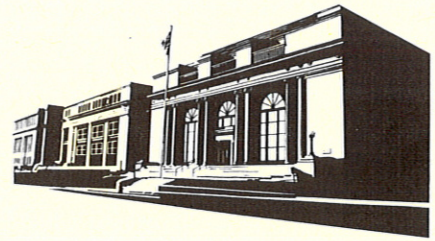


# PENNINGTON COUNTY BUILDINGS & GROUNDS



302 Kansas City Street

Rapid City, South Dakota 57701-3097

(605) 394-2174

Date: December 10, 2009  
To: Rapid City Historic Preservation Commission  
From: Mike Kuhl, Construction Project Manager  
Re: Pennington County Courthouse Courtroom Conversion

As you may be aware, the State Judicial System has authorized Pennington County another Circuit Court Judge. This has created the need for an additional courtroom. The county intends to relocate the Auditor's Office and convert its current space into a courtroom and court associated office space.

When the Courthouse was built in 1922 the space we intend to use as a courtroom was called the Farmers Assembly Room (a picture of the original blueprint is attached, north is down). Since that time this space has been used for a variety of purposes. In 1975 it was converted into a courtroom (a copy of a blueprint from that project is attached, north is down). It was used as a courtroom until the Courthouse Annex construction was completed and the Auditors Office was moved into this space in 1991. The Auditors Office occupies this space to this date.

Changes will include demolition of some walls and a service counter with its coiling door. All these elements were put into place for the benefit of the Auditors Office and are not historically significant to the building. The county intends to subdivide existing space to create a Jury room, fill the service counter opening, and install casework & millwork, as shown in attached drawings, to create a new courtroom. The Judges bench can be modified in the future to allow wheelchair access, a drawing showing this is attached.

The proposed changes are minimal and will not further impact the historic materials or details of the building. The changes are in compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

The proposed work also complies with the Courthouse Historic Preservation Plan which was completed earlier this year and adopted by Pennington County. This plan identifies two distinct areas for concentration of preservation efforts:

**Primary Preservation Concentration**, are the areas most often viewed by the public.

**Secondary Preservation Concentration**, are the less public areas of the facility and the areas which have undergone a higher degree of adoptive reuse.

A page from the preservation plan which identifies these areas has been attached. The preservation plan classified the space under discussion as a secondary area. This space is considered important, but no restoration efforts are planned at this time.

Pennington County is currently developing a strategic master facilities plan with the assistance of consultants. This plan will identify the County's needs and make recommendations on how to meet those needs. This plan may lead to the relocation of some Courthouse occupants and necessitate significant remodeling of spaces. These efforts may create the opportunity for restoration of elements outlined in the preservation plan.

The Courthouse Historic Preservation Plan is posted on Pennington County's website under the Buildings & Grounds Department page located at:

[http://www.co.pennington.sd.us/bldgrnd/\\_docs/historicplan.pdf](http://www.co.pennington.sd.us/bldgrnd/_docs/historicplan.pdf)

I will be at your meeting on December 18<sup>th</sup> to answer any questions you may have.

### Concentration of Preservation Efforts

The Steering Committee has recommended concentration of the discussion of opportunities for preservation, rehabilitation, or restoration on the 1922 Pennington County Courthouse into two distinct areas.

The primary area of concentration is the treatment of the areas of the courthouse which is most often viewed by members of the public, including the building exterior. These areas, through planned maintenance and careful rehabilitation over the years, are also the areas of the facility to which change and adaptation has had the least impact. Therefore, they are also the most readily available for treatment through continued preservation, and restoration. It should be noted that these primary spaces are likely the best candidates for funding through preservation grants, since most grant programs are competitive, and priority is usually given to public projects that demonstrate good preservation techniques.

The second area of concentration would be less public spaces of the facility. These areas have undergone a higher degree of adaptive re-use, but still exhibit some of the historic fabric of the building, and can be treated through rehabilitation of many of the spaces within.

The following figures show the areas of concentration, along with the modern floor plan of the facility:

