STAFF REPORT

February 28, 2008 **February 22, 2008**

PROPOSAL:
Bahr Vermeer & Haecker Architects, on behalf of Nebraska State Historical Society, requests a Certificate of Appropriateness for modifications to the NSHS Headquarters Building at 1500 R Street in the Capitol Environs District.

DISCUSSION:
The proposed renovation of the Historical Society HQ Building at 1500 R Street includes modifications on the north (rear) side, principally to provide stair towers. The work will not be visible from Centennial Mall and with the construction of the Multicultural Center by UNL at 15th & S Streets, will not be prominently visible from public streets.

Relevant Design Standards include:
Design Standard 2: Proximity

> *The nearer a property is to the Capitol, the greater responsibility it bears in the district. Buildings and other improvements facing Capitol Square should meet very high standards for design, construction, and maintenance. Improvements facing the Capitol Malls...should also meet high standards. Other improvements within the District but not facing the Square or the Malls should not intrude upon the Capitol's setting and should contribute to the overall quality of the District.*

The building site is near the north boundary of the Environs District and will have no visibility from Centennial Mall. In staff's opinion, the proposal easily meets the required standard of not intruding on the Capitol's setting and contributing to the overall quality of the District.

This handsome building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Even though the modification will be inconspicuous, it appears to have been very carefully considered by the Society and their architects, and in my opinion would meet the high standard set in the Environs District for new construction:

Design Standard 9: Facades

> *New buildings in the District should be designed to enhance the setting of the Capitol and their immediate surroundings. When those surroundings have a high degree of cohesiveness, new designs should be compatible with their setting, strengthening the visual relationships found among existing buildings and landscape features. In areas that lack cohesion, designs should be proposed that offer themes and patterns that can be further expanded in future development.*
>
> *Brick, stone, or other richly textured, highly durable masonry is desirable for building exteriors on Capitol Square, Centennial Mall, and Lincoln Mall. Permanence should be an overriding characteristic in the choice of exterior materials. Colors should be drawn from a muted palette of warm, earth tones or shades of white, with the context of surrounding buildings as a guide.*

Recommended Finding: The proposed design meets the Capitol Environs Design Standards.

Recommended action: Approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Edward F. Zimmer, Planner

