



Brandon M. Scott  
Mayor

**COMMISSION FOR  
HISTORICAL & ARCHITECTURAL  
PRESERVATION**

*Harry Spikes, Chairman*

**STAFF REPORT**



*Chris Ryer  
Director*

**March 14, 2023**

**REQUEST:** Demolish Structure – Demolition Hearing One – Determination of Historic Significance (Jonestown Historic District)

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**STAFF:** Tyriq Charleus, Eric Holcomb and Stacy Montgomery

**PETITIONER(S):** Helping Up Mission Inc., Contract Purchaser

**OWNER:** Hendler Creamery Development LLC

**SITE/HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Jonestown Historic District: The property is located within the Jonestown historic district on E. Baltimore Street between East Street, an alley street, to the west and Aisquith Street to the east (*Image 1*). The property is located near the McKim Free School, a Baltimore City Landmark, located within a traffic island on Aisquith Street and the Friends Meeting House on Aisquith Street near Fayette Street, also a Baltimore City Landmark (*Images 2-4*).

Jonestown historic district exemplifies the physical culture of a residential, commercial and industrial neighborhood that housed and employed several immigrant and class groups throughout the late 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries. In typical urban development pattern, residential, institutional, commercial and industrial uses were fairly integrated components of Baltimore City, particularly in the Jonestown neighborhood. This neighborhood became home to many first generation ethnic groups, which built their synagogues and churches here. In addition, several significant industries settled in Jonestown contributing to its built environment.

Site Conditions/Architectural Description: Currently, the Hendler Creamery structure comprises three (south, west, and north elevations) exterior walls. Significant portions of the building were demolished (with CHAP approval). The existing walls were to be incorporated into a large apartment complex. The Hendler Creamery building was designed by local architect Jackson Gott in 1892 as a cable car powerhouse. The building powered the run of cable from Gay Street to North Avenue. In 1899, the United Railway and Electric Company, a Baltimore street car conglomerate, purchased the building and replaced the cable cars with electric streetcars. In 1903 prominent theater owner James L. Kernan converted the building to a theater. Kernan hired architect Edward Glidden to install a lobby, manager's office, box office and an auditorium. A new floor was also inserted in the former engine room. In 1912, Lionel Manuel Hendler purchased the property and converted it into America's first

completely automated ice cream plant. Between 1914 and 1915, Hendler added a third floor, and a bay to the eastern side of the structure (*Image 6*). The Hendler Company continued making ice cream until 1971 when Borden Company acquired the business. Ice cream was made at the site until the mid-1980s. The building has been underused and vacant ever since (*Image 7*).

The three-story masonry building included a highly decorative south elevation—its primary façade—with four arched window openings flanked by larger arched entryways. This façade still exists. The west elevation contains five large arched openings and numerous window openings. The arched openings have been altered or partially enclosed to include some windows. The window openings are of various sizes and scattered along the façade. The tripartite north elevation features large-scale arched openings on the first floor that have been altered with metal roll-up doors. Currently, these three elevations are being shored up by large metal supports that span out onto the public right-of-way.

## **BACKGROUND**

- September 11, 2012 - CHAP determined that adjacent structures 1101-1105 E. Fayette Street, 1107 E. Fayette Street and 1110 E. Baltimore Street did not contribute to the Jonestown Local Historic District.
- November 12, 2013 - CHAP approved demolition for the structures determined non-contributing (1101-1105 E. Fayette Street, 1107 E. Fayette Street and 1110 E. Baltimore Street).
- December 10, 2013 - CHAP gave concept approval of the proposed new construction in height, massing, and scale. The Hendler development team presented a plan to construct a new six-story structure with 254 apartment units and two floors of underground parking, and to rehabilitate the Hendler Creamery building. In addition, CHAP gave concept approval of the Hendler building plans with the following amendments:
  - Preserve the “Laboratories” sign and second story window frames.
  - Redesign the proposed complete removal of gabled roof area. (The staff report stated: “The removal of the gable roof as proposed changes the overall volume and shape of the structure, which will detract from the historic character of the structure.”)

### Next Steps:

- The applicant will need to address all issues regarding changes to the eastern property line on Aisquith Street and other development procedure requirements prior to returning to CHAP.
- Landscape details will come back to the full commission.
- The applicant will need to present final details (building features, materials and detailing) of the new construction to the full commission.
- The applicant will need to present to the full commission the Hendler Creamery restoration plans for repointing, window details, masonry repair, and roof design.

- August 11, 2015 – CHAP approved concept plans with final details to come to the full Commission for review. At the Commission hearing, the new development team presented its request to alter the previously approved 2013 plans. **The new plan proposed the demolition of the Hendler building’s entire east elevation, one bay of the tripartite north elevation, and the building’s interior structure.** A new east elevation wall would be constructed of contemporary materials that would support a replication of the existing gable roof running the length of the building. CHAP staff presented a finding of disapproval to the Commission due to the extent of the proposed demolition and the fact that the project had received conceptual approval in 2013 with the understanding that the historic building would be rehabilitated. Contrary to the staff recommendation, the Commission issued concept approval of the developer’s proposal, with final details to come to the full Commission for review.
- April 11, 2017 – CHAP approved amendments to the previously approved plans affecting the building with final details to be reviewed by staff.
- August 15, 2018 -DHCD APPROVED demolition permit to remove the following:
  - On the North elevation, remove the three-story easternmost (later) section of façade
  - Raze entire east elevation
  - Remove roof sheathing and roofing panels, remove roof trusses when shoring is complete
  - Remove all interior elements
  - Shore north, south and west elevations in accordance with shoring plan.
- September 20, 2021 – DHCD building inspector investigated the building due to a complaint of possible dangerous conditions that could result in imminent safety conditions. The inspector determined that there was no cause for any action at this time. Fencing enclosed entire structure, and the structural steel supports entire front and west side of building.
- February 9, 2023 - DHCD Assistant Commissioner evaluated the structural engineer’s report and concurred with the findings.

**PROPOSAL & APPLICATION OF GUIDELINES**

This proposal is to demolish the remaining three elevations of the building as part of a long-term plan by the contract purchaser to grade the property and make temporary green space for use by the Helping Up Mission. Ultimately, most likely after five or more years, the Helping Up Mission plans to redevelop the property for use that supports their mission.

The staff has applied the following CHAP criteria for evaluation:

The quality of significance in Baltimore history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, public interiors, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

1. That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of Baltimore history; or
2. That are associated with the lives of persons significant in Baltimore's past; or
3. That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
4. That have yielded or may be likely to yield information important in Baltimore prehistory or history.

The above criteria mirror the National Register Criteria for Evaluation, which were developed by the National Park Service to determine historic significance in American history and culture.

In order to apply the criteria for evaluation, staff needed to analyze the existing conditions of the structure. Because of the structure's deteriorated condition, the applicant submitted a detailed structural engineer's report. Staff analyzed the report with the following questions in mind:

1. What portions of the building are deteriorated beyond repair?
2. What portions of the building must be removed in order to restore or reconstruct portions of the building?
3. If restored, what portions of the original building would remain?

Once staff determined how much of the remaining fabric could be saved and restored, staff could determine if the building still contributes to the Jonestown Historic District by meeting the criteria.

## **ANALYSIS**

The deteriorated condition of the building is not surprising. The building has sat vacant and/or underused since the mid-1980s. In August of 2018, the eastern wall, roof and interior were removed and the remaining walls were shored up. For four and a half years, these walls have sat like this.

