



PO BOX 272, TURNERS FALLS, MA 01376, 413.863.8316
INFO@RENBUILD.NET, WWW.RENBUILD.NET

09/17/24

Montague Historical Commission
Janel Nockleby, Chair
One Avenue A
Turners Falls, MA 01376

RE 11 North St, Montague Center, MA

Chairman Nockleby, and Members of the Commission,

Renaissance Builders has applied for a Demolition permit for 11 North Street in Montague Center. We were initially hired to lift up the house and replace the fieldstone foundation with a poured concrete foundation in order to address a serious rat infestation. As we investigated the house and learned more about the situation, we determined that a new foundation would not necessarily solve the problem. Because of the various stages of building and construction techniques present in the house there are many hidden voids where rats might hide during the process. The owners would undertake serious disruption to their lives and expense with no guarantee of eradicating the rats. They have already spent tens of thousands of dollars trying to rid their home of vermin, to no avail. They therefore concluded that the only way to live without rats is to demolish the existing structure and build new.

- The Owners are:
Jane Stephenson, 11 North St, Montague, MA 01351, 413-325-4458,
janestephenson222@gmail.com, and
Alison Ryan, 11 North St, Montague, MA 01351, 413-834-0849,
alisonryan5@gmail.com
- A testimony from the Owners is attached.
- Photos of the sides of the building visible from the public way, taken within the past 12 months, are attached.
- A floor plan of the existing structure is attached, along with a site plan showing the existing footprint and the proposed footprint of the new house.

The house consists of several parts, constructed over many years. The oldest section (indicated in yellow on the footprint drawing) is the structure that was reportedly moved from the Town Common in 1842 after the other half fell to ruin. A series of additions conceal most of the original building, including one that added a new, steeper pitched roof over the old roof. This double roof structure is contributing to the rat problem, as it provides them with their own protected space that has no access. (A concealed space such as this would not be allowed in current Building Code for safety reasons.) The only parts of the oldest building that are still visible are 2 sections of exterior wall.

While this house is within the Historic District, and a portion of the house at one time had historical significance, once that structure was moved in 1842 it appears that there was little concern about preserving it for the sake of its original use. Rather, given the various additions that were subsequently added, it seems like it was a practical move by frugal New Englanders to reuse the half of the building that hadn't yet fallen down. The additions suggest it was soon converted to living space and added to accordingly. No sense of its original purpose or significance remains.

The Owners' intent is to replace this structure with a new home in keeping with the character of the neighborhood. The proposed house is a 2 story Colonial similar to the neighbor's house, with a typical New England porch. A rendering is attached.

On behalf of the Owners we request that the Montague Historical Commission advise the Montague Inspector of Buildings to approve this Demolition Permit. We request that it be approved in as speedy a manner as possible to allow demolition and construction to proceed so that the Owners can be in their new, rat free home promptly.

Please feel free to call or email for further information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tricia Perham".

Tricia Perham
Vice President, Renaissance Builders

Dear Montague Center Historical Commission,

We are writing to fill you in on what has led to our reluctant decision to demolish our home at 11 North Street. We have lived in the home for 25 years. 11 North Street is a typical run-on New England abode, with six sections, all built at different times. It has at least four different types of foundations, at least four different kinds of roofs, and myriad wall and ceiling structures, tacked together with a mish-mash of methods and technology. We have worked to improve the property in the time we've lived there, but one factor has dogged us incessantly—rats. We have a serious and unmanageable infestation. We have combated them with every manner of deterrent and mitigation available, spending tens of thousands of dollars on these efforts. These have included: rodenticide, trapping, exclusion, patching internal holes, steel wool, as well as contracting with four different problem wildlife services.

Rats have, twice, chewed through water lines, leading to colossal flooding and ruination. Because of this, we had to rip out half of the first floor and replace it, only to have this scenario repeated within two years. The water line damage also led to extensive black mold, requiring mitigation. All our food items are stored in metal containers because the rats have learned to chew through plastic. Despite these efforts, rats continue to live in our walls, our ceilings and under our house. Daily, they chew through plaster and drywall, through window screens and ceiling fixtures to get into the main living spaces of the home. They live in our stove, behind the refrigerator, in our laundry room and kitchen cupboards, inside our chairs and couches and we even had a group make a nest in our child's trundle bed.

Rats and mold are a health hazard that we can not surrender to. We had hoped to be able to preserve the house by digging out and pouring a concrete foundation under it. We chose Renaissance Builders for this project because of their experience with preserving older houses. However, as we worked on this plan, we learned that the colony was so well-entrenched that a new foundation would not eliminate the problem. Even stripping the walls, floors and ceilings down to studs would not mitigate the rats. Therefore we have come to the reluctant conclusion that because of the hodge-podge construction of the house, the rats cannot be eliminated or managed through renovation. Instead, we need to demolish and start anew.

Please understand that this decision was heartbreaking for us and we certainly have not come to it lightly. We know 11 North Street really well at this point and have come to admit that the manner in which the house has evolved, with multiple additions, over time, has created conditions ideal for rodents but unsuitable for human habitation.

Thank you for your time and consideration and for the work you do for the community.

Jane Stephenson
Alison Ryan



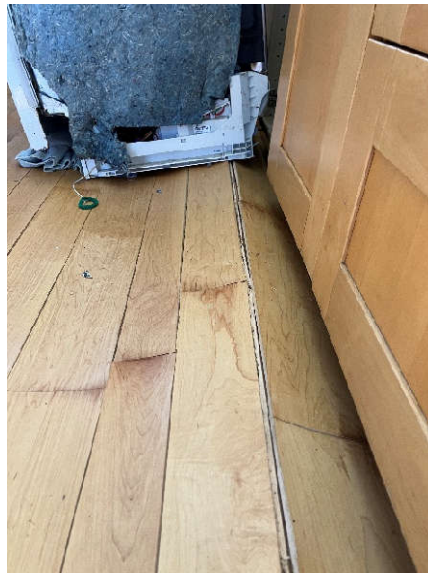
Rat tunnels in the dirt floor of the basement



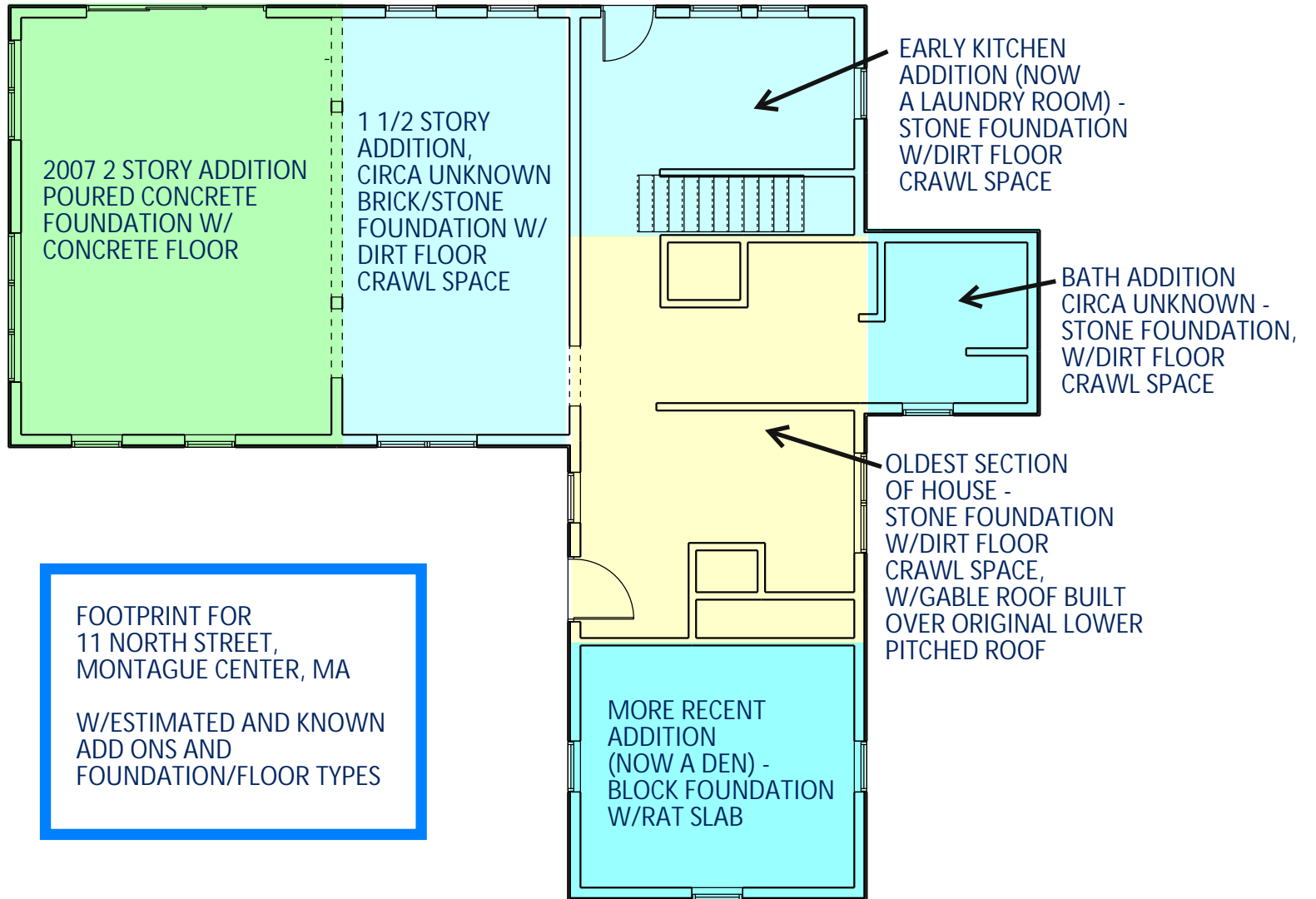
Water damage and mold in the concrete section of the basement from the most recent rat incident when they chewed through the water line in the refrigerator.