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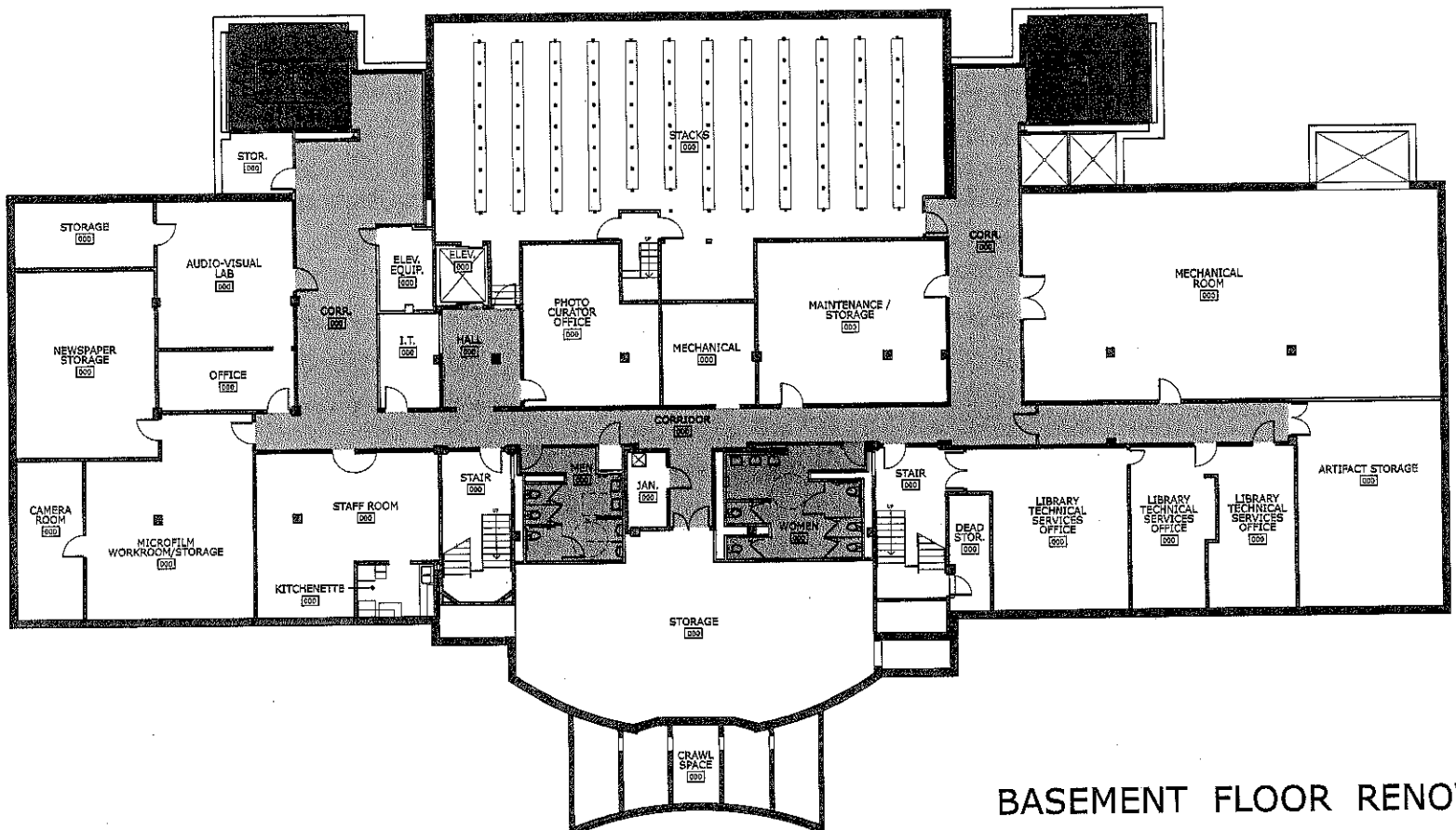
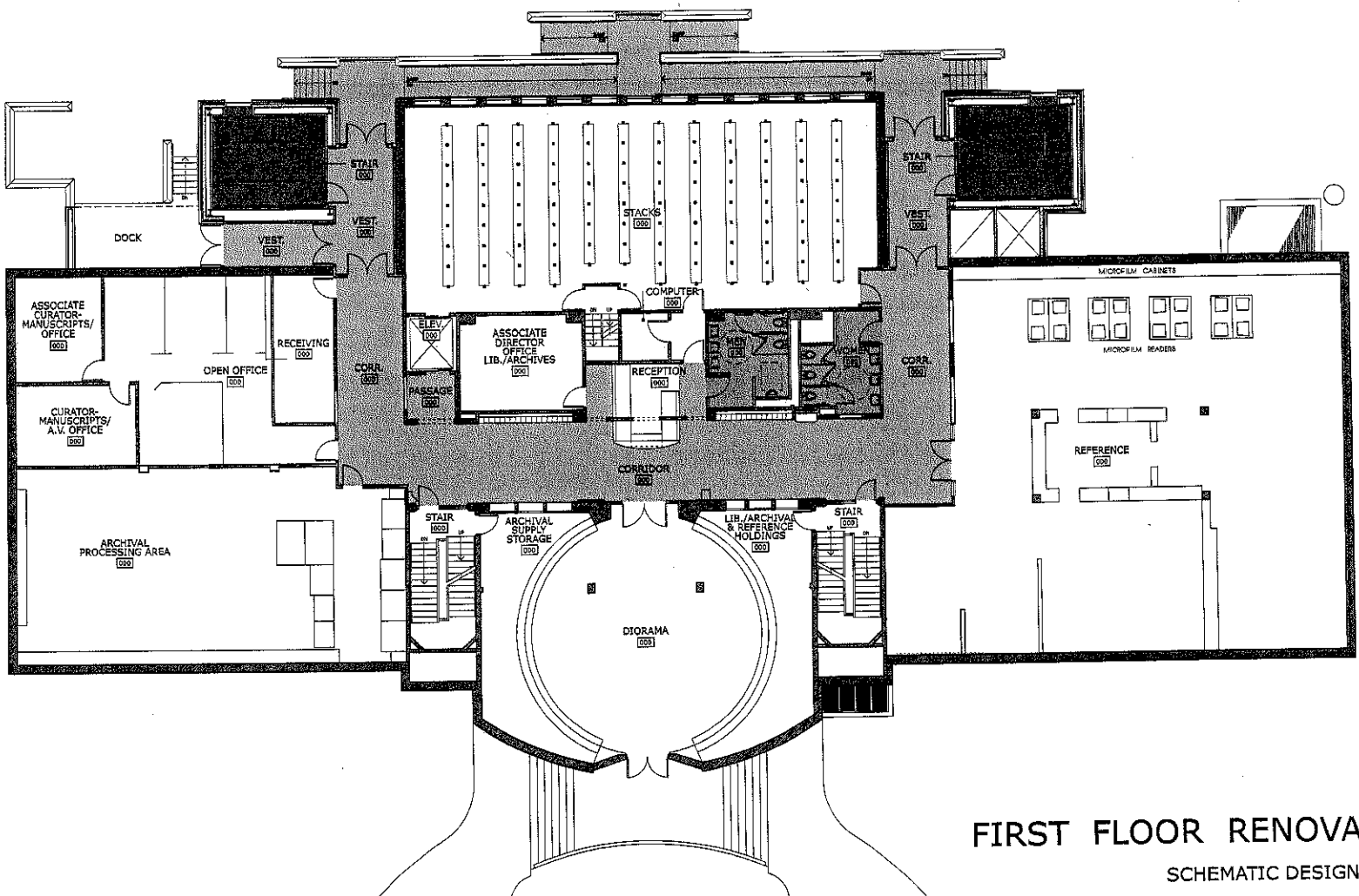