On February 8, the applicant submitted a detailed structural engineer's report. In summary, the report identified the following areas of deterioration:

- Much of the mortar is in moderate and poor condition, allowing for water infiltration,
- The interior surface of the walls was constructed with soft brick that is deteriorating rapidly. These bricks were not meant to be exposed to weather.
- Cut-off iron beams stick out of the interior walls and have swelled with pack rust.
- Steel lintels, too, have swelled with pack rust and are actively stressing the building.
- Portions of a concrete upper floor is still embedded into the wall and are allowing water infiltration.
- There is no evidence that the outer brick is tied into the inner portion of the walls.

- There are cracks and delamination of the inner surface of the walls.
- On the outer wall, especially the west elevation, efflorescence indicates water infiltration. Significant amount of brick has lost its protective (vitrified) skin and need to be replaced because of significant deterioration. Much of this condition may have been caused by sandblasting of the building decades ago.
- The tops of the walls have no “cap” and allow for water infiltration (for more information, please review the engineer’s report).

The Conclusions section of the report, especially numbers 7,8,9,10, and 11, speak to what portions of the building would need to be removed in order to stabilize and repair the structure.

The following captures staff analysis:

- Number 7 of the conclusion section states that the interior surface of the wall would have to be **completely** removed and replaced if the walls were to remain. Number 10 of the conclusions section states that “the deteriorated exterior side of the facades can’t be repaired independently of the interior side.” It also states that “it is impossible to replace only the interior wythes of the walls while leaving the exterior wythe intact.” Therefore, if all the interior wall must be replaced with durable brick, the only way to do that is to remove the exterior wall.
- In addition, number 8 of the conclusions state that all steel lintels must be removed and replaced, and the abandoned “cut-off” steel beams and concrete slabs that are embedded into the wall must be removed. In order to do this safely, significant portions of the wall above must be removed.
- Lastly, there are numerous areas of the exterior wall that need to be replaced for structural reasons. Number 9 of the conclusions report states “This is problematic at the arched openings because removing and reconstructing the arches requires removal of the entire wall above them.

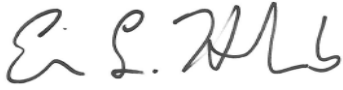
In conclusion, staff has determined, according to the analysis of the structural engineer, that these walls are deteriorated **beyond repair**. This structure can only be reconstructed. However, once the building is deconstructed, there is no more historic structure. There is NO structure that contributes to the historic character of the historic district.

### **NEIGHBORHOOD COMMENTS**

Staff is awaiting comments from the Architectural Review Committee. McKim Free School, the Ronald McDonald House, and two residents of the neighborhood have sent letters of support for demolition.

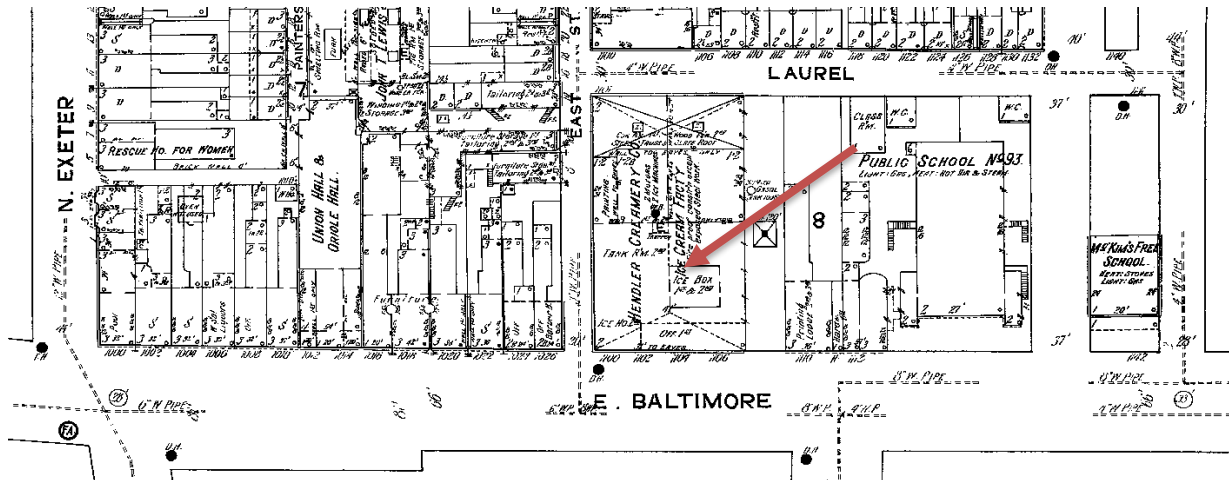
### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the structure has lost its historic integrity because the building has deteriorated beyond repair.

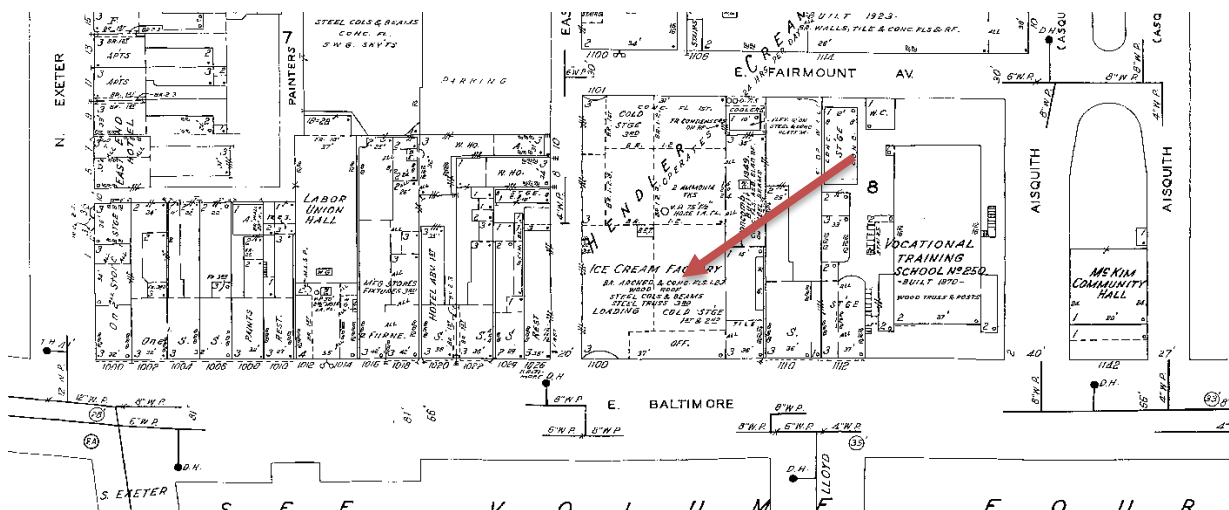
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. S. Holcomb". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Eric" and last name "Holcomb" clearly legible.

