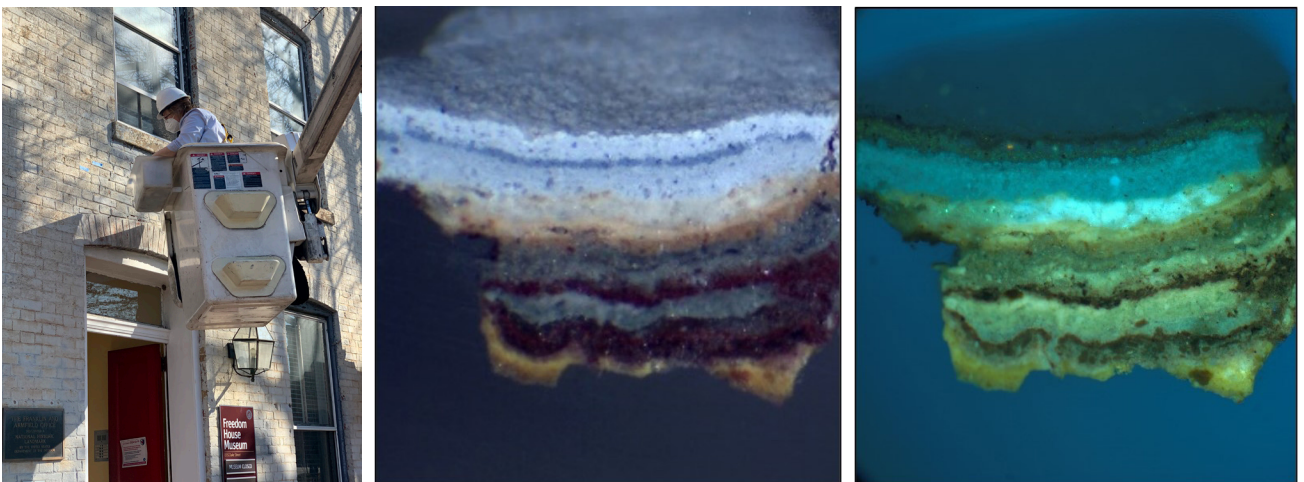


Figure 03: Images of process for obtaining historic material samples for further analysis, including exterior paint samples and subsequent photomicrograph analysis.

# HISTORIC IMAGE ANALYSIS

Several key historic photographs and illustrations from the mid 1800's served as critical resources for documenting how 1315 Duke Street appeared at the tail end of its period of significance. The SmithGroup team not only analyzed these photographs and illustrations in detail but also overlaid subsequent building information on them and annotated them to try to best identify what feature from that period might still remain. This analysis also assisted with supporting the developmental history of the site and building.

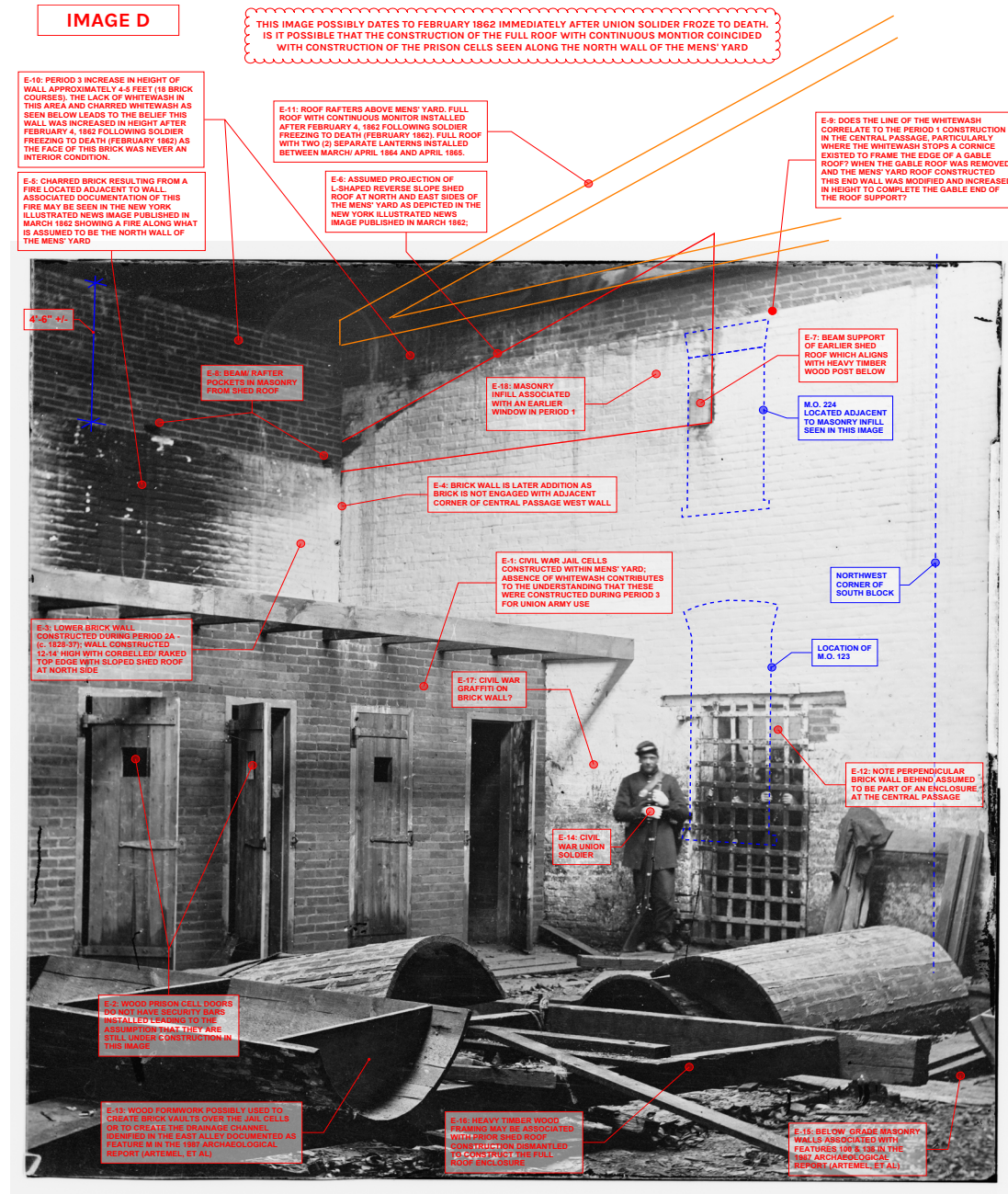


Figure 04: Sample of detailed analysis and comparison of historic photographs to existing conditions to understand the developmental history of the property and structure.

## **ADDITIONAL RESEARCH**

In addition to the historic information provided to the SmithGroup team by OHA, Robinson & Associates, the team historians, augmented this research by looking into the background of slavery in the Chesapeake region as well as the history and evolution of slave pens and their contribution to the slave trade economy.

## **BUILDING HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE**

Built in 1812-13 by Alexandria merchant Robert Young as a private residence, 1315 Duke Street originally stood three stories tall under a moderately-pitched, side-gable roof. The Federal-style, brick dwelling measured roughly 24 feet across by 38 feet deep. The front facade was divided into three bays, with the entrance bay on the west. The original windows were likely twelve-over-twelve, double-hung, wood sash windows. Tax records can be interpreted to indicate that within one year of the house's construction, Young also built a detached two-story brick outbuilding that was likely used as a kitchen-quarters. Research to date has not identified the architect or builder of the dwelling.

1315 Duke Street functioned as a residence for fifteen years before being leased, in 1828, to Franklin & Armfield, a newly established business partnership formed by slave traders Isaac Franklin (1789-1846) and John Armfield (1797-1871).

## **SLAVE TRADE**

One result of the federal prohibition of the trans-Atlantic slave trade in 1808 was an increase in the domestic trade of enslaved people. By that time, areas in the United States where the slavery system was established (Virginia, Maryland, and North Carolina) had a "surplus" of enslaved workers, many of whom were relocated by force to fulfill a demand for laborers both in the Deep South and the southwest frontier. Cotton planters at the time were faced with a growing demand for their crop on the world market and were eager to increase their workforce by purchasing enslaved people from the Upper South. Late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century legislative efforts to circumscribe the domestic trade of enslaved people were widely ignored and poorly enforced. This circumstance provided great latitude to itinerant speculators who purchased enslaved people in rural areas of the Upper South and transported them to markets in Savannah, Charleston, Mobile, Natchez, and New Orleans. During these early years of the interstate trade in enslaved labor, speculators were typically small-scale operators who worked alone out of taverns or hotels. Most transported bondspople either overland or by river. Chained caravans of slaves called coffles covered roughly 20 to 25 miles a day on foot.