BASEMENT FLOOR RENOVATION PLAN

SCHEMATIC DESIGN

0' 4' 8' 16'



FIRST FLOOR RENOVATION PLAN

SCHEMATIC DESIGN

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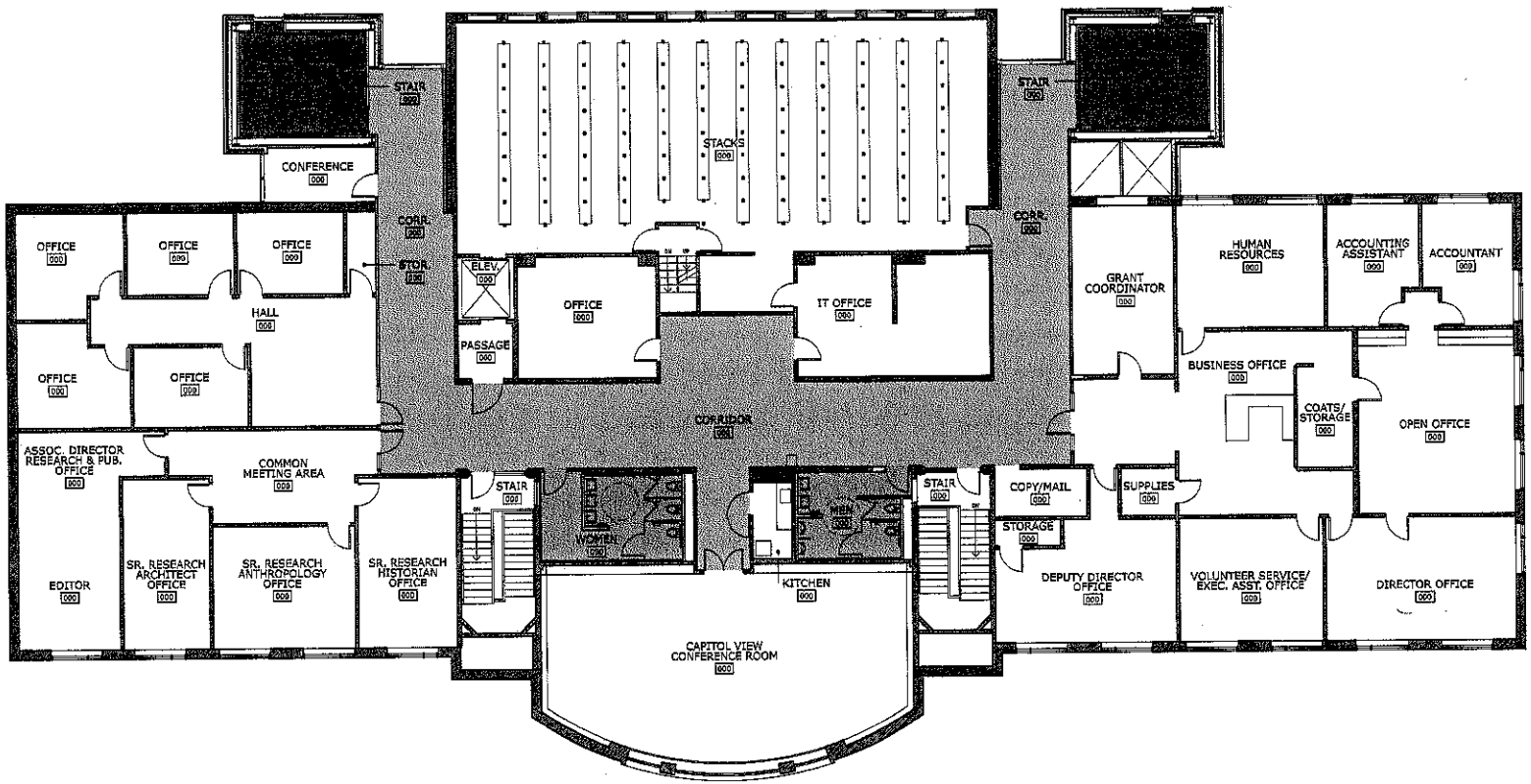