Mold



The kitchen floor had to be completely removed.



STREET SIDE

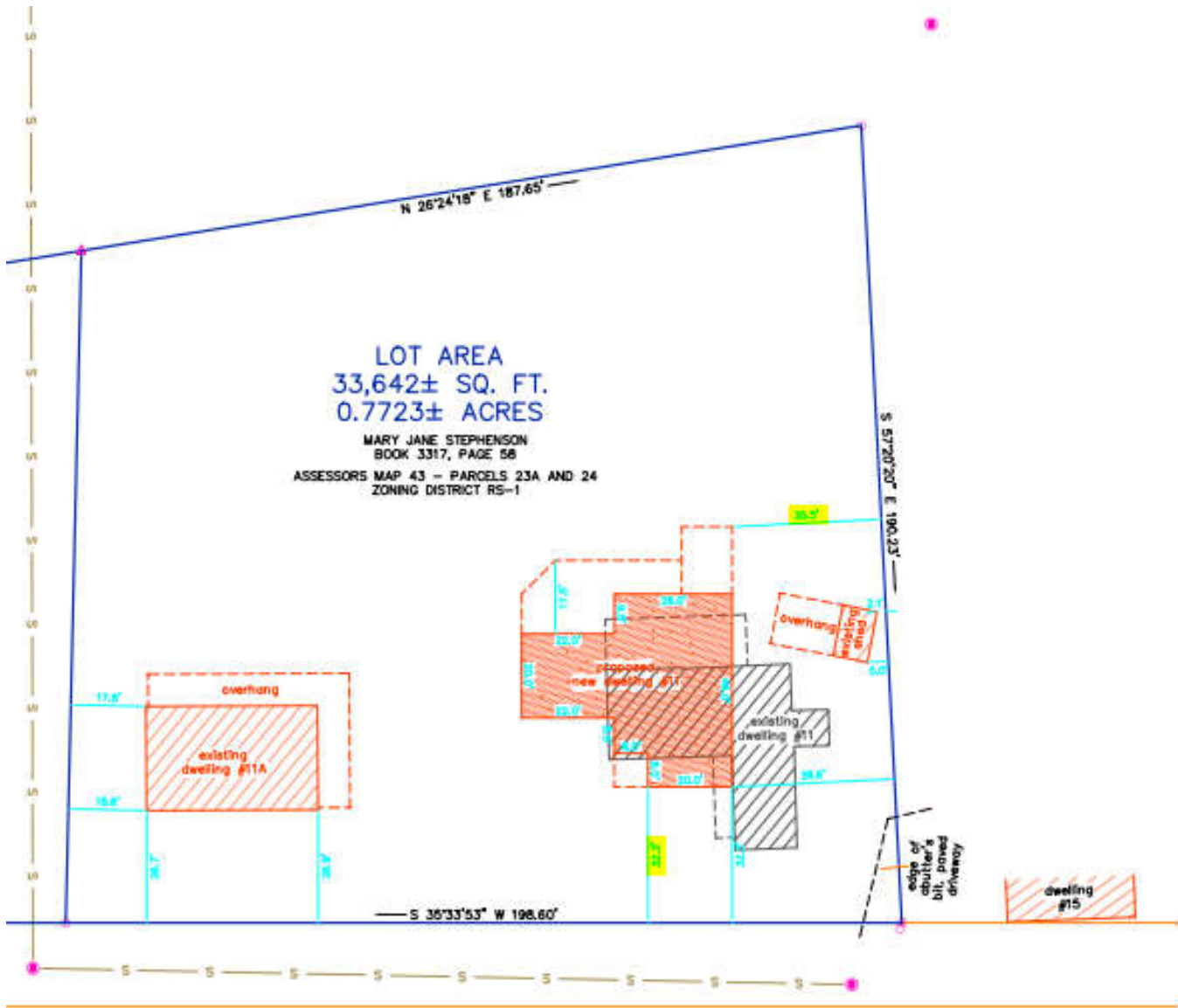




BLACK
LIVES
MATTER







"PROPOSED BUILDING LAYOUT"
 PLAN OF LAND IN
 MONTAGUE, MASSACHUSETTS
 PREPARED FOR
 MARY JANE STEPHENSON



SCALE: 1"=20' AUGUST 20, 2024
 HAROLD L. EATON AND ASSOCIATES, INC.
 REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL LAND SURVEYORS
 235 RUSSELL STREET - HADLEY - MASSACHUSETTS
 413-584-7599 413-585-5976 (fax)
 email - hleaton@aol.com



Proposed new construction, 11 North St, Montague Center, MA
Street View



Massachusetts Historical Commission Survey and Planning Grant Program

Fiscal Year 2025

The Massachusetts Historical Commission Survey and Planning Grant Program is a federally funded, reimbursable, 50/50 matching grant program to support historic preservation planning activities in communities throughout the state.

For Fiscal Year 2025, eligible applicants for Survey and Planning Grants are anticipated to include all local historical commissions, local historic district commissions, planning offices, and other eligible public and non-profit historic preservation organizations.

The target planning figure for this FY 2025 matching grant round will be contingent on MHC's FY 2025 federal budget allocation. This has not yet been determined. Under federal law, MHC is required to pass through grant awards representing 10% of the MHC's total annual federal funding allocation to Certified Local Governments.

Eligible Activities

As the State Historic Preservation Office, the Massachusetts Historical Commission is responsible for administering the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. The Act authorizes the Secretary of the Interior, through the National Park Service and State Historic Preservation Offices, to grant funds to communities and private non-profit organizations for a wide range of preservation-related activities. These include:

- Completion of **cultural resource inventories**;
- Nomination of significant properties to the **National Register of Historic Places**;
- Completion of community-wide **preservation plans**; and
- Other types of **studies, reports, publications and projects** that relate to the identification and protection of significant historic properties and sites

Please note that while all eligible projects will be considered, **for FY 2025 MHC will prioritize planning and National Register Projects** (Categories B.2 and B.3 in the *Guidelines for Survey & Planning Applicants*).

The Survey and Planning Grant program supports efforts to identify and plan for the protection of significant historic buildings, structures, archaeological sites, and landscapes in the Commonwealth.

How to Apply

Program Timeline

Pre-application (letter of intent) deadline:	November 15, 2024
---	--------------------------

Invitations for full applications issued:	December 11, 2024
Full application deadline:	February 3, 2025
Award selection:	March 12, 2025
Project end date:	June 30, 2026

See the Guidelines for Survey and Planning Applicants for more information on eligible projects, selection criteria, and the application process. You can download the Guidelines and the pre-application form (letter of intent) below in either PDF or Word format.