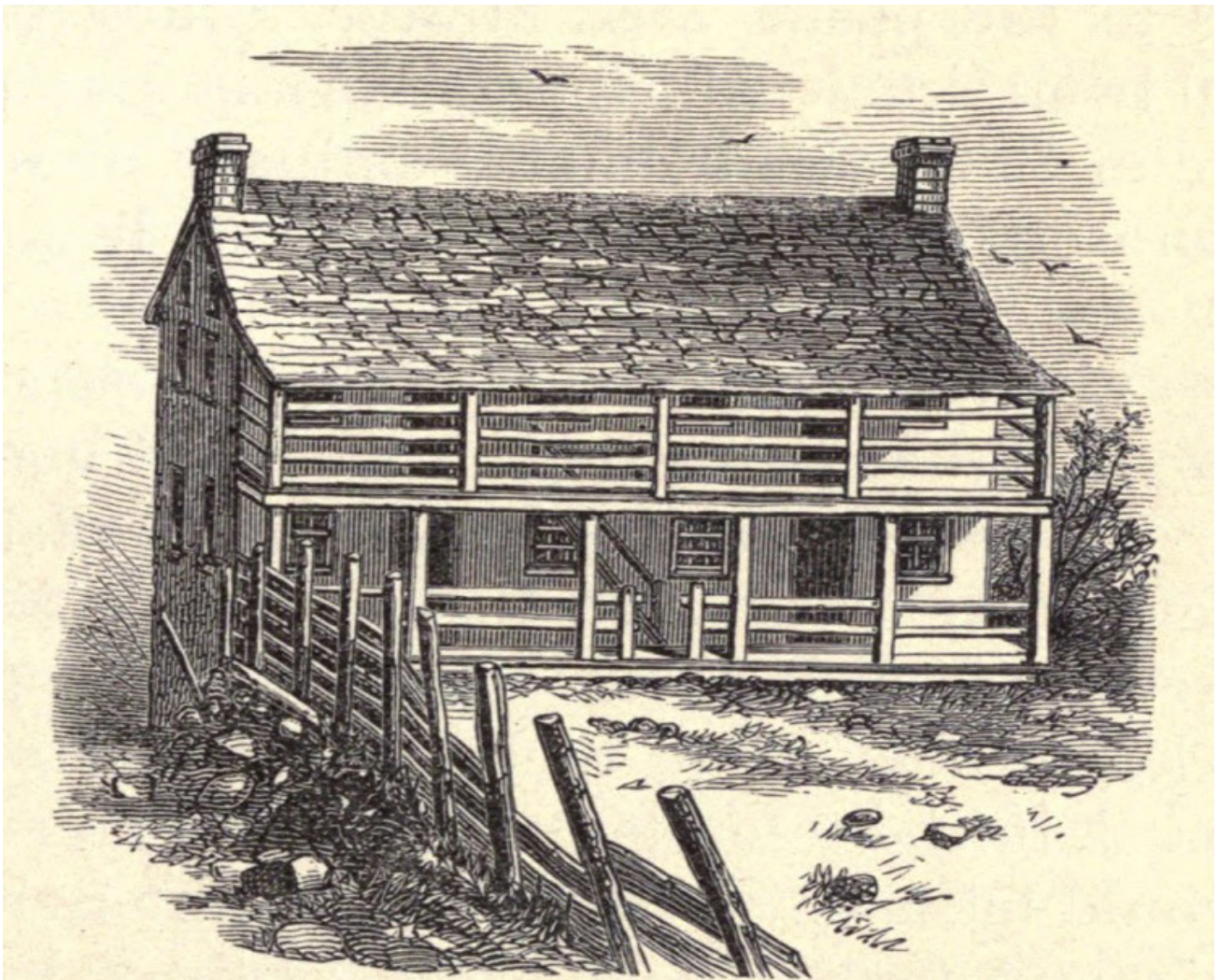
Starting in the 1820s, the interstate slave trade experienced a vast transformation in scale, geography, effectiveness, and profitability. Between 1820 and 1860, forced migration impacted roughly 882,000 enslaved lives, with 60 to 70 percent of this total migration a result of the slave trade. Slave traders frequently formed partnerships, with one partner assigned to handle purchases and move enslaved people from the Upper South and another to handle sales transactions. In this way, purchasing did not have to be suspended while moving a coffle or waiting to complete sales. The use of maritime transport became more widespread during this time, increasing the frequency at which traders could ship bondspople. The larger seafaring vessels could carry more than 200 enslaved workers per trip. Transporting slaves by sea was highly efficient, taking less than half the time it took to travel overland with coffles, and reduced the risk of escape.

During this period, a pattern of exchange between large urban centers emerged, and the interstate slave trade became more regularized and organized. In the Upper South, cities including Baltimore, Alexandria, Washington, D.C., and Richmond became slave collecting and resale centers. Traders established permanent places of operation rather than relying on hotels

or taverns to do business. In urban centers, these slave pens – essentially private jails – were typically sited a short distance from a wharf if located in a port city, at the outskirts of town near trade routes or turnpikes, in districts with low property values that were out of the public eye, or a combination of the above. Slave pens established in the 1850s might be located near railroad stations. If space allowed, for a daily fee, some slave traders opened their pen to other speculators who did not have their own facility, or to travelers who needed to confine one or more bondspeople overnight or on a short-term basis. County jails often provided the same service.

## SLAVE PENS AND SLAVE TRADE IN THE CHESAPEAKE

Several commonalities emerge in studying archival documentation and contemporary descriptions of urban-based slave pens in the Chesapeake region from the period 1820 to circa 1860. Although a fenced yard or simple whitewashed shed could function as a slave pen, more frequently, the facilities operated by large-scale, interstate dealers were sizeable establishments that could accommodate dozens or even hundreds of enslaved people. A slave pen might include specialized structures or spaces for housing business owners and/or employees, conducting business, confining bondspeople, preparing and providing food and clothing, offering medical care, and staging supplies for transport. The most notorious slave pens in the Upper South were operated by men such as Austin Woolfolk and Hope H. Slatter in Baltimore, William H. Williams in Washington, D.C., Franklin & Armfield in Alexandria, and Robert Lumpkin in Richmond, among others.



**Figure 05:** Engraving of the jail at Lumpkin's slave pen in Richmond. From Charles H. Corey's *A History of the Richmond Theological Seminary*. [Charles H. Corey, *A History of the Richmond Theological Seminary* (Richmond, VA: J. W. Randolph Company, 1895), 47.]

In either 1821 or 1823, Austin Woolfolk established a slave pen that operated from his house at the west end of Pratt Street in Baltimore, and other slave traders in larger towns of the Upper South replicated this business model. One or more spaces within the house likely functioned as offices and were used to meet with customers, negotiate purchases and sales, communicate with agents, arrange the transport of enslaved people, settle accounts, and secure business records. To an incarcerated slave or a passerby, however, the most obvious physical manifestation of a slave pen was its fence or wall. A description of Hope H. Slatter's pen in Baltimore, for example, noted that the brick walls around his facility measured about 20 feet high. While the primary function of a permanent enclosure was to prevent escape, it also blocked communication with outsiders and concealed the slave pen's inner workings from outsiders and the eyes of "polite" society. Yards, whether defined by a solid masonry perimeter wall, a high wood fence, the wall of building, or a combination of elements, provided an open, or partially open, space capable of holding large groups of enslaved people. Another typical feature of many large-scale, urban slave pens was a jail – a building separate from the house but enclosed within or forming part of the perimeter of the yard where enslaved people could be securely locked up for days or longer periods. Contemporary descriptions indicate that interiors of slave jails were typically divided into separate rooms, often called cells or apartments, that were used for holding more than one person rather than functioning as a space for solitary confinement. Having separate cells rather than one large space protected against internal threats such as the spread of disease or insurrection. The jail at Lumpkin's slave pen in Richmond was described as a long, two-story, brick building with a piazza, or porch, on the north that provided access to both levels. In addition to a residence/office, yard, and jail, some slave traders built boarding houses on their properties to accommodate visitors participating in the trafficking of humans. Other structures and spaces within a slave pen may have included a hospital, kitchen, stable, privies, and work yards.

As one of the country's busiest colonial ports, Alexandria had long held a reputation as a robust slave market. By the early nineteenth century, it ranked second to Baltimore as a leading urban center for the slave trade in the Upper South. In the first two decades of the nineteenth century, the key sites of Alexandria's domestic slave trade were concentrated along lower King Street and near Market Square, where slave traders congregated in taverns or could be found at the jail or post office. Beginning in the 1820s, as the interstate slave trade became more regularized and organized, slave traders established large slave pens on the outskirts of the city, typically near or along key trade routes or turnpikes.