SECOND FLOOR RENOVATION PLAN

SCHEMATIC DESIGN

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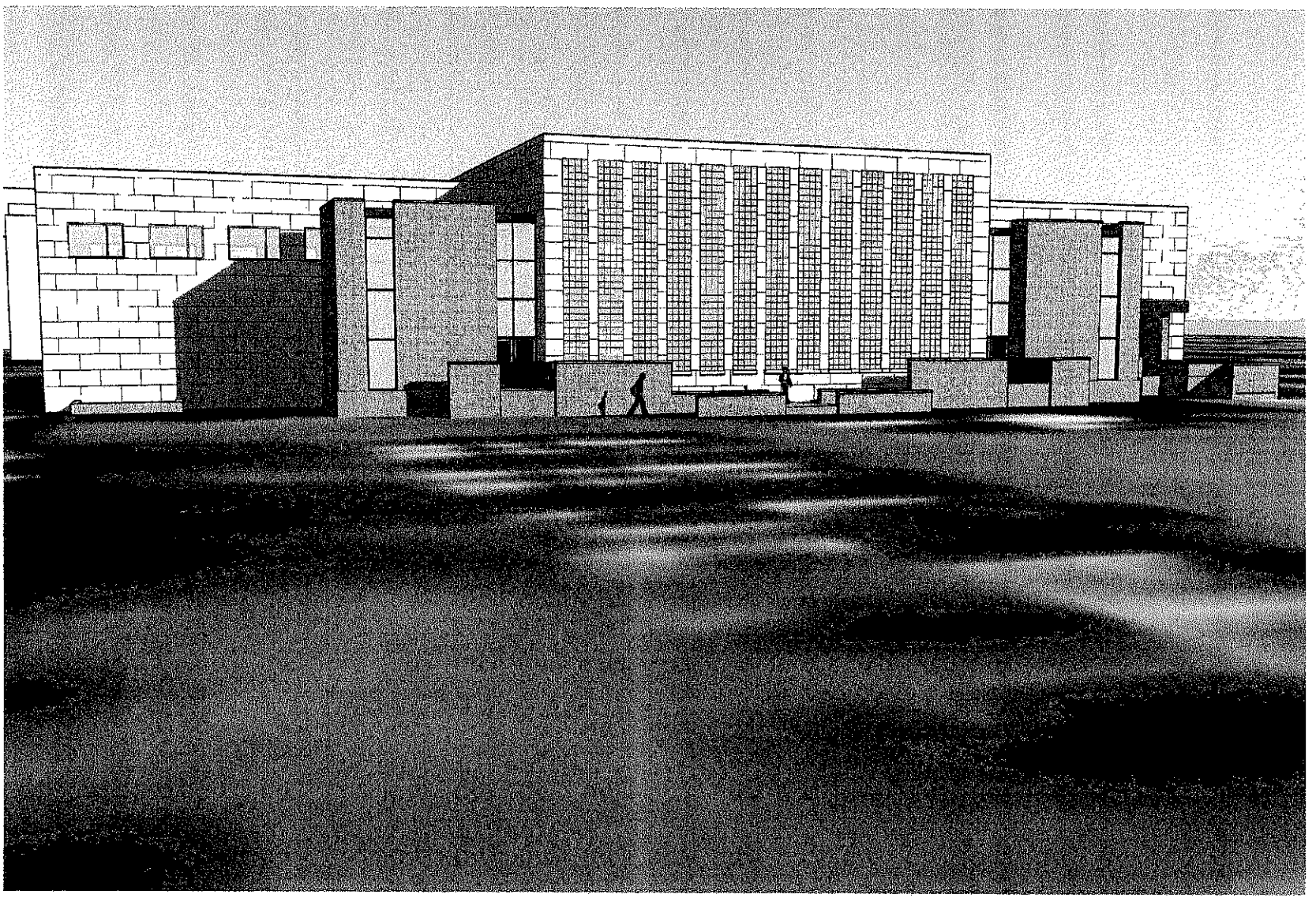