**Eric Holcomb,  
Executive Director**



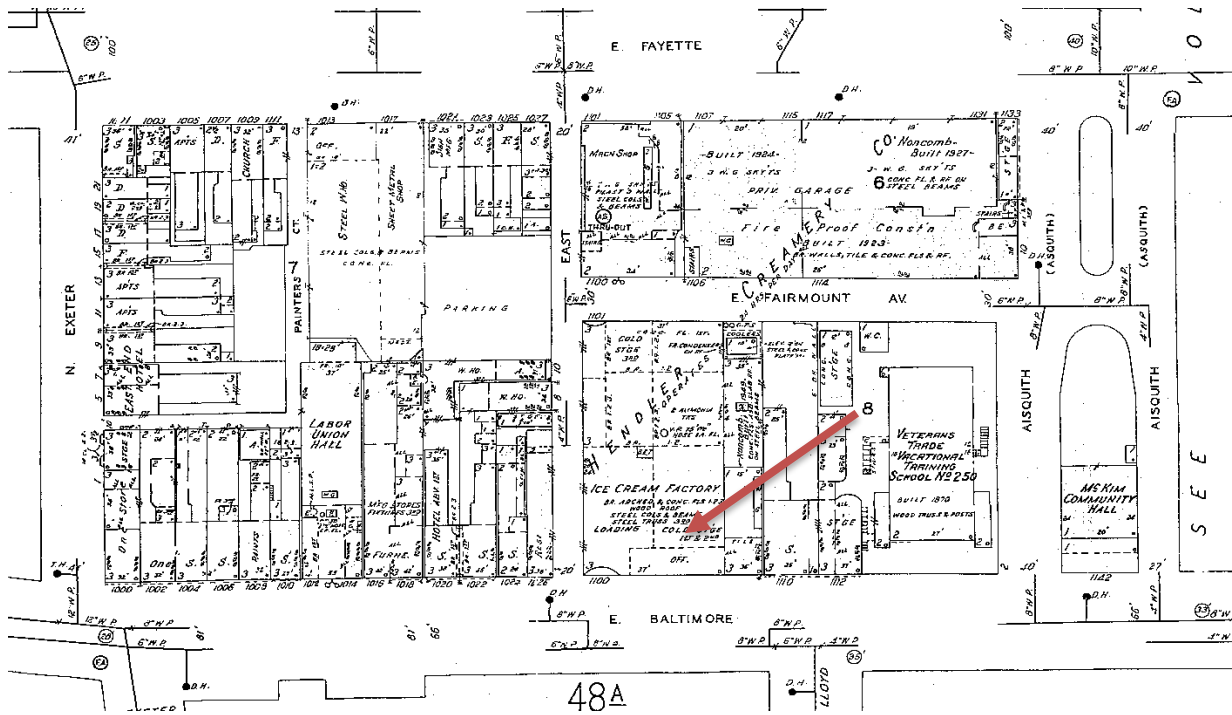


Map 2: 1914-1915 Sanborn Map: 1100 E. Baltimore within the Jonestown Historic District



Map 3: 1914-1951 Sanborn Map: 1100 E. Baltimore within the Jonestown Historic District





Map 4: 1914-1953 Sanborn Map: 1100 E. Baltimore within the Jonestown Historic District



Image 2: Aerial image of 1100 E. Baltimore as seen from the south. Circa 2017



Image 3: Aerial image of 1100 E. Baltimore as seen from the southeast. Circa 2017

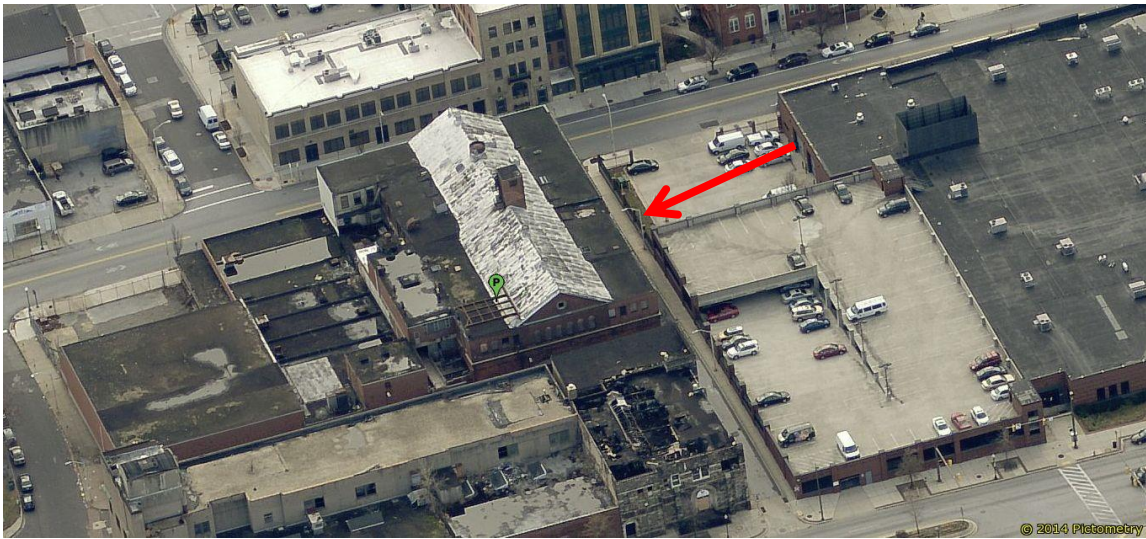


Image 4: Aerial image of 1100 E. Baltimore as seen from the northeast.