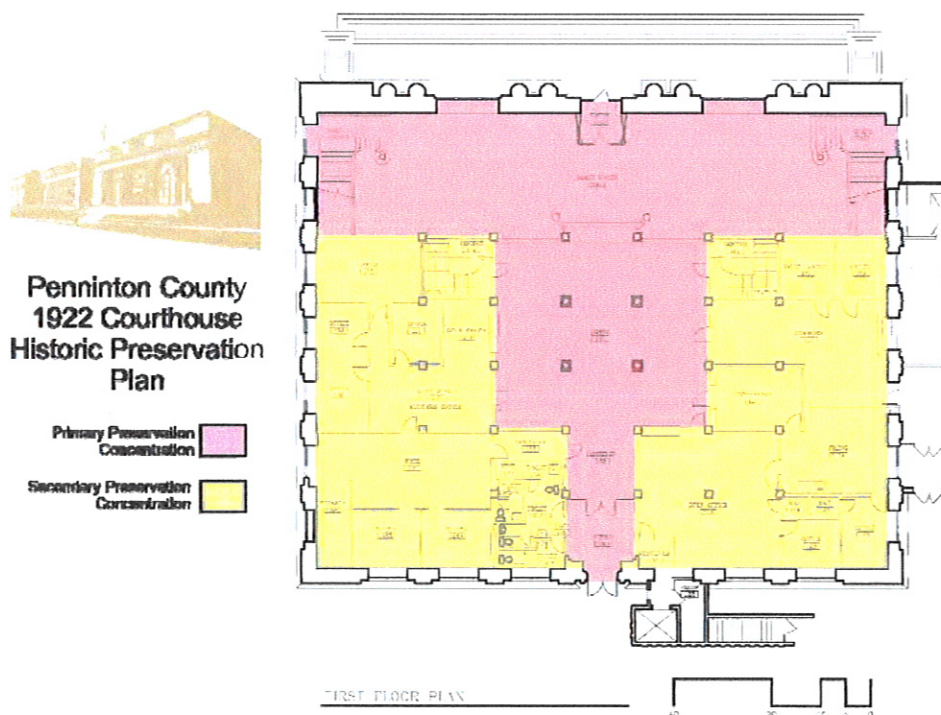
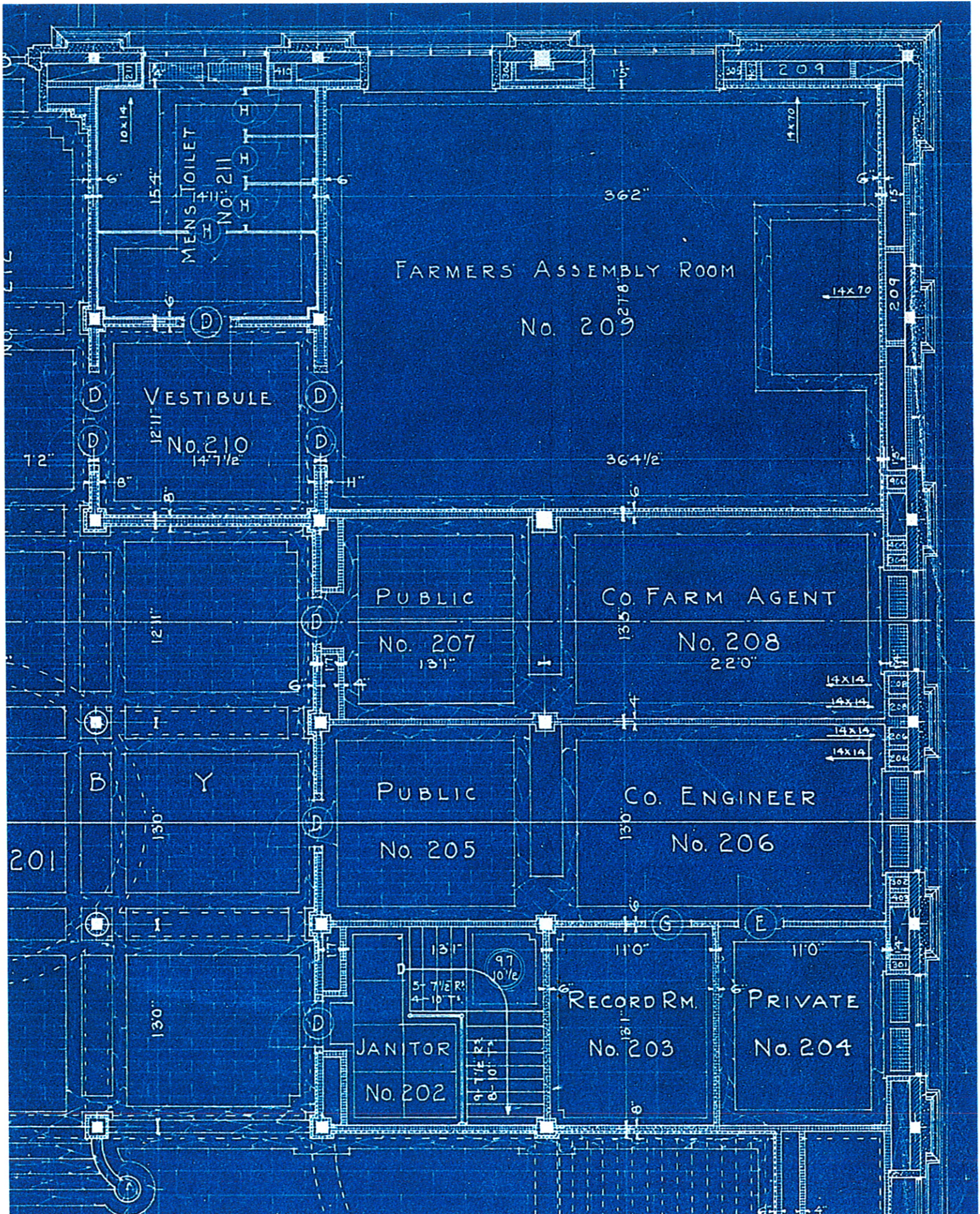
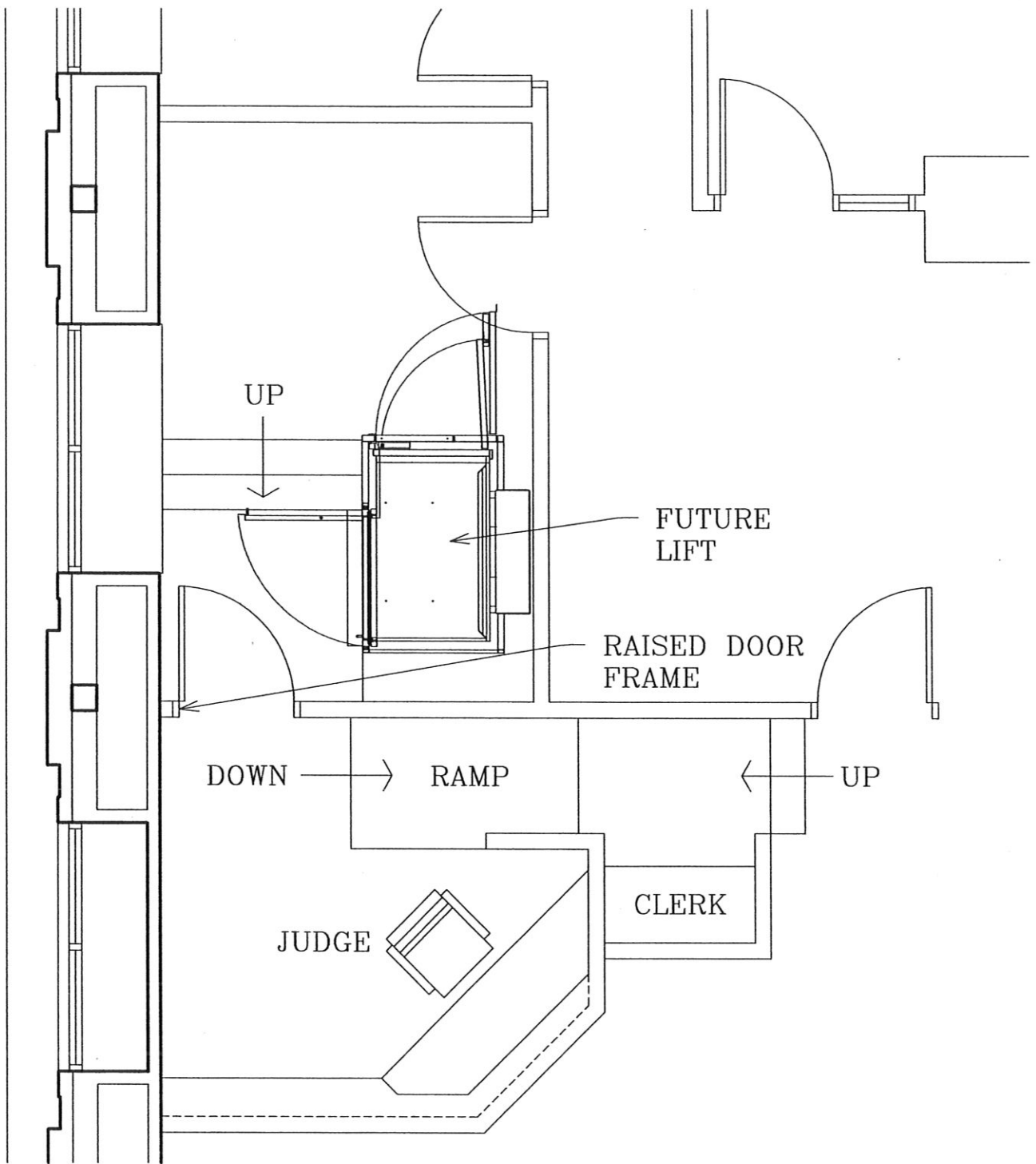


Figure 1. Current first floor plan.





FUTURE HC ACCESS (IF NEEDED)

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