### **1315 DUKE STREET AND THE SLAVE TRADE**

Isaac Franklin was born in 1789 near what is now Gallatin, Tennessee. John Armfield, eight years Franklin's junior, was from the central Piedmont region of North Carolina. Franklin's brothers introduced him to the trafficking of enslaved people as a young man in the first decade of the nineteenth century. Armfield operated a general store in Surry County, North Carolina, before entering the slave trade in 1825. Both were involved in the slave trade in Alexandria, part of Washington, D.C., at the time, prior to forming a partnership in 1828. Franklin & Armfield's business operations were organized so as to efficiently divide labor. Armfield presided over the Alexandria slave pen, supervised purchasing agents, and organized the slaves' transport – both overland by coffe and via the coastal route. Franklin managed sales from depots in New Orleans, Natchez, and, beginning in 1833, Forks of the Road outside of Natchez. Franklin & Armfield's business model relied on an extensive network of purchasing agents, introduced efficiencies in coastwise transport, and exploited the use of credit to gain immense personal wealth. The firm speculated on a massive scale and was responsible for the forced migration of thousands of enslaved men, women, and children from Virginia and Maryland to the Deep South, becoming, in the process, the largest slave trading firm on the continent.



**Figure 06:** This image of the former slave pen at 1315 Duke Street was taken from the southeast corner of the intersection of Duke and Payne streets. Although it dates to the Civil War period, it is the best historic photograph of the two-story, brick building set back from Payne Street. While this building was likely constructed during Period 2, its original function is not clear. The whitewashed walls of the former women’s yard are clearly visible in this image, as is the shed roof that partially covers the space. [Slave pen, Alexandria, VA, Matthew Brady, 1861-1865, Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress]

Franklin and Armfield used 1315 Duke Street as their firm’s Alexandria headquarters, first leasing the 1-acre property then purchasing it in 1832. The firm transformed the former residential grounds into a cruelly efficient facility for the acquisition and confinement of enslaved people and for the preparation of those people for transport to the Deep South on foot or by sea. While the exact number and type of buildings and structures that once comprised the Franklin & Armfield slave pen has not been determined with certainty, it is known that the site supported several two-story, brick buildings and at least two slave yards in addition to the Federal-era dwelling house. Research indicates that a large part of this infrastructure was built in the early 1830s. The Franklin & Armfield slave pen in Alexandria was notorious during its time, described and denounced by politicians, journalists, and abolitionists, some with international audiences. When Franklin & Armfield left 1315 Duke Street in 1837, the property continued to be used by merchants engaged in the trafficking of enslaved African Americans for another twenty-four years until May 24, 1861, when U.S. Army troops crossed the Potomac and occupied Alexandria at the start of the Civil War.

During the Civil War, the slave pen at 1315 Duke Street was converted into a military prison and quarters, and a portion of the site was occupied by structures associated with the L’Ouverture Hospital and Contraband Barracks. The property reverted to private ownership in 1866. By the early 1870s, all of the buildings and structures associated with the former slave pen had been razed with the exception of the dwelling house, the two-story outbuilding behind it that was likely built as a kitchen-quarters, and a portion of the structure that served as a passage between the two. 1315 Duke Street was renovated in 1871 when it converted into a boarding house.

For most of the twentieth century, the building functioned as an apartment building. Early twentieth-century alterations included adding a half story over the main block and a third floor to the rear wing. After archaeological investigations and a major renovation in 1984-85, 1315 Duke Street was leased as an office building. Over the years, the larger parcel once associated with the slave pen was subdivided (to create what is today 1301-1311 Duke Street, 1317-1321 Duke Street, and 1323 Duke Street) and sold. The Northern Virginia Urban League purchased the property in 1997 and occupied most of the building, by that time known as Freedom House, as its headquarters while setting aside space in the basement for the placement of museum exhibits. The Freedom House Museum, interpreting the antebellum history of the building and its association with the slave trade, opened in 2008. The City of Alexandria purchased 1315 Duke Street in 2020 with plans to preserve and interpret the property for future generations.

1315 Duke Street is nationally significant for its associations with Franklin & Armfield, once the largest slave-trading firm in the United States, and for its decades-long affiliation with the domestic slave trade in Virginia. The period of significance of the property is defined as 1828 to 1861. This interval includes the years that Franklin & Armfield either leased or owned the property and encompasses its use as a slave pen by George Kephart, Price, Birch & Co., and other merchants participating in the interstate trade of enslaved people.

The business practices and activities of the traders that occupied and owned 1315 Duke Street between 1828 and 1861 were emblematic of larger, nationally significant trends during the antebellum era. The firm of Franklin & Armfield, in particular, was instrumental in shaping a new phase of the interstate slave trade that started in the 1820s and encompassed a transformation in the scale, effectiveness, and profitability of the business that impacted over half a million lives. The firm's importance to the business of trading in enslaved people and its location near the National Capital also made it a target of those Americans determined to end that trade. Prominent national publications carried stories on the slave pen to make the inhumanity of its practices known to a wide audience in hopes of gaining support for emancipation. The events and activities tied to 1315 Duke Street represent important aspects of the complex historical narrative of slavery in the United States, a narrative that helped shape the economic, political, and social development of the United States in the nineteenth century and continues to pose challenges to our national identity today. In recognition of its outstanding historic significance, 1315 Duke Street was designated a National Historic Landmark by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior in 1978.

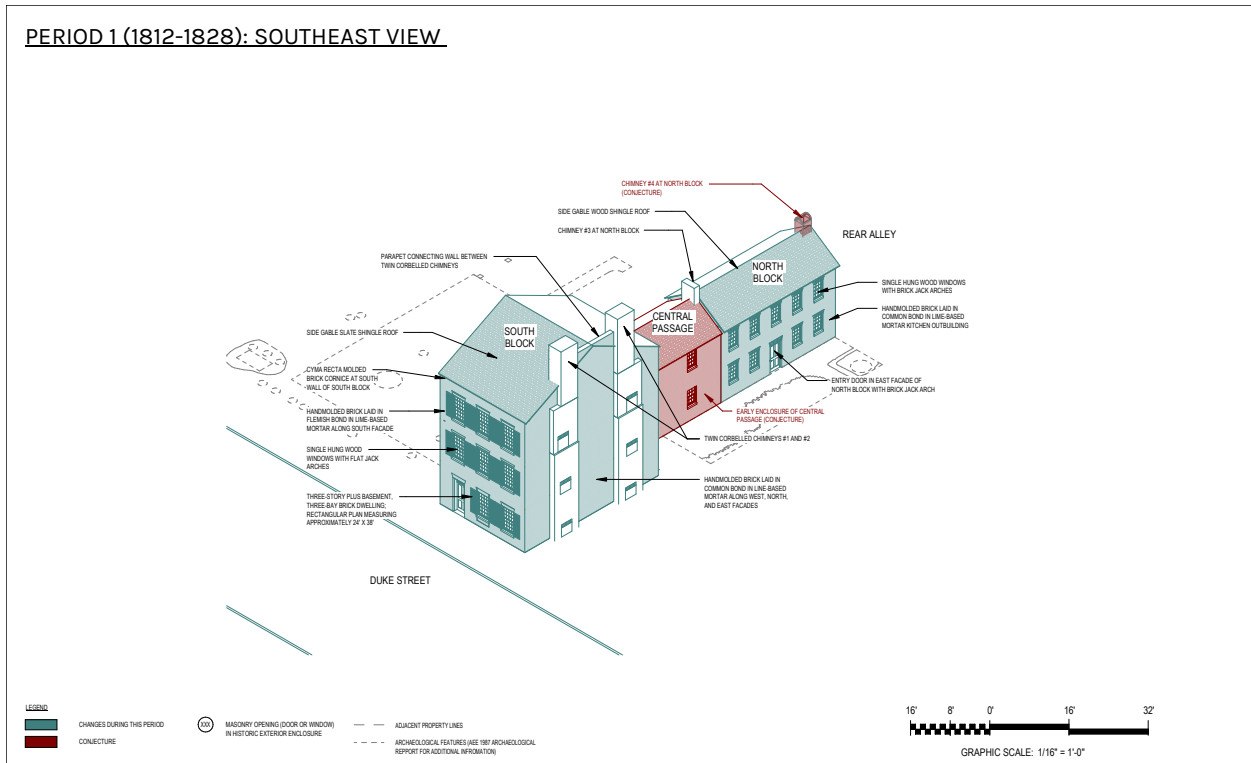
## **PERIODS OF DEVELOPMENT**

The development of 1315 Duke Street from its original construction to present day can be divided into five major periods. These periods were identified through archival research as well as on-site investigations of the existing physical fabric, using laser scanning, site probes, materials analysis, and other tools and methods.

### **PERIOD 1: RESIDENCE (1812-1828)**

Period 1 covers the initial development of the property – then comprised of a 1-acre parcel consisting of two 1/2-acre town lots – by Brigadier General Robert Young and its ownership by Young and subsequently by the Mechanic's Bank of Alexandria. This period encompasses the years in which the brick dwelling house, which would eventually be assigned the address 1315 Duke Street, was originally built and used both as a leased and as an owner-occupied residence. Also during this period, a detached, two-story, brick outbuilding was constructed behind the dwelling house. Although the type, location, and character of other outbuildings or site features from this period of construction is unknown, dependencies common to buildings like this may have included a privy, stable, washhouse, or smokehouse.