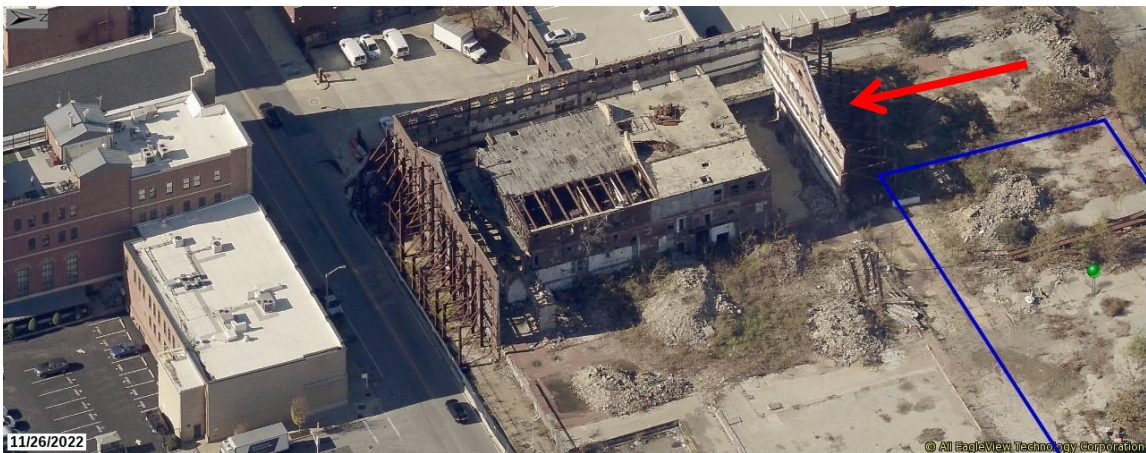


Image 5: Aerial image of 1100 E. Baltimore as seen from the east. Present day



Image 6: Aerial image of 1100 E. Baltimore as seen from the north. Present day



Image 7: Aerial image of 1100 E. Baltimore as seen from the west. Present day



Image 8: Aerial image of 1100 E. Baltimore as seen from the south. Present day



*Image 9: Hendler Building 1892*



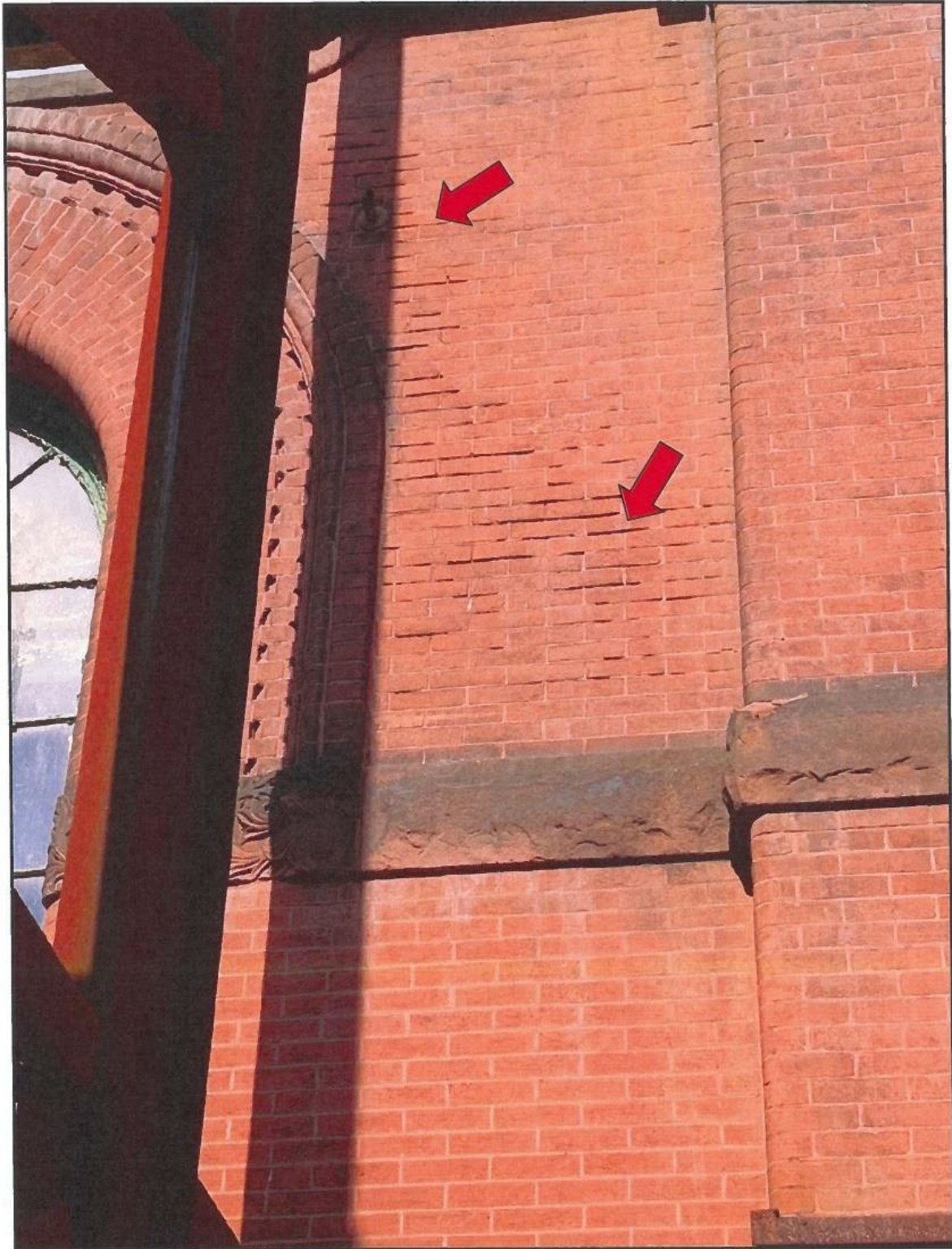
*Image 10: Hendler Building 1915-1920*