- [Guidelines for Applicants and Pre-Application form](#) (PDF)
- [Guidelines for Applicants and Pre-Application form](#) (DOC)

If you have any questions, contact the MHC Preservation Planning team:

Massachusetts Historical Commission

[Massachusetts Archives Building](#)

[220 Morrissey Boulevard](#)

[Boston, MA 02125-3314](#)

Phone: [617-727-8470](tel:617-727-8470)

Email: michael.steinitz@sec.state.ma.us

GUIDELINES FOR SURVEY AND PLANNING APPLICANTS

A. Eligible Applicants for FY 2025 Survey and Planning Grant funding are:

1. Local historical commissions created under M.G.L., Chapter 40 sec. 8(d);
2. Historic district commissions or study committees;
3. City and town planning offices and boards or community development offices;
4. Regional planning agencies and state agencies;
5. Educational institutions;
6. Certified Local Governments of Boston, Bedford, Beverly, Brookline, Danvers, Dedham, Eastham, Easton, Falmouth, Framingham, Gloucester, Grafton, Hingham, Holyoke, Lexington, Lowell, Manchester-by-the-Sea, Marblehead, Medfield, Medford, Methuen, Nantucket, New Bedford, Newton, Plymouth, Quincy, Salem, Somerville, Sudbury, and Worcester;
7. Private non-profit organizations.

All applicants must be able to meet deadlines, monitor project work, and have a financial system that meets federal standards. If the applicant is not the local historical commission, the comments of the local historical commission will be required if the applicant is invited to submit a full proposal.

B. Eligible Projects That Will Be Funding Priorities for FY 2025

All projects must be consistent with the objectives of the Massachusetts State Historic Preservation Plan, 2018-2022 (available on-line at <https://www.sec.state.ma.us/divisions/mhc/preservation/historic-preservation-plan.htm>), which stresses the need for identification, evaluation, and protection of the state's cultural resources. The following project types are considered eligible for funding:

1. Community-wide or targeted inventories of historic, architectural, landscape or archaeological resources, or planning (survey plan) projects to prepare for such inventories. The current State Historic Preservation Plan includes the updating of community-wide inventories, development of community-wide survey plans, and the undertaking of thematic surveys among its objectives.
2. Preparation of National Register of Historic Places nominations. MHC will consider National Register district nominations ONLY if there is documented support for the district from owners and/or community officials. In addition, nominations may be prepared for individually eligible public properties and those owned by private nonprofit organizations. Prior to submission of a full application, the MHC must have completed an evaluation as to the National Register eligibility of the district or individual properties. A community-wide survey, which provides a context for the evaluation, must have been completed before an evaluation can be made. The nomination and listing of eligible properties and districts to the National Register is a primary objective of the current State Historic Preservation Plan. **[MHC FY 2025 PRIORITY]**
3. Other planning projects relating to the identification, evaluation, and protection of National Register-eligible resources. Examples include, but are not limited to: a communitywide historic preservation plan; development of local historic district design guidelines; preparation of historic preservation public information; studies of the feasibility of a proposed preservation planning policy or initiative at the neighborhood or community level; heritage tourism programs; and training and/or educational programs. The current State Historic Preservation Plan encourages the use of planning tools, protective mechanisms and public education to integrate historic preservation best-practices more fully into the local planning and development process. **[MHC FY 2025 PRIORITY]**

4. ****CLG APPLICANTS ONLY**** Studies necessary to enable future development or protection of a public or private nonprofit owned National Register-listed property, including conditions assessments, feasibility studies, and the development of plans and specifications for restoration or rehabilitation. Historic structures reports may include the preparation of outline plans and specifications for a Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund (MPPF) application.

C. **Funding**

The National Park Service through the Massachusetts Historical Commission provides funding for Survey and Planning grants. Grant funds must be administered in accordance with federal and state requirements. MHC complies with Equal Opportunity regulations. The standard state contract is required.

Survey & Planning Matching Grants: Grants are 50/50 % matching reimbursement grants. The local share (50%) must be from a non-federal source; the only exception is Community Development Block Grant funding, which can be used as a local match. Preference is given to projects with a full cash match. Existing paid staff and volunteers (unpaid) may, however, use the value of their time donated to the project as part of the match. Volunteer time may contribute up to 25% of the local share. The donated time must be necessary and reasonable to meet the project goals and must be adequately documented by MHC time sheets. Volunteer time will be valued at minimum wage unless a higher rate can be documented and is approved by the MHC.

Grant requests should be for no less than \$7,500 for a minimum total project cost of \$15,000. Community-wide or targeted survey grant requests should be for no less than \$12,500 for a minimum total project cost of \$25,000. There is no maximum amount; however, most awards will likely be between \$10,000 and \$20,000. Projects must be from 6-12 months in duration and should be able to start administratively around July 2025. Consultant projects should be scheduled to begin work September 2025 following an open procurement process. Project work must be completed by June 30, 2026. Survey and Planning grants are reimbursement grants. The grant recipient must first expend the total project cost. Upon approval and acceptance of final products and submission of a satisfactory project completion report (which includes financial documentation for the total project cost), the recipient will be reimbursed for 50% of eligible project costs up to the amount of the grant allocation. No partial reimbursements prior to completion of the project will be considered. A grant recipient therefore must have sufficient funds available to cover the entire cost of the project prior to reimbursement. Matching-share funds must be in place when a grant award is made.

Note that no project-paid consultants can be pre-selected by the applicant. Federal and state regulations require an open selection process. The applicant, if selected for funding, will receive further instructions on procurement procedures. Potential consultants should play no role in shaping applications.

D. **Application Procedures**

The original copy of the letter of intent to apply for funds (form attached) must be received by the MHC office by 5 p.m., Friday, November 15, 2024. No faxed or emailed applications are accepted. Letters/Proposals should be addressed to:

Michael Steinitz
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, MA 02125

E. **Selection Process**

MHC staff and a subcommittee of the full Commission will evaluate pre- and full applications and proposals. The Commission will invite full S&P applications at its December 11, 2024 Commission meeting. **The full application will be due by February 3, 2025.** Grant awards will be made at the March 12, 2025 Commission meeting. All MHC monthly meetings are open to the public.

F. Evaluation and Selection Criteria

Survey & Planning Matching Grants:

- All **pre-applications** will be reviewed and selected for an invitation to prepare a full application based on the following criteria:
 1. Demonstration that the proposed project will represent a public benefit by supporting local and state historic preservation priorities established by the MHC and the local historical commission.
 2. Identification of the funding match source; demonstration that the match is in place or will be in place by the time of the grant award; demonstrated understanding of the reimbursement nature of the MHC grant.
 3. Demonstration of financial need, i.e., that other funding has been sought and is not available and/or that the proposed activities could not be undertaken without Survey and Planning grant support.
 4. Demonstration that the proposed activity can realistically be completed within the budget and time frame of the project.
 5. MHC will consider statewide geographic distribution in its invitations for full application. MHC will also give special consideration to applicants who have not previously been awarded program funds.
- The following selection criteria will be used to evaluate **full applications**.
 1. Appropriateness of Proposed Project: Preference will be given to applications that demonstrate a clear understanding of the preservation needs of the community and that propose projects which address state, regional, or local preservation goals and objectives as outlined in the Massachusetts State Historic Preservation Plan 2018-2022 (available at www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc).
 2. Level of Information: Preference will be given to survey projects in communities where the existing level of information about cultural resources is low or nonexistent, as identified by the State Reconnaissance Survey in a Regional Report or as identified by the MHC.
 3. Level of Significance: Preference will be given to communities with significant historic, architectural, or landscape/archaeological resources, as identified in an existing community cultural resources survey, in an MHC Regional Reconnaissance Survey report, or as identified in the State Historic Preservation Plan.
 4. Potential for Loss or Destruction: Preference will be given to communities whose historic, architectural, landscape or archaeological resources are threatened with loss or destruction, as identified by the MHC Regional Report or as identified by the State Historic Preservation Plan. Major threats to a community's resources include pressure from new development, abandonment, deterioration, underutilization, or natural hazards, including those resulting from climate change, such as sea-level rise and increased risk of coastal and inland flooding.
 5. Level of Local Preservation Activity: Preference will be given to communities that have active local historical commissions. For applications submitted by an office or local organization other than the local historical commission, the supporting documents must include a letter of support from the local historical commission and evidence that the applicant is coordinating efforts with the local historical commission.
 6. Demonstrated Understanding of Work to Be Performed: Preference will be given to applications that demonstrate a clear understanding of the tasks to be undertaken and products to be submitted under the appropriate MHC scope of work and timetable.