**PERIOD 1 (1812-1828): SOUTHEAST VIEW**

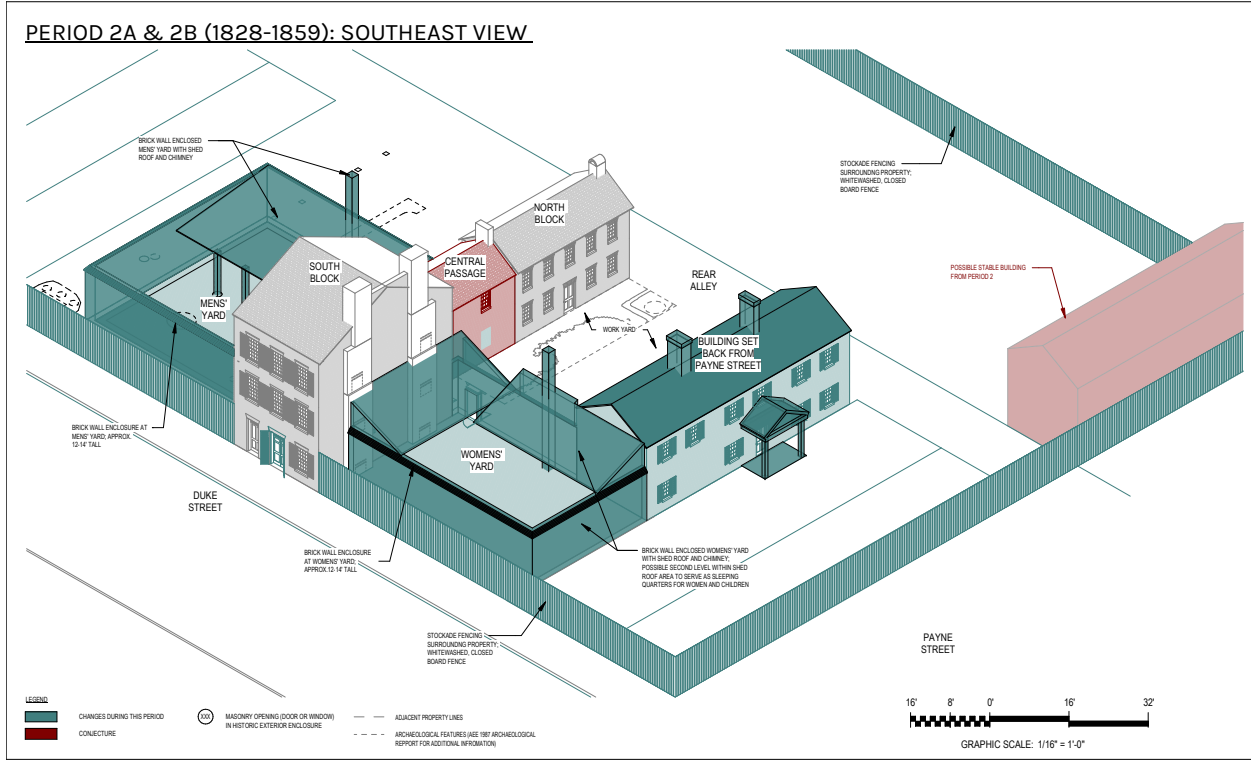


**Figure 07:** Three-dimensional model of the property and structures at 1315 Duke Street during Period 1.

**PERIOD 2: SLAVE PEN (1828-1861)**

Period 2 covers the period during which 1315 Duke Street was used as a center for the interstate slave trade. During this time, several iterations of slave trader partnerships utilized the property and made changes to the building and site to accommodate its commercial function.

**PERIOD 2A & 2B (1828-1859): SOUTHEAST VIEW**



**Figure 08:** Three-dimensional model of the property and structures at 1315 Duke Street during Period 2.



### PERIOD 2A: FRANKLIN & ARMFIELD (1828-1837)

In early 1828, the Mechanic's Bank entered into a five-year lease with Franklin & Armfield. The agreement ushered in a new phase in the development history of the property, effectively transforming the residence into a place of business engaged in the trade of enslaved people. During this period, significant alterations were made to the dwelling house and site to convert the property into a slave pen, including, but not limited to, the construction of yards to hold enslaved people and the construction of additional outbuildings.

### PERIOD 2B: GEORGE KEPHART & CO., ET AL. (1837-1859)

In 1837, slave trader George Kephart – a former Franklin & Armfield agent – advertised that he had taken over the slave pen on Duke Street. Although Kephart established his business there, he would not actually purchase the property until March 1846. By this period, the site included a large stable.

### PERIOD 2C: PRICE, BIRCH & CO. (1859-1861)

George Kephart sold the Duke Street slave pen in 1858, when it was purchased by slave traders Charles M. Price and John C. Cook. These two men, along with Kephart and William H. Birch, engaged in a business partnership operating under the name Price, Birch & Co. The firm made some alterations to the property, including the installation of running water and possibly changes to the roof over the men's yard.

### PERIOD 3: MILITARY OCCUPATION DURING THE CIVIL WAR (1861-1866)

At the start of the Civil War, US Army troops entered Alexandria and liberated the former Franklin & Armfield slave pen. The army then requisitioned the property and converted it into a military prison. The former slave yards were used to incarcerate prisoners, the dwelling house was transformed into officers' quarters, and guards were housed in the outbuildings.

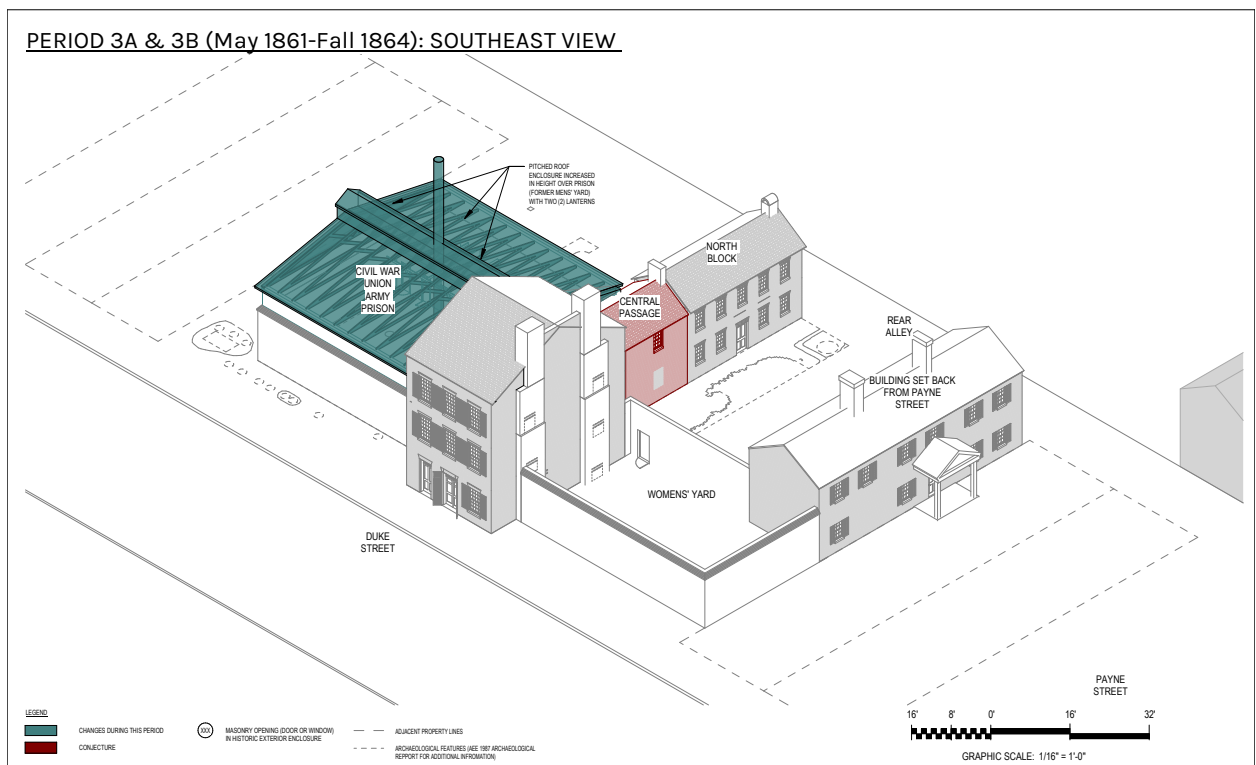


Figure 09: Three-dimensional model of the property and structures at 1315 Duke Street during Periods 3A & 3B.

### PERIOD 3A: INITIAL OCCUPANCY (MAY 1861-CA. LATE FEBRUARY 1862)

During Period 3A, the US Army seized the slave pen at 1315 Duke Street and started using it as a military prison.