*Image 11: Main (South) Facade, Hendler Building, 2017*



*Image 12: Existing Conditions, Hendler Building, 2023*

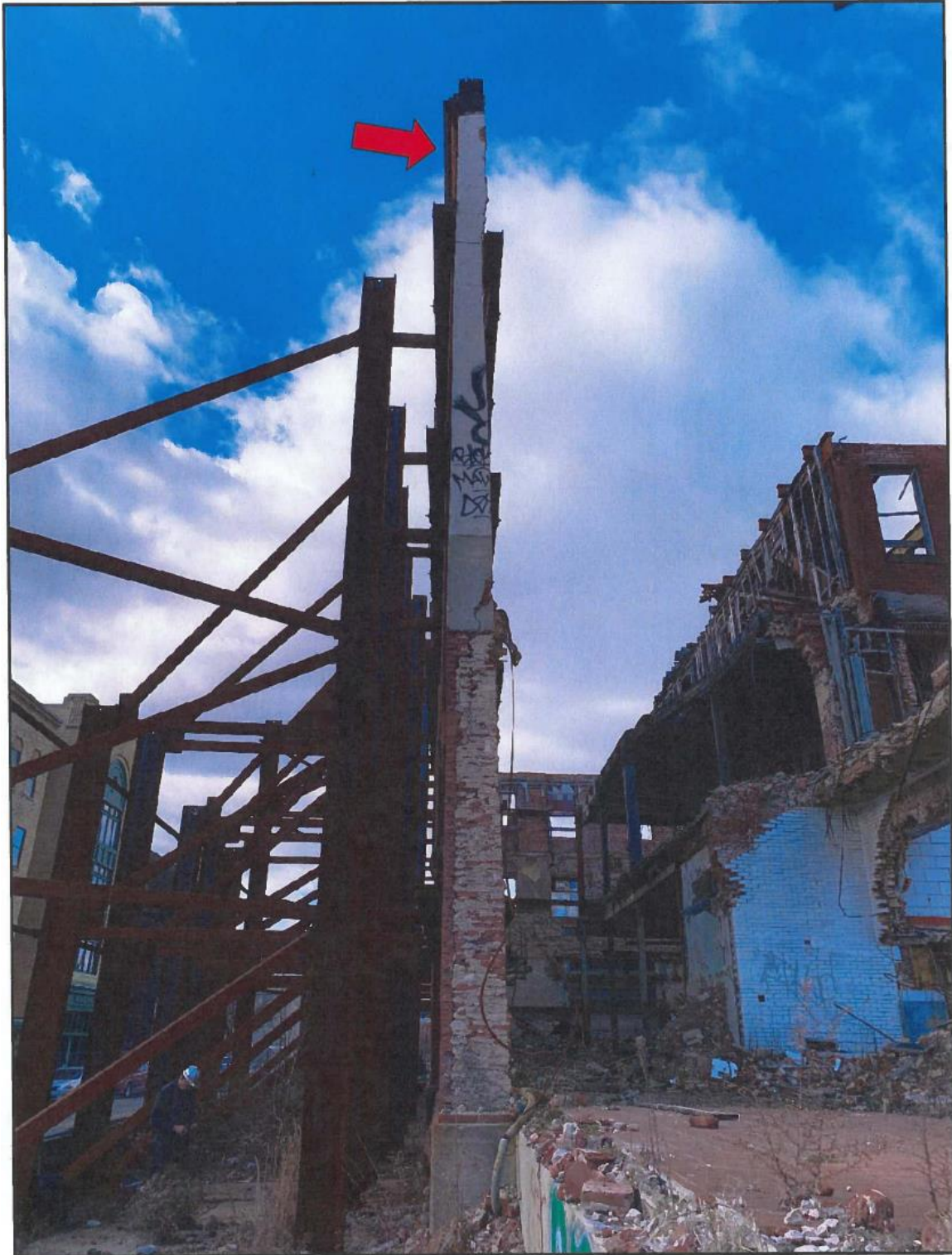


*Image 13: Existing Conditions, Hendler Building, 2023*



*Image 14* Existing Conditions, Hendler Building, 2023





*Image 15: Existing Conditions, Hendler Building, 2023*



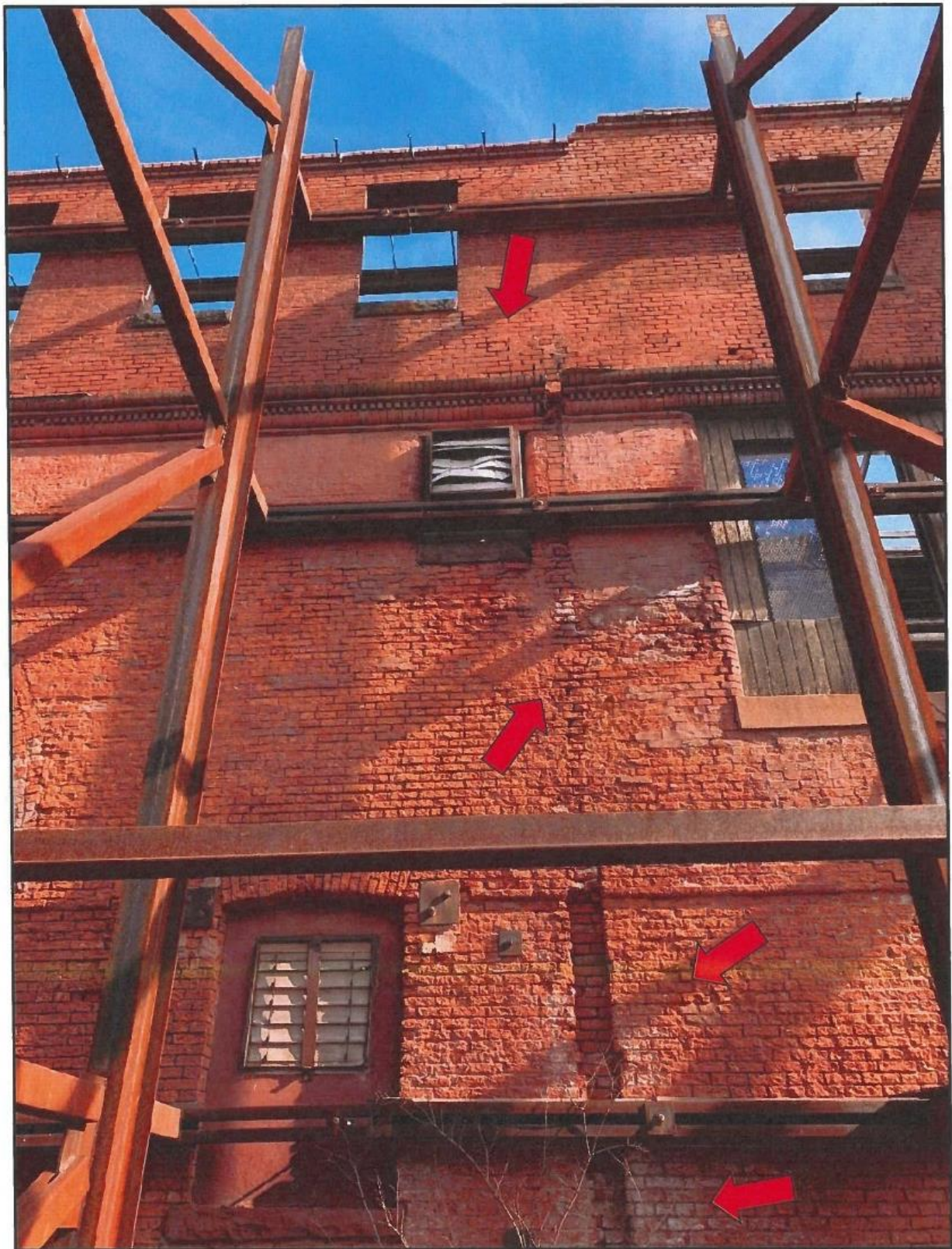
*Image 16: Existing Conditions, Hendler Building, 2023*



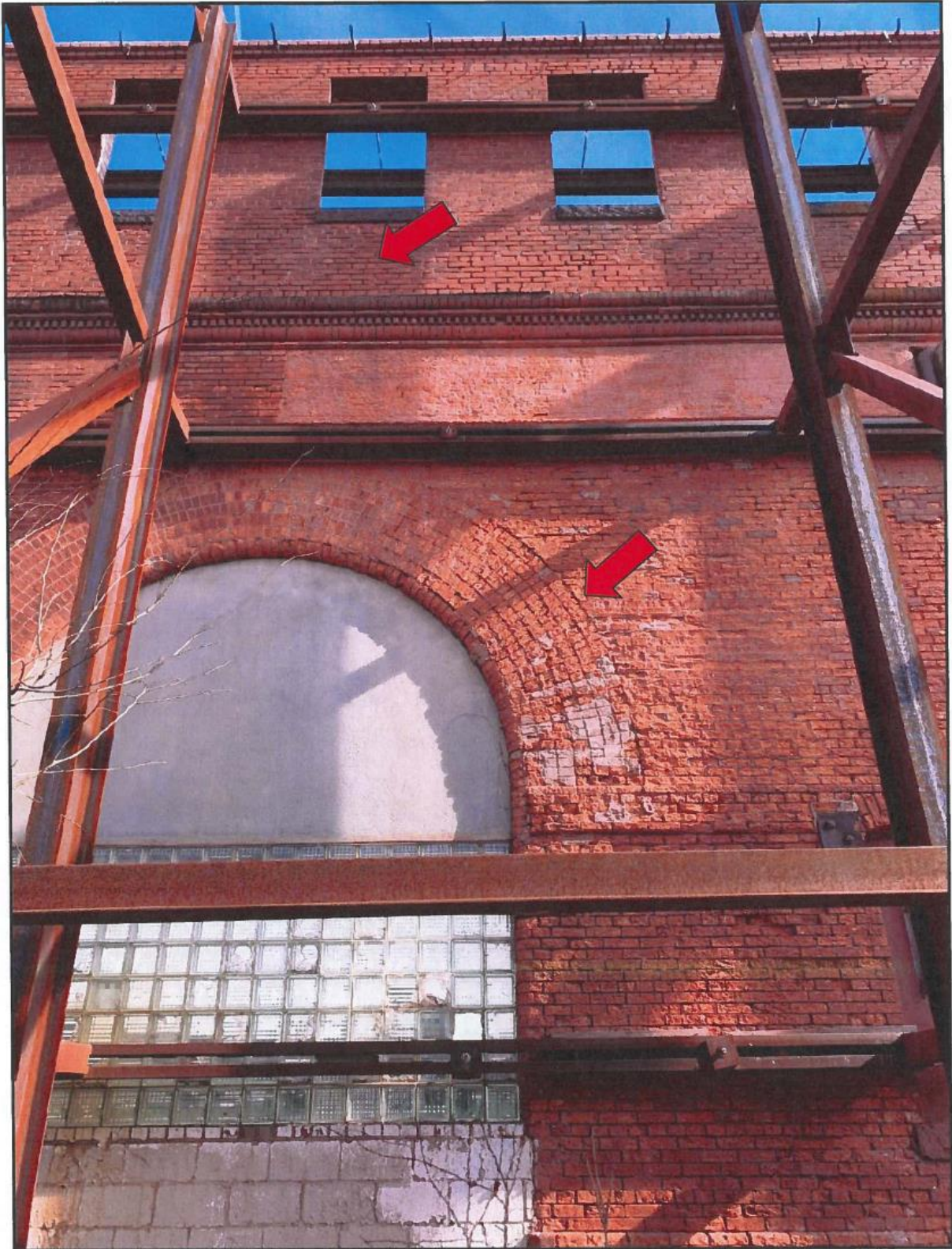
*Image 17: Existing Conditions, Hendler Building, 2023*