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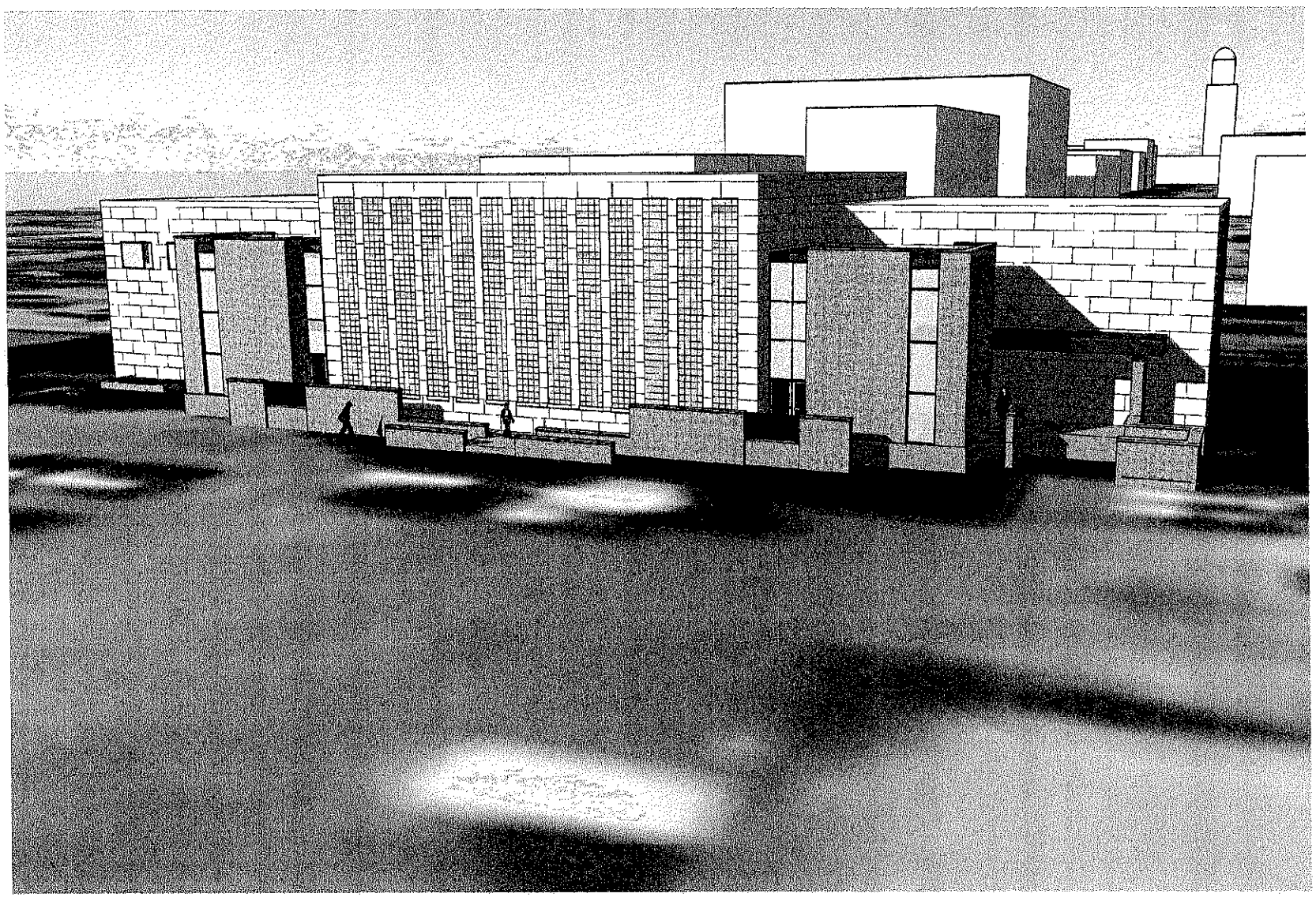