### PERIOD 3B: MEN'S YARD ALTERATIONS (CA. LATE FEBRUARY 1862-FALL 1864)

During this period, the US Army likely made substantial changes to the former men's yard structure, including raising the height of the walls, enclosing the space with a side-gable, monitor roof, and adding cells for the solitary confinement of inmates.

### PERIOD 3C: LATER CHANGES (CA. FALL 1864-1866)

The US Army made additional changes to the former men's yard when its monitor roof was replaced with a new gable roof that featured two louvered lanterns. Additionally, three windows may have added to the south wall of the former men's yard during this period.

### PERIOD 4: BOARDING HOUSE AND APARTMENT BUILDING (1866-1984)

Period 4 encompasses the post-Civil War years through the mid-1980s. Many of the spaces and structures associated with the slave yard and US Army prison were razed during this period, and the early nineteenth-century dwelling house was converted first into a boarding house, then to flats, and finally to an apartment building. In this process, the property was transformed into a typical urban block composed of residential and commercial buildings representing multiple periods in the development history of Alexandria.

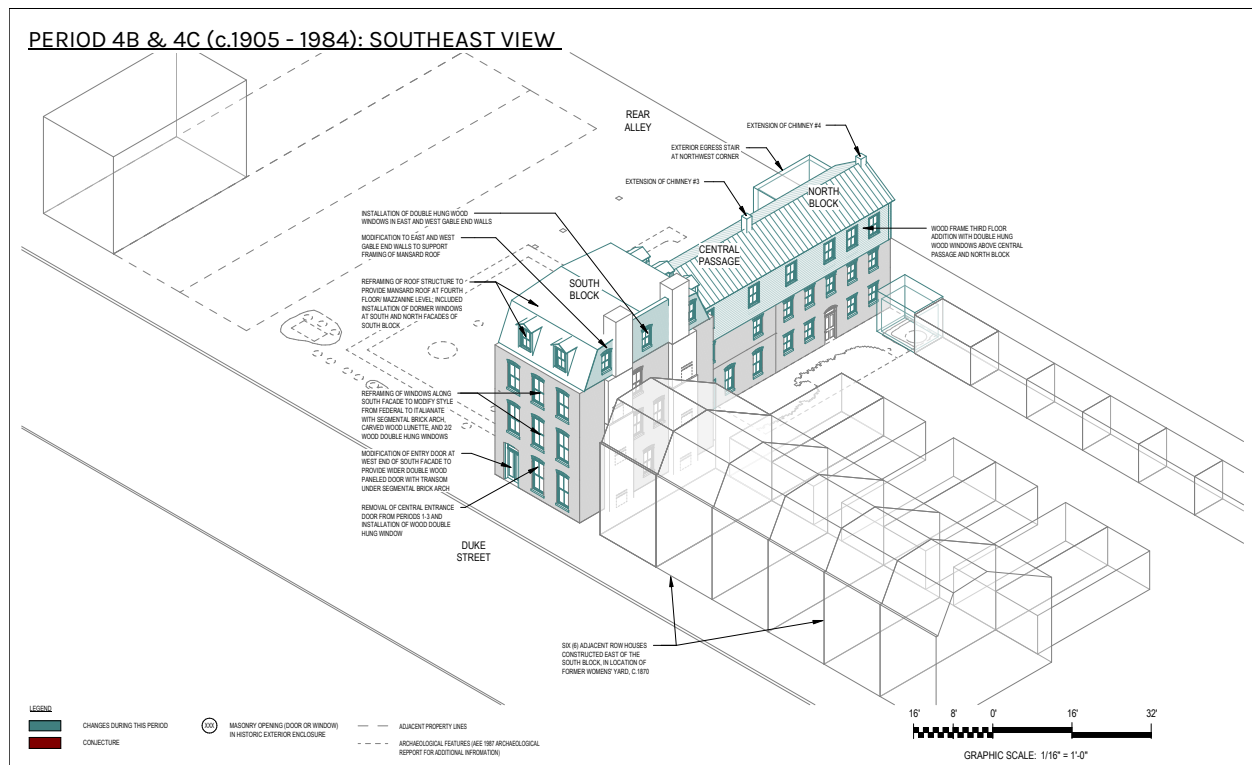


Figure 10: Three-dimensional model of the property and structures at 1315 Duke Street during Periods 4B & 4C.

### PERIOD 4A: RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AND BOARDING HOUSE RENOVATIONS (1866-1902)

Period 4A covers the years during which much of the former slave pen complex was razed to clear the land for the construction of six row houses (now 1301-1311 Duke Street) and 1315 Duke Street was renovated to convert it into a boarding house. This work likely involved rebuilding the passage that linked the former dwelling house and kitchen outbuilding,

incorporating the west wall of the earlier structure and possibly other components. While the full scope of the interior changes during this period is unknown, the original window openings of the south facade of the nineteenth-century dwelling house were enlarged, the window sashes replaced, and new window openings were added to the side facades, likely as part of the 1871 renovation of 1315 Duke Street.

**PERIOD 4B: BUILDING EXPANSION AND CONVERSION TO FLATS (1902-1915)**

During this period, 1315 Duke Street was enlarged, likely circa 1905, with the addition of a half story under a mansard roof over nineteenth-century dwelling house and the construction of a third floor over the rear wing. The function of the building changed from a boarding house to flats.

**PERIOD 4C: APARTMENT BUILDING (1915-1984)**

In Period 4C, 1315 Duke Street functioned as an apartment building. By the 1980s, it had been subdivided into seven units – two on the first, second, and third floors and one in the half story (or mezzanine). Each of the apartments had a separate kitchen and bathroom.

**PERIOD 5: OFFICE BUILDING AND MUSEUM (1984-2020)**

Washington, D.C., residents and investors J. Peter Dunston and Betty Dunston acquired 1315 Duke Street in 1984 and renovated and expanded the historic structure to convert it into an office building. Prior to the renovation, archaeological investigations were carried out at 1315 Duke Street and at the adjacent property to the west (1317-1321 Duke Street). The building was dedicated as Freedom House in 1988 in honor of Lewis Henry Bailey, a formerly enslaved man once confined in the slave pen. The Northern Virginia Urban League (NVUL) purchased the property in 1997 to use as its headquarters and later used the basement as an exhibit space. The interpretive and educational use of 1315 Duke Street continued under the current ownership of the City of Alexandria.

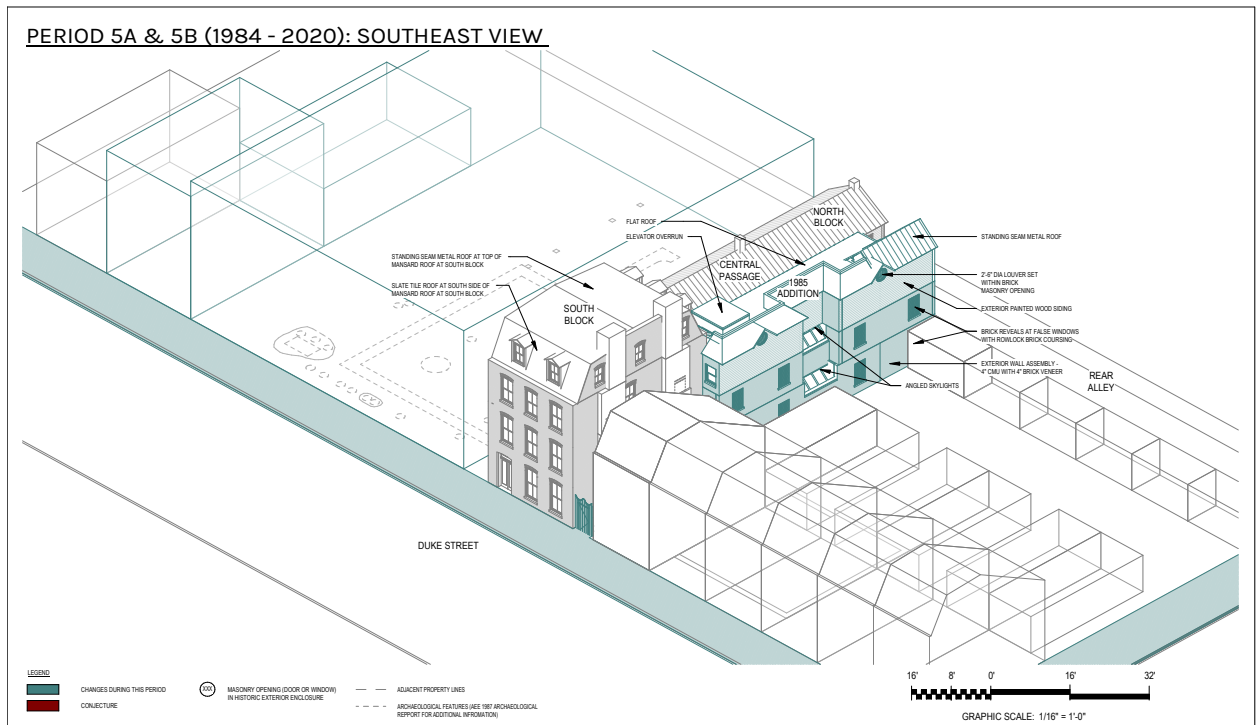


Figure 11: Three-dimensional model of the property and structures at 1315 Duke Street during Periods 5A & 5B.