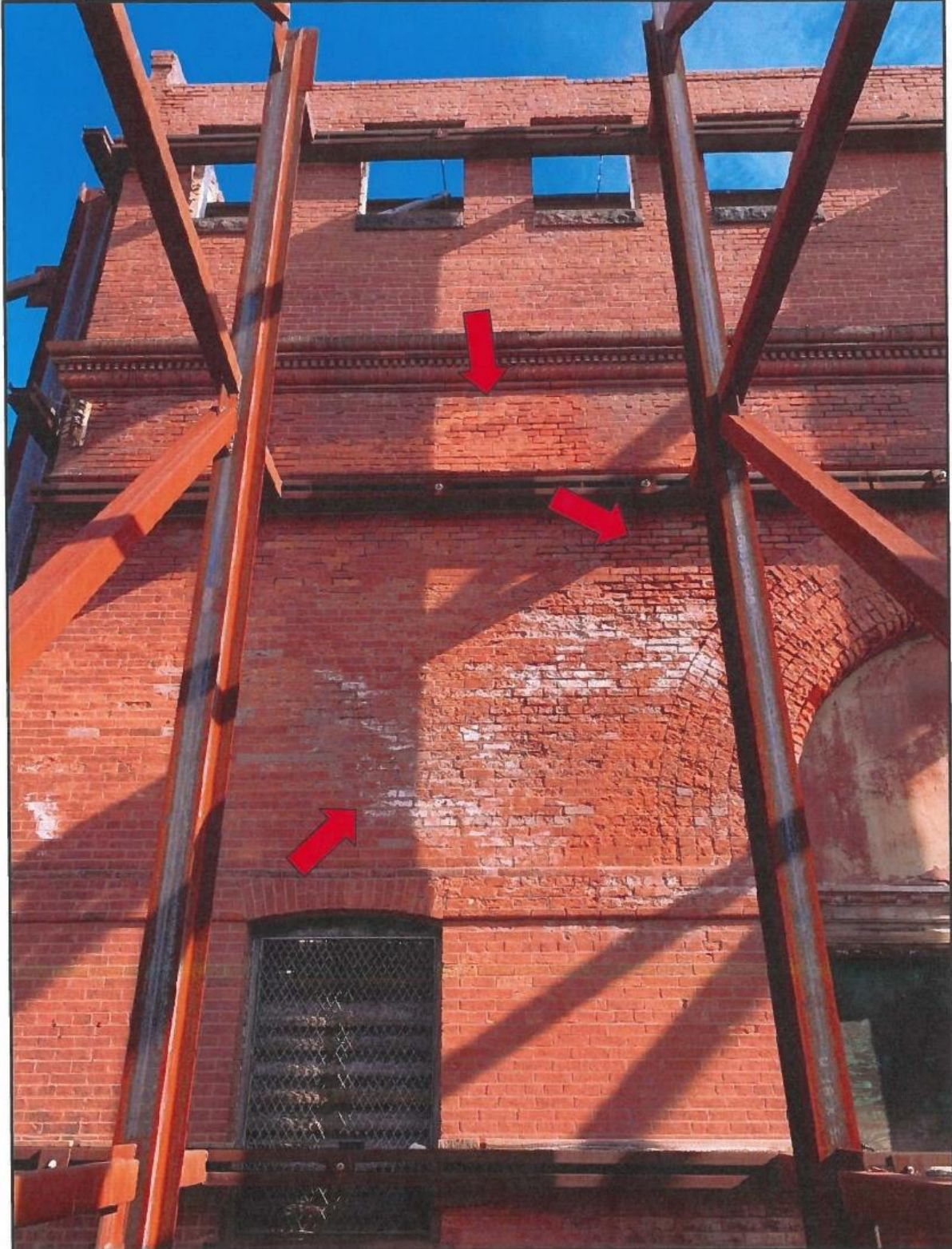
*Image 18: Existing Conditions, Hendler Building, 2023*



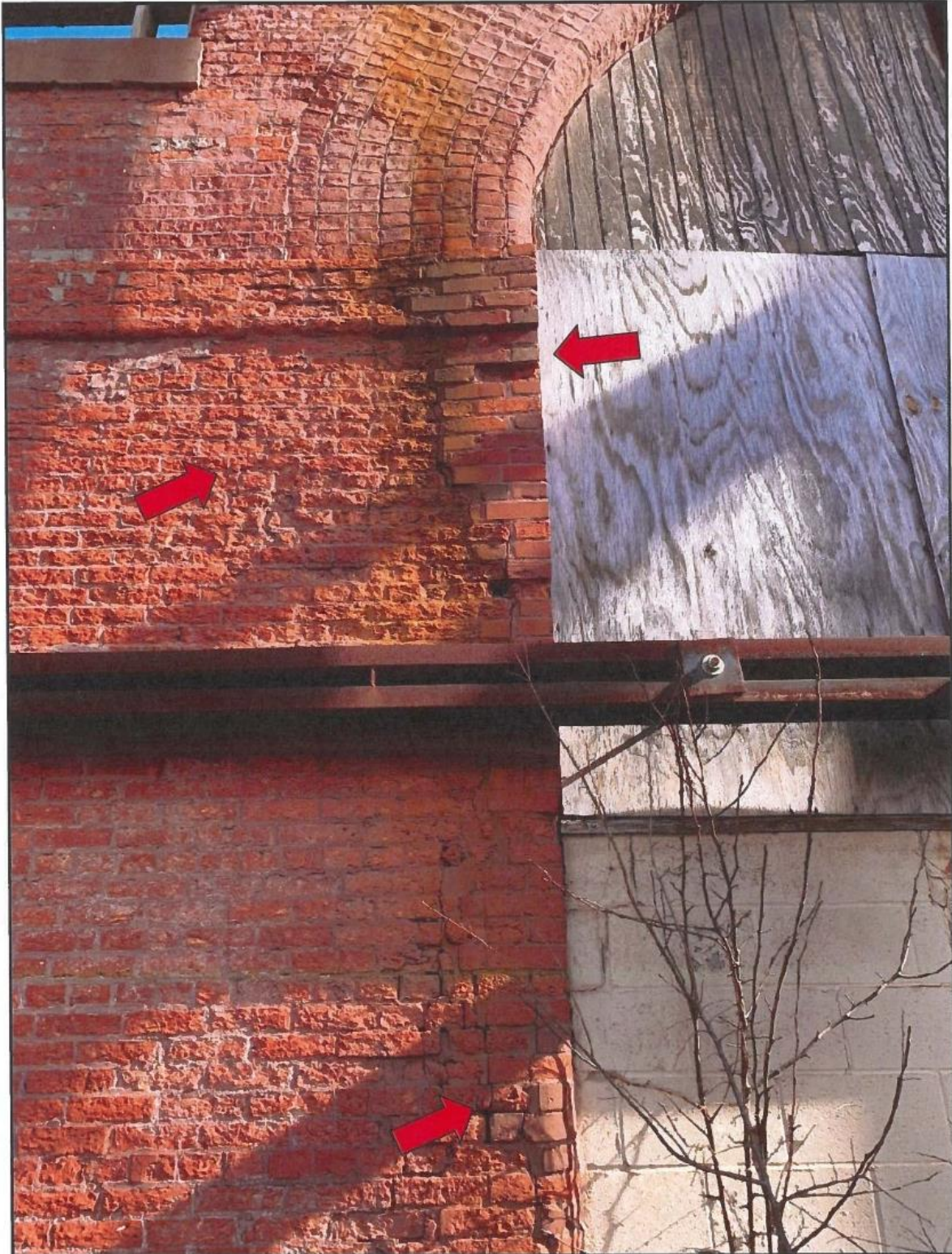
*Image 19: Existing Conditions, Hendler Building, 2023*