BVH ARCHITECTS

ARCHITECT
BAHR VERMEER HAECKER ARCHITECTS
440 N 8TH STREET STE 100
LINCOLN NE 68508
V 402 475 4551
F 402 475 0226
bvh.com

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER
R.O. YOUKER, INC.
1201 O STREET, SUITE 310
LINCOLN, NE 68508
V 402 477 7640
F 402 477 7631
www.royouker.com

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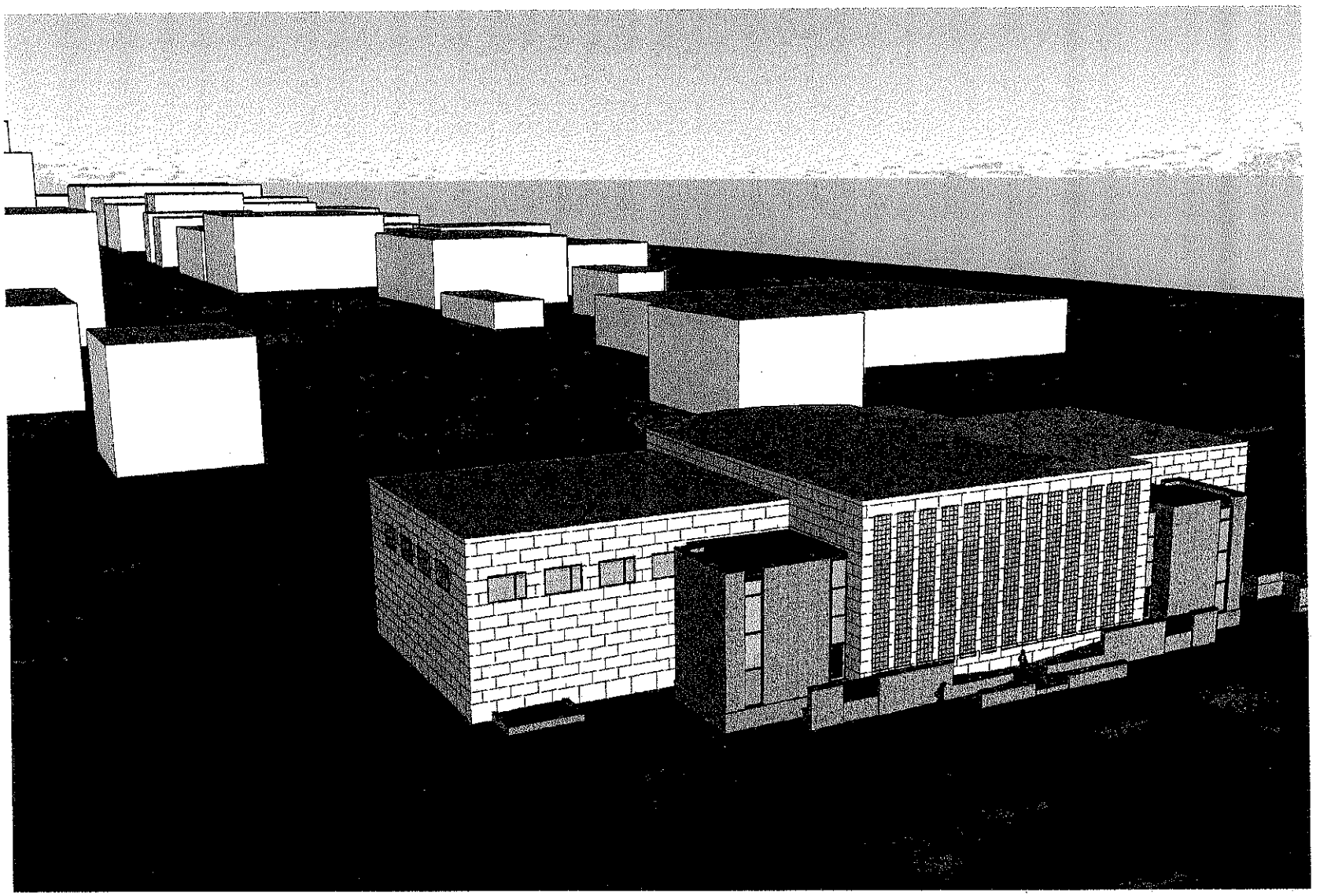