**PERIOD 5A: DUNSTON OWNERSHIP (1984-1997)**

At the start of this period, 1315 Duke Street was renovated to convert it from an apartment building to an office building. The work included the construction of a three-story, 1,984-square-foot addition that built out the lot and encapsulated the north facade of the nineteenth-century dwelling house and the east facade of its rear wing.

**PERIOD 5B: NORTHERN VIRGINIA URBAN LEAGUE (1997-2020)**

Period 5B covers the recent past when the NVUL used the building as its headquarters and operated the site for meetings, programs, and administrative use. In 2008, the NVUL opened a basement exhibit with support from a Save America’s Treasures Grant. In 2018, the Office of Historic Alexandria stepped in to expand the exhibit to the first floor and operate the museum.

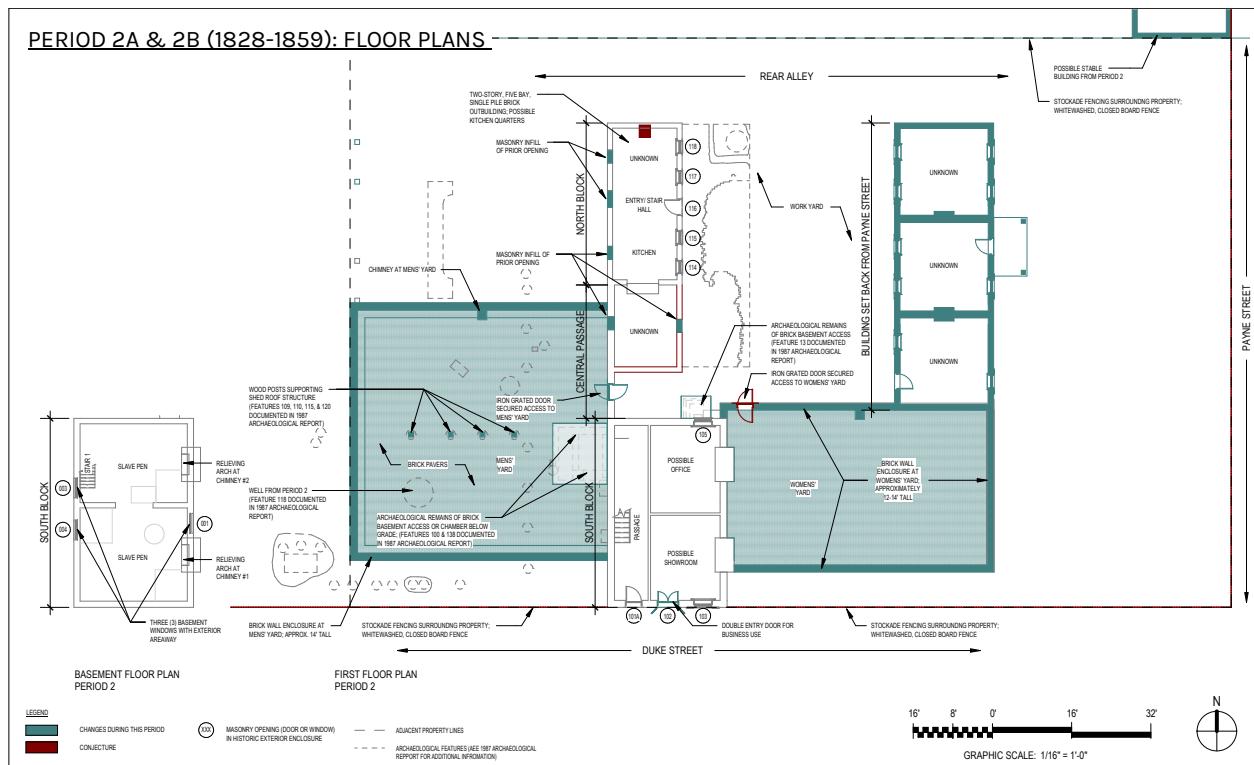
**PERIOD 5C: CITY OF ALEXANDRIA (2020-PRESENT)**

Period 5C covers the building’s ownership by the City of Alexandria, which acquired 1315 Duke Street in March 2020 with the intent to restore and interpret the site. 1315 Duke Street became the eighth museum operated by the Office of Historic Alexandria.

**PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE - PERIOD 2 (1828-1861)**

The Period of Significance for a historic property is based upon the length of time that the resource made the contributions or achieved the character on which significance is based. For properties associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history, the Period of Significance is usually the span of time when the property actively contributed to the events. For architecturally significant properties, the period of significance is typically the date of construction.

1315 Duke Street is significant for its associations with Franklin & Armfield, once the largest slave-trading firm in the United States, and for its decades-long affiliation with the domestic slave trade



**Figure 12:** Basement and First Floor plans of site and property during the Period of Significance (Period 2: 1828-1861),

in Virginia. The Period of Significance is defined as 1828 to 1861. This interval includes the years that Franklin & Armfield either leased or owned the property, encompasses its use as a slave pen by George Kephart, Price, Birch & Co., and other merchants participating in the interstate trade of enslaved people, and corresponds with the period of significance identified in the National Historic Landmark nomination.

## PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION & INVENTORY

As part of the thorough documentation of the existing conditions of the building all exterior and interior features have been captured in the physical description and inventory portion of the HSR. This documentation describes the exterior with drawings, photographs and narratives and identifies features as best as possible as to whether they are contributing to the period of significance or not. Similarly, all interior spaces were surveyed and every room was analyzed and documented regarding flooring, walls, ceiling and other features with an analysis of which feature that can be attributed to the period of significance or not. The matrices for each room identify the architectural feature, provide a description of the feature, give an approximate age, prescribe it to a period, explain the documentation for assuming its age and determine whether it is Contributing or Non Contributing to the defined Period of Significance. The purpose of this analysis is to provide guidance for treatment and use as to what can be removed and what must be maintained related to the Period of Significance.

### OFFICE 304

Location: Third Floor, South Block



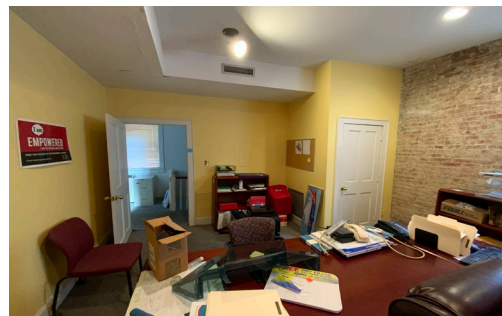
Office 304, North Elevation



Office 304, East Elevation



Office 304, South Elevation



Office 304, West Elevation

### SPACE INVENTORY

FEATURE (including designation if applicable)	DESCRIPTION	APPROX. AGE	PERIOD	DOCUMENTATION FOR DETERMINING AGE	COMMENTS	Contributing (C) or Non-contributing (NC)
Room Plan	enclosed office	1985	5A	1985 Dunston Property Renovation Drawings	None.	NC
Flooring	carpet on plywood subfloor; select areas of tongue & groove wood flooring remain under carpet	1985	5A	1985 Dunston Property Renovation Drawings	Historic wood flooring exposed in Investigative Probe #13. See Appendix E.	NC
Ceiling	painted 1/2" gypsum wallboard	1985	5A	1985 Dunston Property Renovation Drawings	None.	NC

Figure 13: Abbreviated example of the physical description and inventory of all interior spaces at 1315 Duke Street.

# CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT

The Conditions Assessment portion of the HSR provide a thorough analysis of all building systems and identified deficiencies. The SmithGroup project team spent several days assessing these conditions to evaluate every aspect of the building. The following list represents highlights of that assessment.

## ACCESSIBILITY

- Although there is an interior elevator, entry into the building and circulation through it is not provided in a holistic manner.

## ARCHITECTURAL - EXTERIOR

- Masonry Issues - Cracks in brick, loose and missing mortar, open mortar joints, biological growth, missing or mismatched brick were observed and need to be addressed.
- Wood Elements - All wood elements have lost paint and bare wood is exposed with evidence of rot being noted. Windows are missing elements, sills are deteriorating and glazing putty is missing.
- Metal Elements - Downspouts have corroded and in some cases are missing.