7. Extent and Nature of Public Benefit: Preference will be given to applications demonstrating that the project's products will be available and of benefit to the general public, and to applications that complement ongoing national, state, regional or local planning and revitalization efforts. Preference will also be given to projects demonstrating a benefit to 2020 Environmental Justice neighborhoods as defined by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs.*
8. Administrative and Financial Management Capabilities: Preference will be given to applicants who demonstrate strong capabilities to administer funds and ensure completion of the project in a timely and effective manner. Completeness of the grant application will be considered. Past performance as a sub-grantee, if applicable, also will be considered. All project work must be completed by June 30, 2026.
9. MHC will consider statewide geographic distribution of applicants in its grant awards.

*See <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massgis-data-2020-environmental-justice-populations>

If you have any questions on a potential project scope of work, please contact us at by email. Applicants are strongly advised to discuss their proposed project with MHC staff prior to submitting a pre-application. Email us to schedule a phone conversation.

National Register projects: Ben Haley, Director, National Register Program (Ben.Haley@sec.state.ma.us)

Preservation planning projects: Jenn Doherty, Local Government Programs Coordinator (Jennifer.Doherty@sec.state.ma.us)

Survey projects: Peter Stott, Preservation Planner (Peter.Stott@sec.state.ma.us); Robin Fordham, Preservation Planner (Robin.Fordham@sec.state.ma.us)

General questions: Michael Steinitz, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, (Michael.Steinitz@sec.state.ma.us)

This program receives Federal financial assistance for identification and protection of historic properties. Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, the U.S. Department of the Interior prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or age in its federally assisted programs. If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility as described above, or if you desire further information, please write to: Office for Equal Opportunity, National Park Service, 1849 C Street NW, Washington, DC 20240.

Michael Steinitz
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, MA 02125-3314

Due: 5 p.m., November 15, 2024
No faxed or emailed applications

FY 2025 LETTER OF INTENT TO APPLY FOR SURVEY AND PLANNING FUNDS

1. PROJECT TITLE: _____
2. COMMUNITY/COMMUNITIES: _____
3. APPLICANT ORGANIZATION: _____
ADDRESS: _____
PHONE: _____ FAX: _____
EMAIL: _____
4. LOCAL PROJECT COORDINATOR: _____
ADDRESS: _____
PHONE: _____ FAX: _____
EMAIL: _____
5. AMOUNT OF FUNDING REQUESTED: \$ _____ (50%)
 LOCAL SHARE: \$ _____ (50%)
 TOTAL PROJECT COST: \$ _____ (100%)
6. PRELIMINARY BUDGET AND MATCHING SHARE INFORMATION (ESTIMATED):

 LOCAL SHARE SOURCE: _____
 CASH AMOUNT: \$ _____
 IN-KIND SERVICES (paid employee on staff): \$ _____
 DONATED VOLUNTEER TIME: \$ _____
7. AUTHORIZED APPLICANT SIGNATURE: _____

(NAME, PLEASE PRINT)

(TITLE)

(DATE)

8. NARRATIVE STATEMENT (**ATTACH A ONE-PAGE, TYPED NARRATIVE STATEMENT**):

Explain in a concise statement how the proposed project relates to past, current, and future preservation activity in the community, region or state. Describe how the results of the proposed project will be incorporated into the community, region, or state planning process, and the extent to which the results will be made available and used by the general public. Provide any other information on the special qualities of the project, which makes it deserving of funding. Be sure to address the five Selection Criteria for Pre-Applications. (See Guidelines Item F.)

Metcalfe Associates ARCHITECTURE

142 Main St. Northampton, MA, 01060 Tristram W. Metcalfe III, Ma. Reg. 5393

Phone number > 413 586 5775

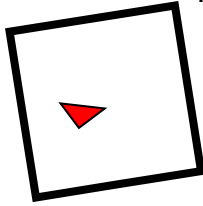
Cell number > 413 695 8200

Email > twm3@rcn.com

NCARB, NYS, MA, CT, NH
registrations

WMAIA

AIA



September 9, 2024

PHASE 1 REPORT

BUILDING CONDITION ASSESSMENT &/OR SELECTIVE DEMOLITION
RECOMMENDATION FOR OLD BLACKSMITH SHOP
at 12 Station Road, Montague Center, MA

THE EXISTING BUILDING

MHC ID MNT.433 MACRIS Maps for MNT.433

CALLED "Old Blacksmith Shop"

Building Conditions Assessment.

SUBMITTED TO:

Jonathan Dobosz, CPRP, <recdir@montague-ma.gov>

Town of Montague Director of Parks & Recreation

56 First St., Turners Falls, MA 01376, (413) 863-3216

The Parks and Recreation Department, One Avenue A Montague, MA 01376

Christopher Sawyer-Laucanno, <csl@mit.edu>

and Janel Nockleby <janel.nockleby@gmail.com>;

Historic Commission Turners Falls, MA

Dear Jonathan,

This report of Task #1 is to be submitted to both the Parks Department and the Historic Commission above to review the following information.

This report term commenced in May to be completed by August 2024. This report is one week beyond that deadline due to several issues beyond our control.

The format of this report will follow the contractual agreement outline tasks written in ***bold italics*** while the additional new report information is in regular type.

This is a brief property description from the RFP

Brief Property Description: The Old Blacksmith Shop

The Old Blacksmith Shop is approximately 1900 square feet, consisting of two joined open buildings with upper storage levels. The cladding is stucco overboard with a metal roof. The Montague Historic Commission suspects that the smaller adjoining building appears to date from c. 1890 and the other larger area from c. 1930.

The original exterior wall with covered window is a load-bearing partition wall between the joined structures.

Background:

The Parks & Recreation Department is overseeing the proposed evaluation of the Old Blacksmith Shop because the structure is on park property. It is currently used for cold storage.

The Parks and Recreation Department is advancing plans for the rehabilitation of the Montague Center Playground which may involve the installation of a parking area at the location of the structure. Because the structure is considered a contributing resource to the Montague Center Historic District (MNT. 433), the Montague Historical Commission has advised the Parks Department to conduct this historic structure evaluation.

The MACRIS Database listing for the property will be included.

Scope of Work

Task 1: Architectural/Structural Analysis and Conditions Survey

a. Conduct an architectural and structural analysis of the structure's interior, exterior and site. To include, but not be limited to i., ii., iii. ;

The existing building has been inspected inside and outside with photographs attached as a pdf file Labeled "Blacksmith Shop report #1 09-09-24".

Architectural/Structural Analysis

The building comprises two wood frame sections with one larger frame as an addition to an earlier smaller frame. The smaller is the Blacksmith Shop with the larger a Garage addition.

The first frame is approximately 25 ft square with the second frame at an approximate 50 foot addition in the same width.

The Blacksmith Shop was the initial older stand alone structure built at a set back further from Station Street and it was built at a higher interior floor level over a crawl space.

The shop has an open 'attic' area essentially just collar ties for rafters spanning East and West. It has a chimney for a metal heating fireplace that was set at the original exterior North wall , and is now an interior party wall to the Garage with its windows blocked off.

The foundations appear to have some concrete repairs but without selective demolition inspection the condition is not visible. The original wood floor level remains roughly 18" above the grade floor level of what is the large garage grade level and workshop space.

The walls of both areas are timber studs covered on the exterior by wood sheathing and later with a metal lath and stucco which is in need of patching repairs at the base where water splash back is maximum.

The two frames are in good shape geometrically with no apparent settlement or deflection which is common in buildings that are utilitarian from that time in history.

i. Estimate approximate original construction dates for the joined entity and signify relative historical importance of each of the conjoined units in terms of features, construction materials, methods of joinery and other construction methods;

CONSTRUCTION DATES

The Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS) has this minimal information and therefore is in need of updates at blank underlines;

ID: [MNT.433](#) Historic Name: CommonName:

Address: 12 Station St Montague Town: Montague

Type: Designations:NRDIS (2001) Types: Blacksmith Shop; Warehouse;

Constructed: 1900 Architecture: Makers: Significance:Architecture; Commerce; Industry;

Demolished: No

There is no photograph of the building

The building age estimate shown above by the Historic Commission in their Evaluation has the ages of the smaller Blacksmith Shop area as c.1890 and larger Garage area as c.1940.