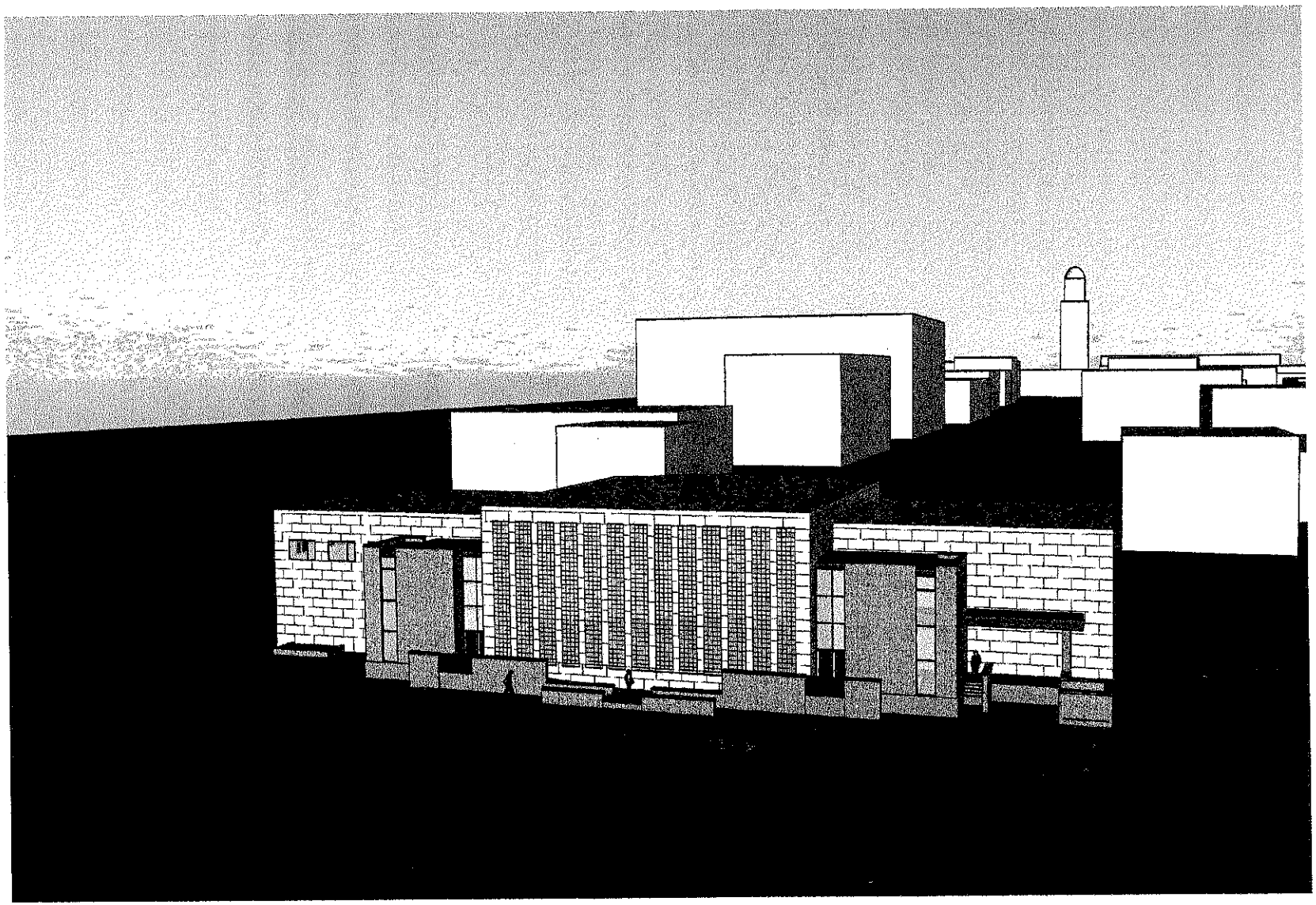
FARRIS ENGINEERING
818 P STREET, SUITE 100
LINCOLN, NE 68508
V 402 477 6163
F 402 477 6120
farris-usa.com/lincoln.html





NEBRASKA STATE
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
HEADQUARTERS
RENOVATION

PROJECT: L07055 DATE: FEBRUARY 14 2008

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ARCHITECTURAL
RENDERINGS

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