## ARCHITECTURAL - INTERIOR

- Interior Finishes - Many interior finishes show signs of wear and replacement is required in select areas. The City of Alexandria has been actively updating select areas of the building as the existing tenant is relocating. This includes repairs and upgrades to the elevator, the kitchen, accessible restrooms on the first floor, and select offices.
- Code Compliance - Several code deficiencies were identified at stairs and landings, particularly

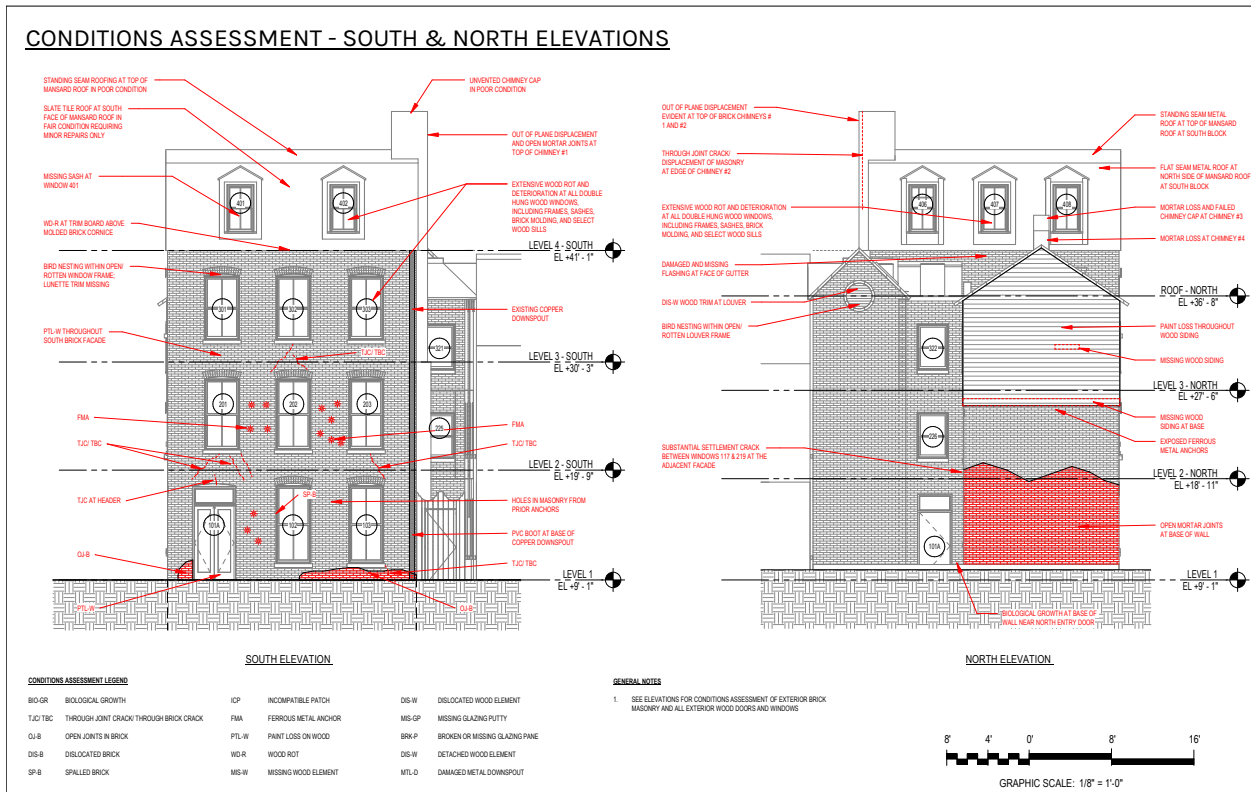


Figure 14: Example of the exterior conditions assessment of the south and north facades.

at Stair 1 and Stair 2.

- Restrooms - The restrooms at the second and third floors require repairs and upgrades to comply with code.

## STRUCTURAL

- Stair 1 - Significant displacement was noted.
- Localize cracking noted in brick masonry at north and east elevations.
- Existing load capacities may limit future use unless floor structure is augmented.

## LIVE LOAD CAPACITY DIAGRAMS

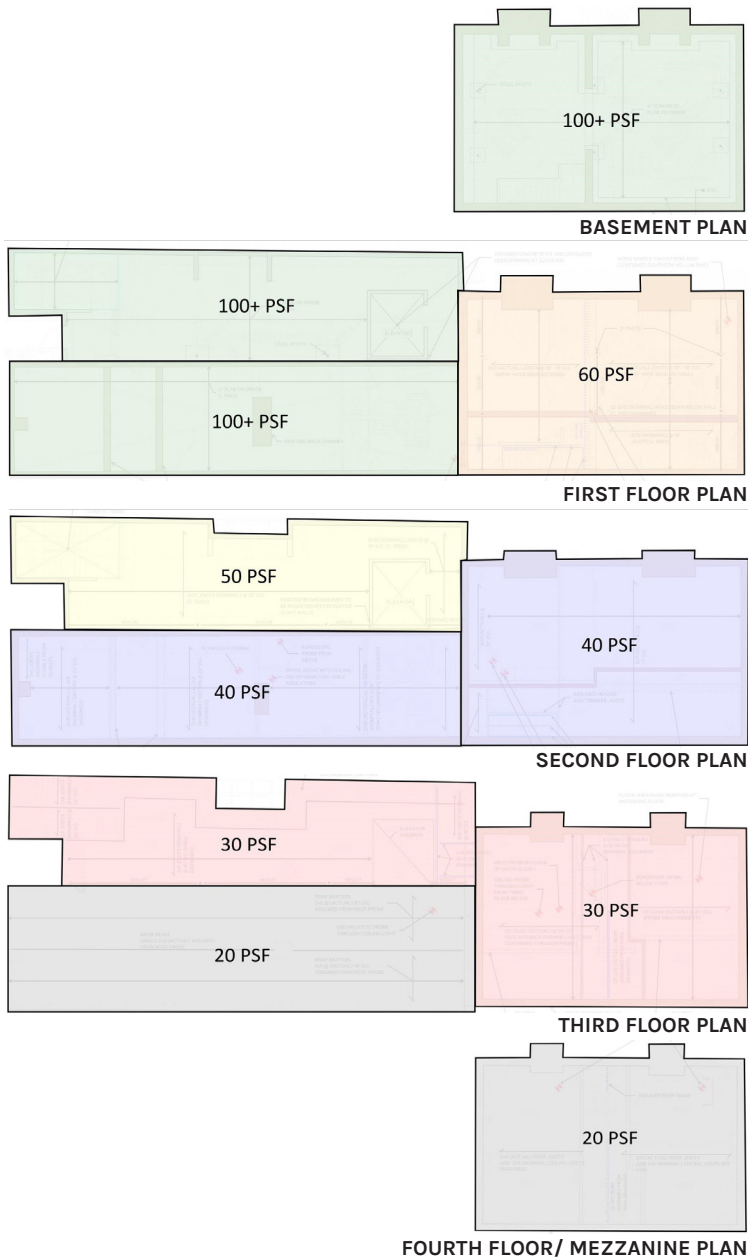


Figure 15: Structural live load capacity analysis diagrams.

## **MECHANICAL, ELECTRICAL, PLUMBING**

- Single Zone Split Systems - The mechanical systems were recently replaced by the City of Alexandria. Routine maintenance is recommended. Depending upon the intended use of the structure the system capacities may need to be reevaluated to serve future needs.
- Electrical Service and Wiring - The underground electrical service enters the basement along the south wall of the basement and services three (3) electrical utility meters. Depending upon the intended use of the structure the system may need to be re-evaluated to serve future needs.
- Plumbing and Domestic Water Service - The existing domestic water service is provided from the north alley. Some of the plumbing fixtures (restrooms and kitchen) have been recently upgraded, but others require replacement to meet current code requirements.

## **LIFE SAFETY, FIRE PROTECTION, FIRE ALARM**

- The Fire Alarm system is in good condition with miscellaneous devices installed that do not meet proper height or operation requirements that have to be corrected.
- The Fire Protection System is in good condition. Some deficiencies were noted with sprinkler heads not installed to NFPA 13 standards that need to be corrected.
- Exposed wood siding on third floor does not comply with current code.

## **WORK RECOMMENDATIONS**

After identifying the deficiencies of the existing building, the SmithGroup team made recommendations for mitigating these issues. The recommendations are meant to address items with the knowledge that a more robust building renovation is planned for the near future to convert the building into a Museum. Some of the recommendations include additional studies to better inform next steps.