There are remains of Knob & Tube electrical wiring which dates it similar to both the older smaller area and the newer larger area from 1890 into the 1940s and 50s when it was eliminated. Ironically that older wiring is safer than what replaces it with its wires kept far apart, however, its risk is that it is easier to add to by owner modifications that are poorly insulated causing fires.

There are no outstanding indications of different build dates but it seems possible that the original Blacksmith Shop site could have had an even older structure given the need of the Smithing trade. It would take excavation &or removal of the wood floor to know if that is the case.

The construction date of the blacksmith shop earliest structure shows milled timber framing members with vertical stud wall framing not horizontal purlins common with some post and beam. The joinery is typical to the 18th century.

HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE

The building was built for Blacksmithing as maintenance for the dominant transportation system with use of horses plus the need for farm equipment animals metal shod feet and leather tack equipment. This includes maintenance of their wheeled vehicles that had heat forged metal connections to its wood structures, thus it was a very important local trade.

The Blacksmith trade began around 1500 BC and passed from the Ancient thru Medieval and Industrial periods but was essentially terminated by the automobile in the 20th century. Therefore this building's history represents the end of an old record of civilization enhancing need to preserve.

The work of a blacksmith shop's metallurgy extended beyond transportation into all manner of mechanical wood and metal systems that are not transportation but for civilization's other needs. This means a blacksmith shop was a core essential institution and thus a very valuable structure in our history enhanced by transportation as a major formative level of civilization's advances.

The addition to the metallurgy shop with a grade level garage storage area for vehicles is very appropriate to the use of a blacksmith shop. It also has use for weather enclosed shop work storage for vehicle repairs related to metallurgy. The fact it has more windows than vehicle doors indicates its dual use adding significant versatile value to the local civilization.

The construction methods that differ with the two areas are in how the wood frame members were milled and the dates above stand as reasonably accurate. The garage has an interior post for a central beam possibly to load the collar tie ceiling joists but no storage access was found.

ii. Inspect and document existing conditions. This should include both interior and exterior conditions and other elements such as roof, masonry, frame, flashing, and windows.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Exterior

The existing condition of the building wall frame and roof are the most critical elements which fortunately are in relatively sound condition with no serious failing elements noticeable in recent leaks except to the stucco in need of repair patching at many places near grade.

There are cosmetic and fenestration issues of the doors and windows in poor condition. The 6/6 double hung windows are nicely protected by fiberglass skylight material on east and west with wood on the south and they are exposed on the north which improves the street image. They all do need some attention especially with frame and sill water sealing. The garage and shop sliding doors are in poor condition and needs major repairs but replacement might tends to violate preservation.

Interior

The inside surfaces of the smaller area are natural wood studs and show the back of the exterior sheathing with no interior finish which helps keep it dry from rot. The floor seems stable but likely has some repair needs yet it is covered by cold storage and is unable to be inspected.

The walls and ceiling have a sheet rock type paneling largely falling down but it makes it more vented and open reducing deterioration by helping keep the attic and roof dry. The access to attic was not discovered and I assume no storage loads are up there as metal storage of long materials are available below with the historic existing metal hangers from the collar ties and ceiling joists.

iii. Evaluate the structural integrity of the structure.

STRUCRURAL INTEGRITY

The foundations are hard to evaluate except for having no signs of failure from frost heaves or settlements which is remarkable given no heat to fight frost heaves and no exterior water gutter management to prevent excessive wetness which feeds potential frost heave problems..

The frames of both the larger and smaller structures are square and true with no significant noticeable sagging or settlement even as I would expect it to occur being so close to grade. However, the stucco finish nicely protects the wood sills and frame where it has not fallen off. The potential for rot in sills is significant but fairly easy to replace if needed given the light frame and good access to sills both inside and out of the garage but the shop has floor blocking access.

SUMMARY

I would caution loading up the collar ties in both areas with more storage weight as they are not likely designed for it without deeper investigation.

I would strongly recommend preservation and reuse of the buildings areas as built by making any needed functional improvements for uses needed by the parks department and other town cold storage until wider uses may be identified. The adding of more garage doors to have direct access vehicle storage of park or public vehicles would use it if that need surfaces.

The cost to stabilize and keep the building in use as cold storage would be minimal compared to most renovation costs today. This is because it is mostly cosmetic and high energy efficiency doors and windows are needed.

A budget could be set and take it as far as is reasonable with maximum attention to water influx to frame prevention first and foremost at windows and wall sills. Following close inspection to all roof areas for no leaks that may be insignificant while stucco repair work would likely be the largest specification material & labor issue.

Reuse options are possible following a later and greater in-depth study.

Respectfully submitted by

Tristram W. Metcalfe III, AIA



STREET FRONT NORTH FACADE

**OLD BLACKSMITH SHOP
12 STATION STREET
MONTAGUE CENTER, MA**



WEST FACADE [FLAT WALLS JOINED WITH PERSPECTIVE @ ROOF]

**OLD BLACKSMITH SHOP
12 STATION STREET
MONTAGUE CENTER, MA**



REAR SOUTH FACADE

**OLD BLACKSMITH SHOP
12 STATION STREET
MONTAGUE CENTER, MA**



ENTRY SIDE EAST FACADE [FLAT WALLS JOINED WITH PERSPECTIVE @ ROOF]