*Image 20: Existing Conditions, Hendler Building, 2023*



*Image 21: Existing Conditions, Hendler Building, 2023*



*Image 22: Existing Conditions, Hendler Building, 2023*





*Image 23: Existing Conditions, Hendler Building, 2023*



*Image 24: Existing Conditions, Hendler Building, 2023*



*Image 25: Existing Conditions, Hendler Building, 2023*



Image 26: Existing Conditions, Hendler Building, 2023



Image 27: Existing Conditions, Hendler Building, 2023

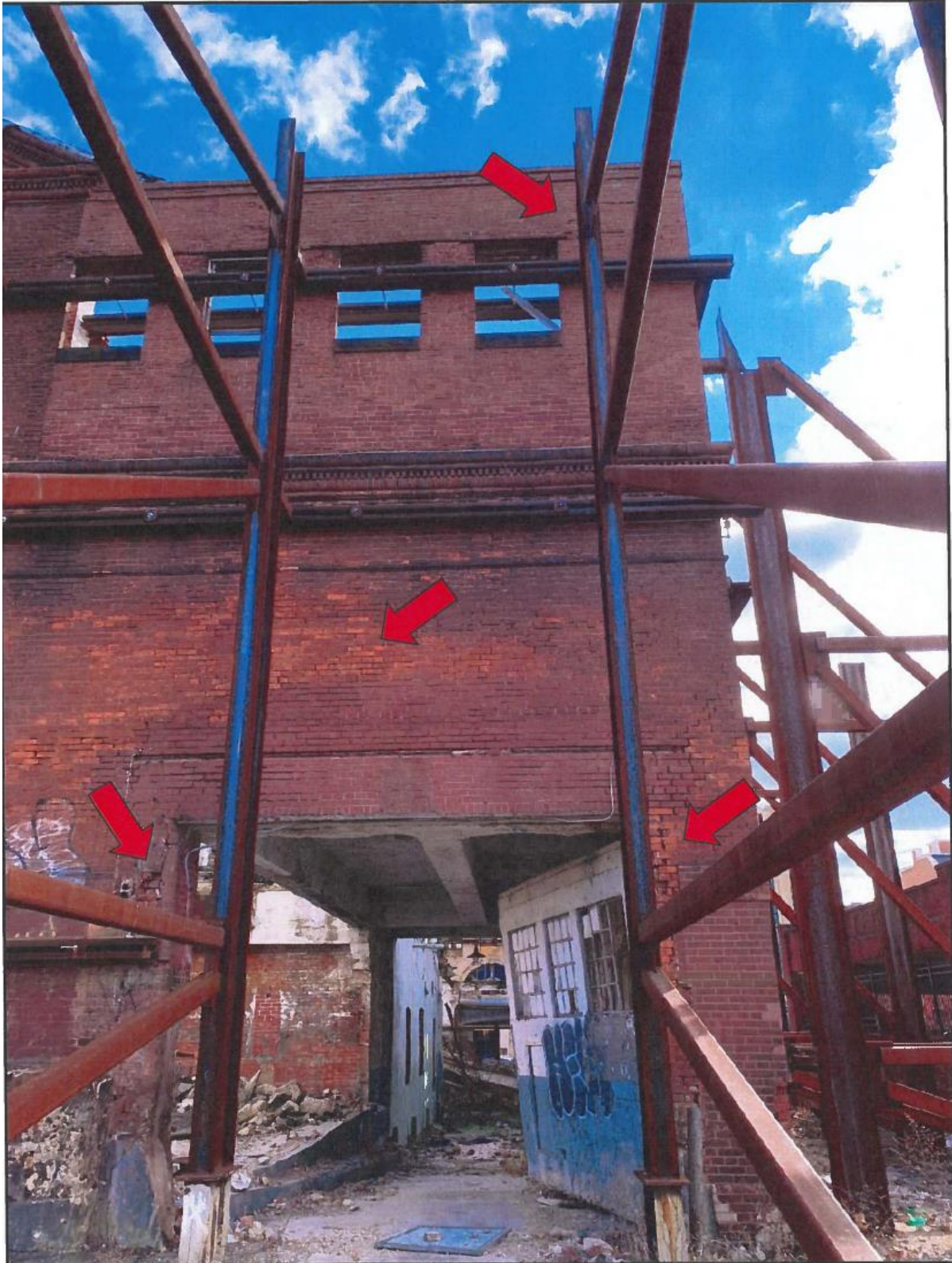
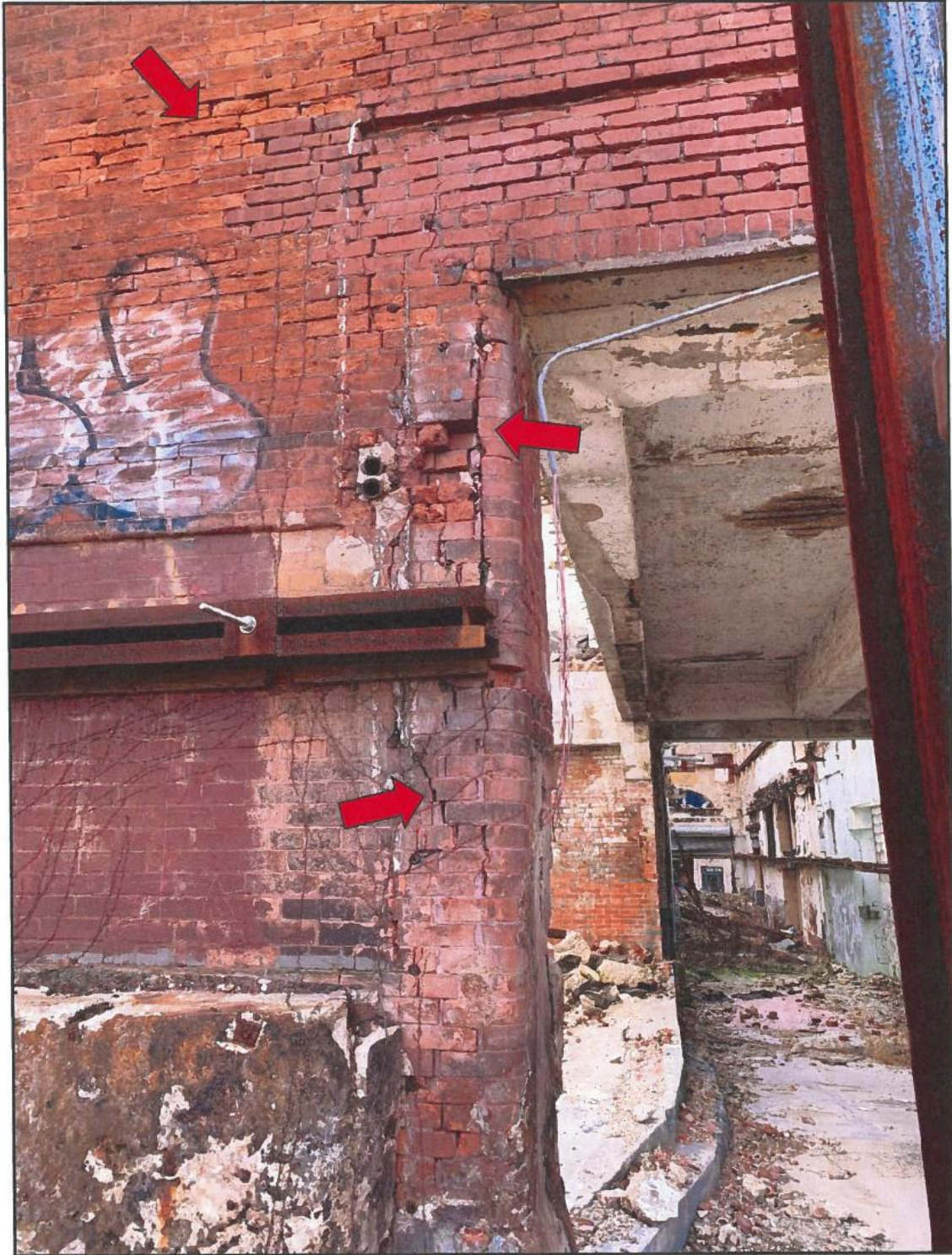
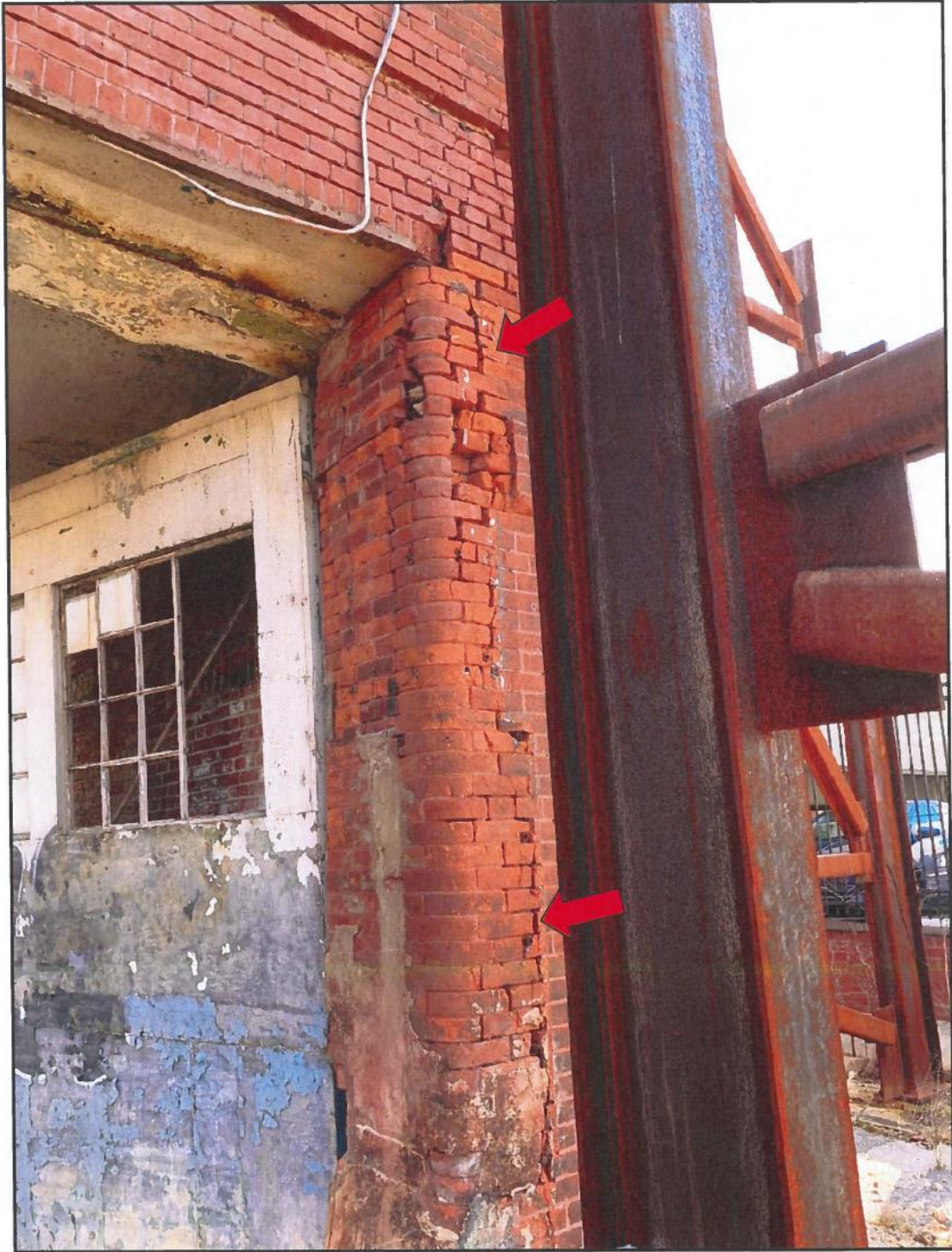