### **ACCESSIBILITY**

- Provide improved accessibility to building from accessible parking
- Improve accessible circulation within the building
- Provide a virtual tour for those not able to access exhibits
- Implement more robust building code evaluation to review all life safety, egress, and accessibility compliance during the next phases of design

### **ARCHITECTURAL - EXTERIOR**

- Implement exterior masonry repairs and re-pointing
- Repair and repaint wood siding
- Restore/replace existing windows and make operable
- Repair/replace flashing and parts of roofing
- Re-point and repair chimneys and provide chimney caps



- Repair/ replace gutters and downspouts

#### **ARCHITECTURAL - INTERIOR**

- Correct Stair 1 floor deflection
- Repair ceiling damage on third and fourth floor

#### **HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**

- Abate or encapsulate existing lead-based paint

#### **STRUCTURAL**

- Full re-pointing of the historic exterior brick and localized re-pointing of interior areas
- Select rebuilding of masonry at areas of localized cracking and displacement
- Further assess Stair 1 condition through probes to evaluate deformation and live load capacity
- Further study Chimney #1 and Chimney #2 at the South Block to evaluate lateral displacement
- Re-evaluate occupancy and live load capacity prior to next phase of design
- Provide localized reinforcement at Stair 1, the fourth floor framing, and the mansard roof
- Conduct code required seismic evaluation if the next phase of design requires removal of interior masonry walls, particularly at the first floor of the North Block

#### **MECHANICAL, ELECTRICAL, PLUMBING**

- Relocate toilet exhaust
- Provide cooling & dehumidification of server room
- Provide proper building pressurization
- Provide mechanical system environmental controls & monitoring
- Domestic hot water heater: replace the electric water heater which is beyond end of life.
- Correct waste vent routing
- Consolidate electrical services
- Provide proper working clearances at electrical equipment & panels
- Emergency battery backup in architectural lighting
- Automatic lighting controls

## **LIFE SAFETY, FIRE PROTECTION, FIRE ALARM**

- Obtain Code Modification Approval for Third Floor historic wood cladding
- Correct Fire Sprinkler spacing and installation deficiencies
- Correct Fire Alarm System deficiencies

## **TREATMENT AND USE OPTIONS**

The Office of Historic Alexandria (OHA) intends to renovate the building to be fully utilized as a Museum that tells the story of the slave trade on the site, within the Chesapeake Region, and across the United States. The interior spaces would be used for exhibit space, museum support spaces, a research center, administrative offices and other uses determined by master planning and through community engagement.

Understanding how OHA plans to use the building and having documented what remains of the historic fabric from Period 1 and Period 2 (Period of Significance), the following treatment options are recommended.

### **TREATMENT #1**

#### **RESTORATION TO THE PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE (PERIOD 2: 1828-1861)**

Replicate as much as possible the configuration of the site and building to resemble the Period of Significance (Period 2: 1828-1861), recognizing this will remove previous alterations and additions to the building to achieve this goal.

### **TREATMENT #2**

#### **RESTORATION OF SOUTH FACADE TO THE PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE (PERIOD 2: 1828-1861), RETAINING MANSARD ROOF AT SOUTH BLOCK**

Restore the front facade to resemble the Period of Significance (Period 2: 1828-1861), recognizing this will be a limited restoration which will maintain later alterations and additions to the site and building. This approach will also maintain the mansard roof at the South Block which does not date to the Period of Significance (Period 2: 1828-1861).

### **TREATMENT #3A**

#### **RESTORATION OF SOUTH FACADE TO THE PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE (PERIOD 2: 1828-1861), REMOVING MANSARD ROOF AT SOUTH BLOCK**

Restore the front facade and South Block roof to resemble the Period of Significance (Period 2: 1828-1861), recognizing this will be a limited restoration which will maintain later alterations and additions to the site and building. This approach will provide a full restoration of the south facade of the South Block, accurately depicting the front facade to the Slave Pen period, but will result in a loss of usable interior space at the fourth floor/ mezzanine level.

### **TREATMENT #3B**

#### **RESTORATION OF SOUTH FACADE TO THE PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE (PERIOD 2: 1828-1861), REMOVING SOUTH PORTION OF MANSARD ROOF AT SOUTH BLOCK**

Restore the front facade and South Block roof to resemble the Period of Significance (Period 2: 1828-1861), recognizing this will be a limited restoration which will maintain later alterations and additions to the site and building. This approach will provide a full

restoration of the south facade of the South Block, accurately depicting the front facade to the Slave Pen period. Partial removal of the existing south portion of the mansard roof will restore the original end gable pitched roof as seen from Duke Street. The existing north portion of the mansard roof will remain at this time to serve programmatic needs at the fourth floor.

#### **TREATMENT #4**

##### **REHABILITATION**

The existing historic and non-historic fabric will remain allowing for the greatest flexibility in the use and interpretation of the site and building.

### **RECOMMENDED TREATMENT AND USE**

At the conclusion of all research, documentation, and analysis undertaken to complete this Historic Structure Report (HSR), SmithGroup recommends that the City of Alexandria pursue Treatment Option #3B which includes full restoration of the south facade of the South Block to the Period of Significance (Period 2: 1828-1861) and removal of the later mansard roof with dormer window addition above this portion of the historic structure.

As documented in this HSR, limited historic fabric remains from this time period and the majority of the remaining historic fabric is found in the masonry and framing of the South Block. Following a comprehensive restoration and rehabilitation of this Historic Landmark, much of the structure preserved will be from a later time period. This front facade presents the greatest opportunity for interpretation of this structure to the Period of Significance along the most prominent and publicly visible facade. There will be a loss of a small portion of occupied space on the fourth floor/ mezzanine of the South Block, but the opportunity to restore the front facade of this structure to accurately reflect the Period of Significance outweighs the impacts from the removal of this later 20th century addition.

### **FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS AND STUDIES**

The research and investigations to better understand the history of 1315 Duke Street will continue for years and decades to come. There is much to the story of this site and structure that is still not fully understood and it is strongly recommended that this effort continue. With the constraints of this contract, the A/E Team evaluated much of the extant on-site building elements and compared this detailed analysis to known historic records and prior research and documentation efforts. Many questions were answered, but still many more need further investigation. The following represents a list of additional investigations and areas of research recommended in the next phases of the project to restore and rehabilitate this historic site and structure.

#### **ADDITION PAINT AND FINISH ANALYSES**

**South Facade, South Block Signage:** Take and analyze additional samples from several undisturbed locations along the area of the signage and front facade to continue to search for any vestiges of the historic signage from Period 2.

**Molded Brick Cornice:** It is evident from historic photographs taken during the Civil War that the molded brick cornice is likely original. This would be an ideal location for additional paint sampling and analysis.

**Central Passage West Wall:** Though established in the Historic Finished Analyses (Appendix A of the HSR) as likely being finished in whitewash, there is strong evidence

that a portion of this wall is original to Period 1. Obtaining paint samples from this wall may assist in understanding the history and evolution of the site.

**Central Passage East Wall:** Though established in the Historic Finished Analyses as likely being finished in whitewash, there is some evidence that a portion of this wall may be original to Period 1. Obtaining paint samples from this wall may assist in understanding the history and evolution of the site, particularly in the area of the Central Passage.

#### **ADDITIONAL INVESTIGATIVE PROBES**

**Locate Original Fireplaces at Chimneys:** Removal of select drywall finishes at the interior will provide access to review any existing fireplaces and locate masonry infill of chimneys and flues where applicable.

**First Floor Flooring:** Removal of the existing hardwood floor, believed to be a recent 20th century addition, may reveal original solid wood flooring. A wood sub-floor can be seen from select areas of the basement below.

**Original Stair 1 Location:** Additional selective dismantling of the drywall finish along the west wall of Entry Hall 102 and the adjacent flooring may uncover additional information of the original stair in this location. This may reveal evidence in the sub-floor and exterior masonry wall where the stair would have been framed and structurally supported.

**Stair 1 Support:** As established in the structural conditions assessment, and confirmed in the laser scan documentation, there is significant deformation and settlement at Stair 1. Select dismantling in areas surrounding this stair will assist the structural engineering team in understanding the existing condition and in making appropriate repair and reinforcement recommendations.

**Masonry 211 Infill:** Additional selective dismantling of the drywall finish along the west wall of Conference Room 201 might uncover additional information related to masonry infill 211.

**Structural Framing:** A complete building renovation will require select structural repairs and reinforcement. Removing existing flooring or ceilings will assist a structural engineer in locating original and modified wood framing, and evaluating its condition. Areas that warrant further investigation are noted in the report, including locations with evidence of recent water infiltration and locations where a change in occupancy or use increases the minimum structural floor load.

#### **ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION AT CENTRAL PASSAGE**

Though it would be quite destructive to the existing building and site to implement, the Central Passage area below Corridor 105, Restroom 106, Restroom 108, and Kitchen 110 is an area which could be studied and evaluated further with an archaeological investigation. The existing concrete slab on-grade could be removed to conduct an archaeological investigation in the area between the South Block and the North Block.

## RESEARCH TOPICS

**Connection between 1315 Duke Street and the Railroad:** It would be beneficial to complete the understanding of slave trade in the Chesapeake Region to confirm if slave traders working out of 1315 Duke Street utilized the railroad to transport enslaved people in addition to their use of ship transport.

**Twentieth-Century history of the Building:** Conduct oral histories with Lavern Chatman, George Lambert, Anne Stone, or others to gain a better understanding of the twentieth-century history of the building.

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