**OLD BLACKSMITH SHOP
12 STATION STREET
MONTAGUE CENTER, MA**



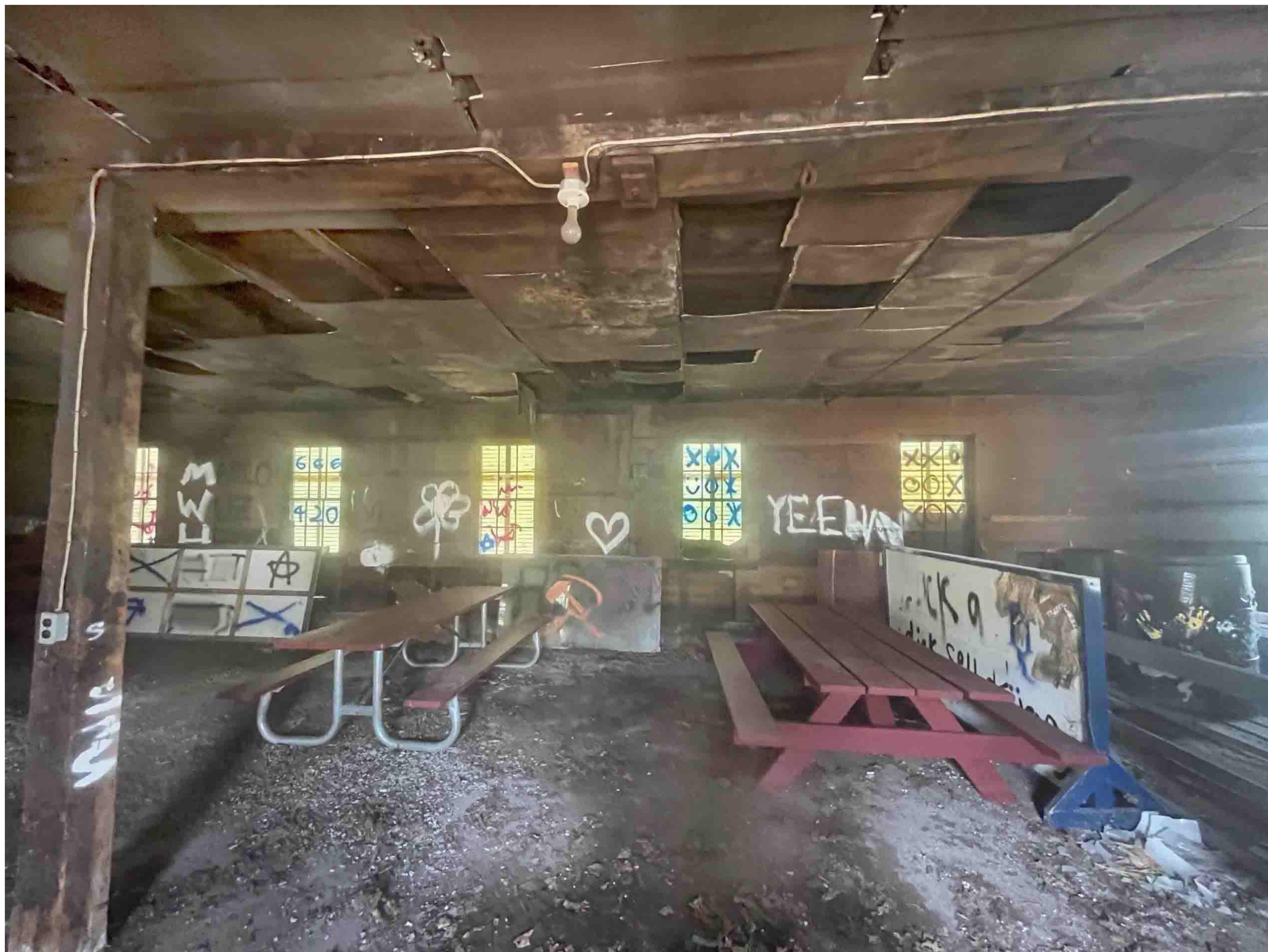
INSIDE EAST ENTRY WALL

**OLD BLACKSMITH SHOP
12 STATION STREET
MONTAGUE CENTER, MA**



INSIDE NORTH FRONT WALL

**OLD BLACKSMITH SHOP
12 STATION STREET
MONTAGUE CENTER, MA**



INSIDE WEST WALL

**OLD BLACKSMITH SHOP
12 STATION STREET
MONTAGUE CENTER, MA**



INSIDE PARTY WALL SOUTH

**OLD BLACKSMITH SHOP
12 STATION STREET
MONTAGUE CENTER, MA**



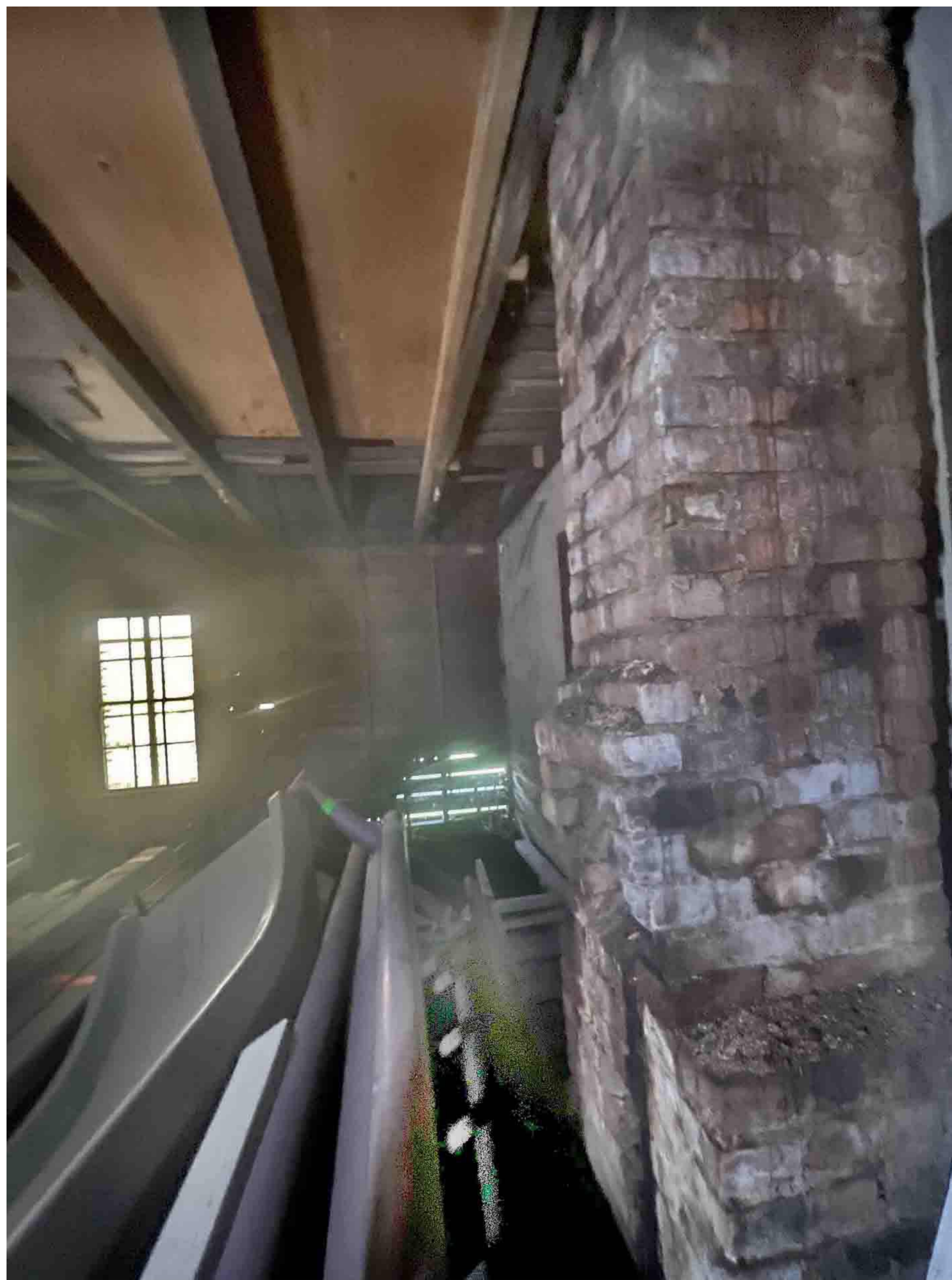
INSIDE SHOP SOUTH WALL [STAIR ITEM IS NOT BUILT IN]