Image 28: Existing Conditions, Hendler Building, 2023



*Image 29: Existing Conditions, Hendler Building, 2023*

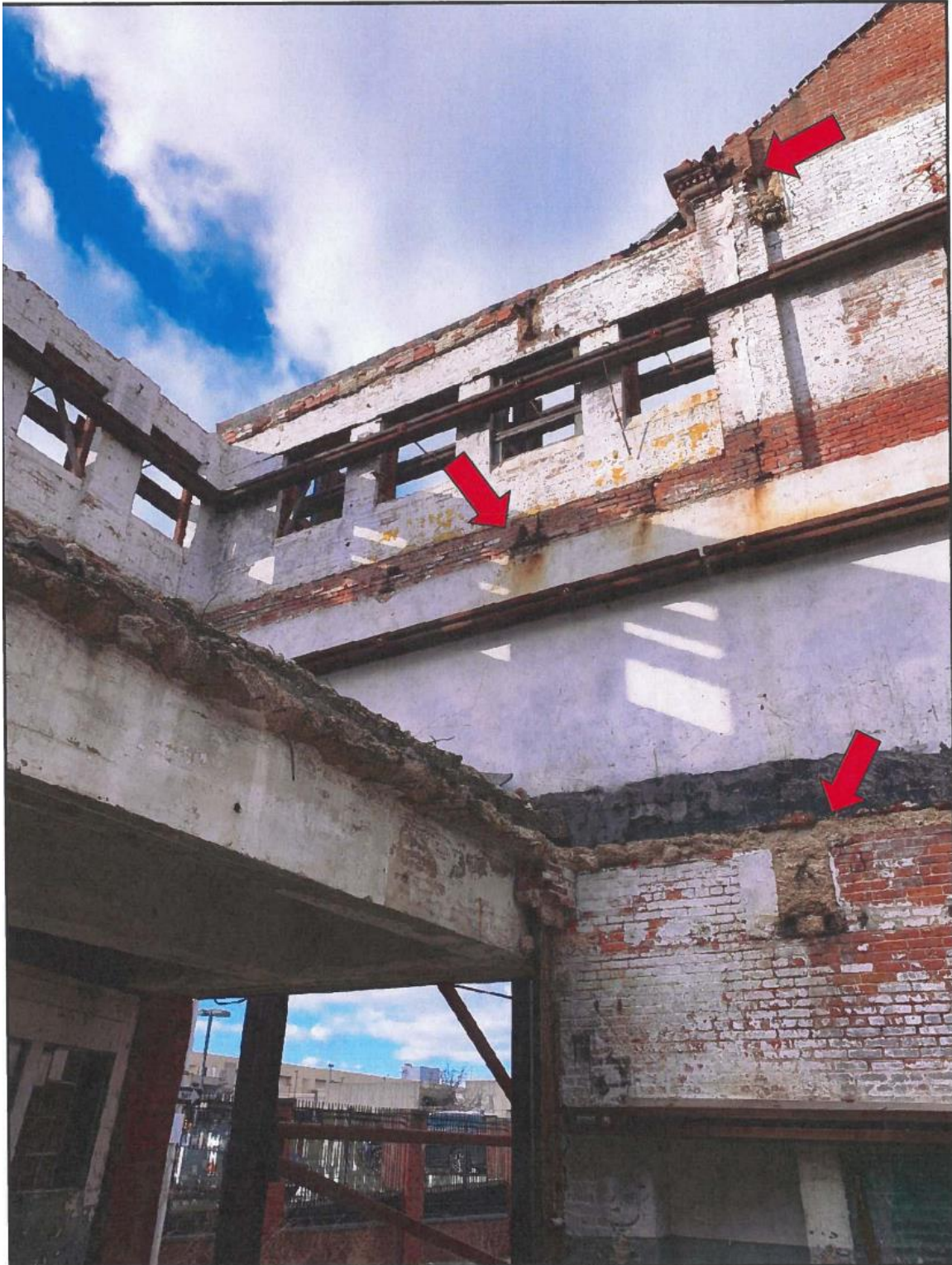


*Image 30: Existing Conditions, Hendler Building, 2023*





*Image 31: Existing Conditions, Hendler Building, 2023*



*Image 32: Existing Conditions, Hendler Building, 2023*



Image 33: Existing Conditions, Hendler Building, 2023



*Image 34: Existing Conditions, Hendler Building, 2023*