**OLD BLACKSMITH SHOP
12 STATION STREET
MONTAGUE CENTER, MA**



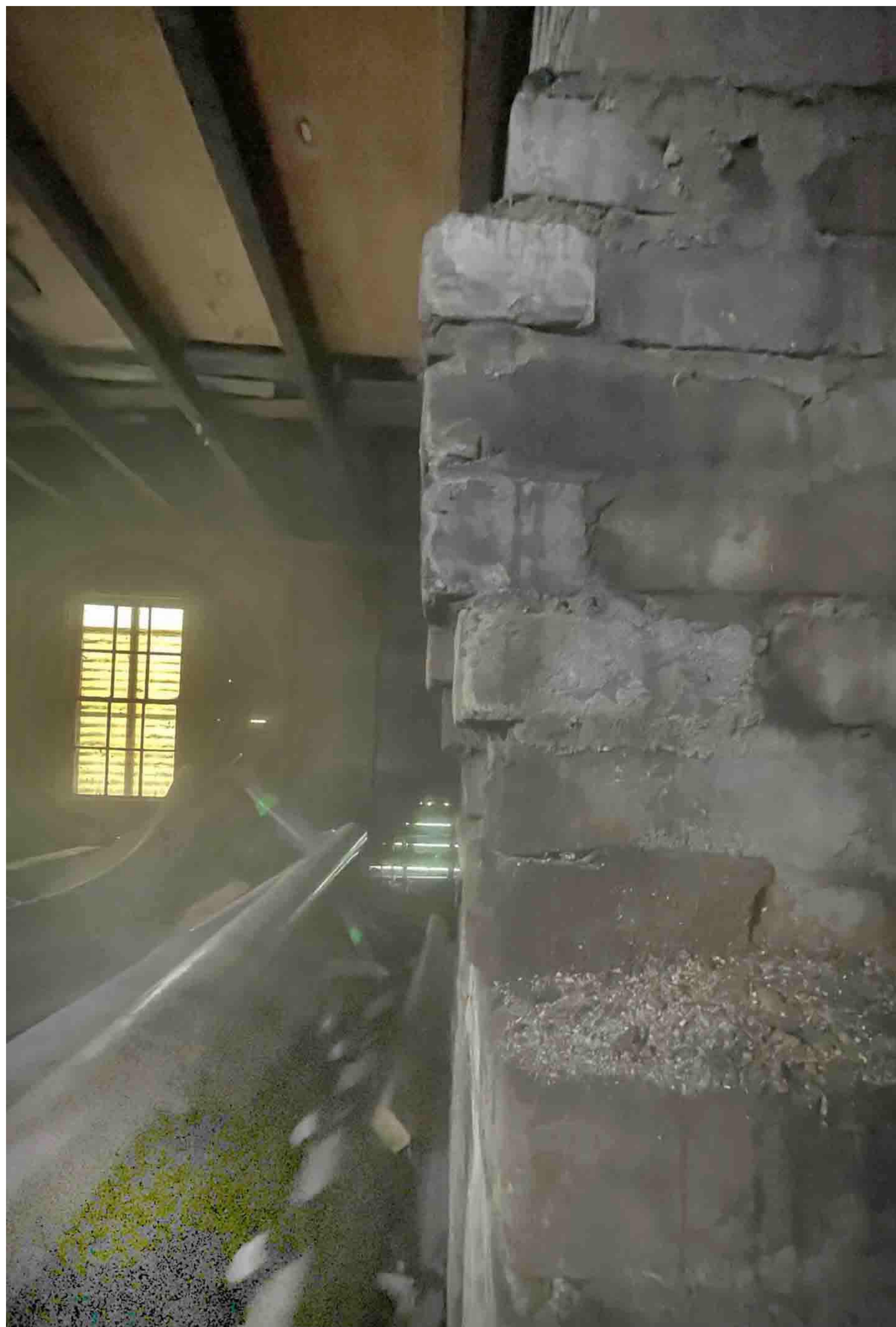
INSIDE SHOP AT DOOR & RAMP TO GARAGE

**OLD BLACKSMITH SHOP
12 STATION STREET
MONTAGUE CENTER, MA**



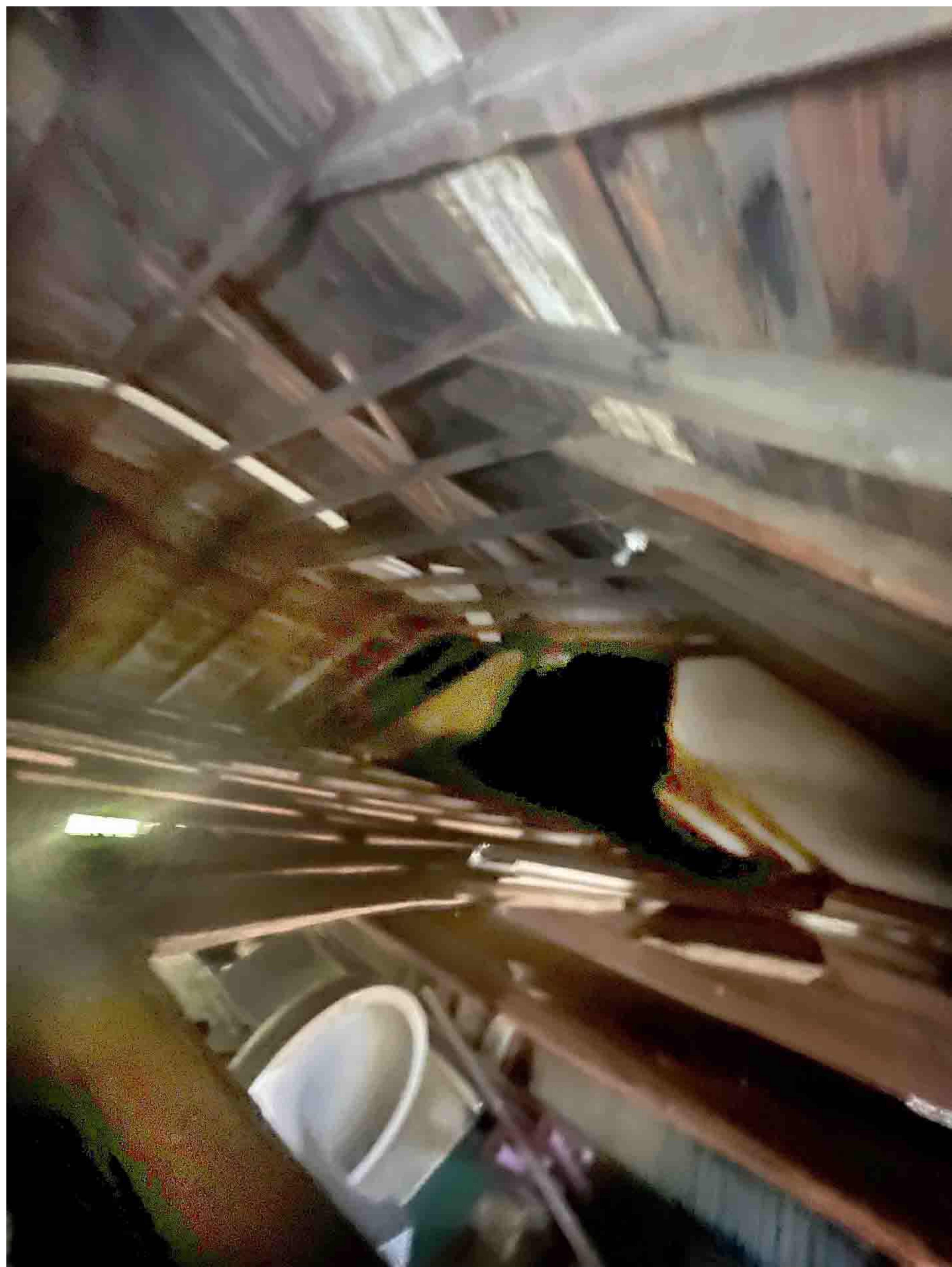
SHOP AT CHIMNEY & WEST WALL

**OLD BLACKSMITH SHOP
12 STATION STREET
MONTAGUE CENTER, MA**



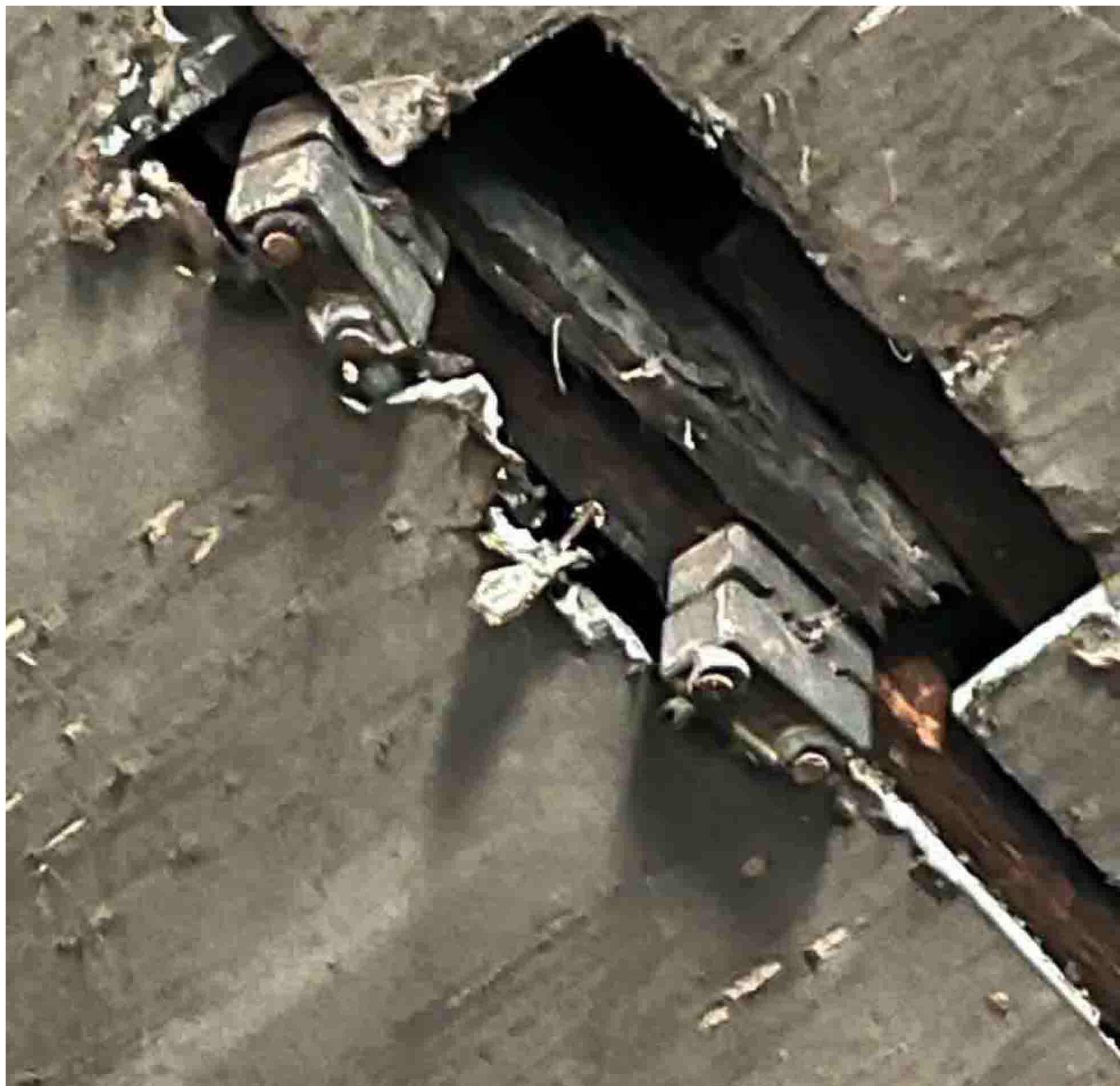
SHOP CRUDE BRICK DETAIL

**OLD BLACKSMITH SHOP
12 STATION STREET
MONTAGUE CENTER, MA**



SHOP ROOF ABOVE COLLAR TIES

**OLD BLACKSMITH SHOP
12 STATION STREET
MONTAGUE CENTER, MA**



GARAGE CEILING KNOB & TUBE

**OLD BLACKSMITH SHOP
12 STATION STREET
MONTAGUE CENTER, MA**



STUCCO EXPOSED STEEL LATH PANEL EDGE AT SHOP & GARAGE JOINT

**OLD BLACKSMITH SHOP
12 STATION STREET
MONTAGUE CENTER, MA**



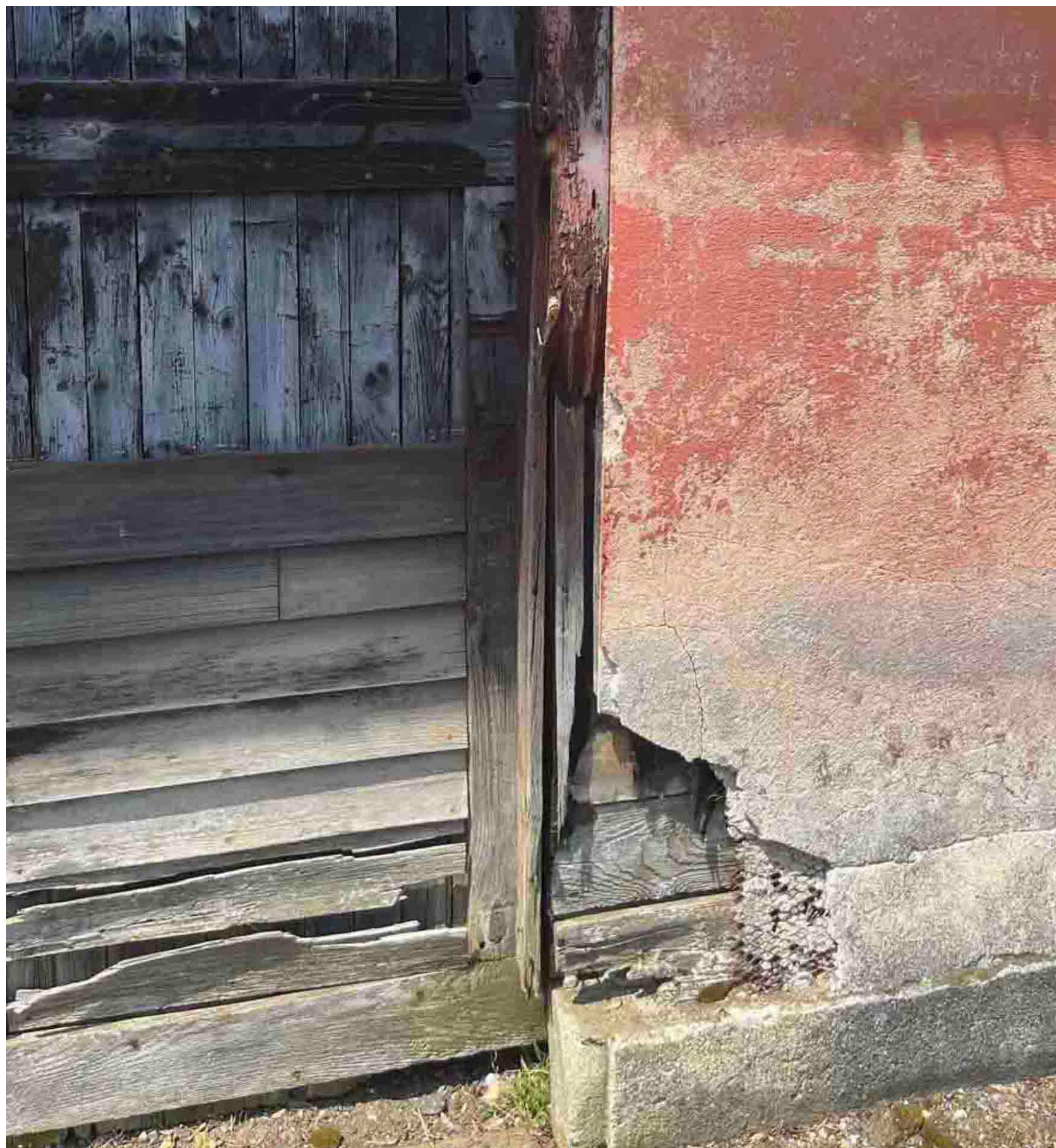
FIBERGLASS PANEL OVER WINDOW

**OLD BLACKSMITH SHOP
12 STATION STREET
MONTAGUE CENTER, MA**



STUCCO AND STEEL LATH OVER WOOD BASE

**OLD BLACKSMITH SHOP
12 STATION STREET
MONTAGUE CENTER, MA**



DOOR JAMB AT EXPOSED WOOD BASE

**OLD BLACKSMITH SHOP
12 STATION STREET
MONTAGUE CENTER, MA**

Metcalfe Associates ARCHITECTURE

142 Main St. Northampton, MA, 01060 Tristram W. Metcalfe III, Ma. Reg. 5393

Phone number > 413 586 5775

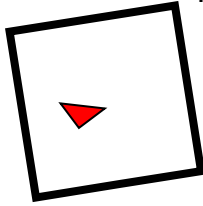
Cell number > 413 695 8200

Email > twm3@rcn.com

NCARB, NYS, MA, CT, NH
registrations

WMAIA

AIA



September 11, 2024

RE: INVOICE # 2
BUILDING CONDITION ASSESSMENT &/OR SELECTIVE DEMOLITION
RECOMMENDATION FOR OLD BLACKSMITH SHOP
at 12 Station Road, Montague Center, MA

To: Jonathan Dobosz, CPRP, <recdir@montague-ma.gov>
Town of Montague Director of Parks & Recreation
56 First St., Turners Falls, MA 01376, (413) 863-3216
The Parks and Recreation Department, One Avenue A Montague, MA 01376

CC: Christopher Sawyer-Laucanno, <csl@mit.edu>
and Janel Nockleby <janel.nockleby@gmail.com>;
Historic Commission Turners Falls, MA

Dear Jonathan,

This is my second invoice with a paid retainer for services, following April 15, 2024

ARTICLE 3: COMPENSATION:

The Town shall pay the Contractor for the performance of the work outlined in Article #1 at the contract sum of \$3,500.00. The Contractor shall submit monthly invoices to the Town for services rendered, which will be due 30 days following receipt by the Town.

I have inspected the site and submitted Report #1.

The retainer was paid for \$1000.00 as the first payment on the \$3500 total contract amount in phase 1.
with a balance **due of \$2500.**

Thank you.

Sincerely

Tris Metcalfe