

**MEETING OF THE ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE
OF THE PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

**TUESDAY, 23 JUNE 2009
COMMISSION CONFERENCE ROOM, ROOM 578, CITY HALL
DAVID AMBURN, CHAIR**

PRESENT

David Amburn, Chair
John Cluver
Nan Gutterman
Dan McCoubrey
Suzanne Pentz

Jonathan Farnham, Executive Director
Erin Cote, Historic Preservation Planner II
Jorge Danta, Historic Preservation Planner II
Rebecca Sell, Historic Preservation Planner II
Karen Gonski, Administrative Technician

ALSO PRESENT

Greg Mastalerz, SgRA
Sarina Rose, SgRA
Lawrence Gilbert, Lawrence Gilbert Architects
Brendan Kelley
Adrian Paulus
Anthony Forte, Esq. Saul Ewing
Rev. Karen Hart
Roderick Wolfson, AIA
Michael Mattioni, Esq. Mattioni Ltd.
David Traub
William G. Schwartz, Esq. Obermayer Rebmann Maxwell & Hippel
Hercules Gregos, Esq. Obermayer Rebmann Maxwell & Hippel
James Plunkard, Hartshorne Plunkard Architecture
Stephen Perna, Perna Frederick Commercial Real Estate
David Radomski, John Buck Co.
Bernard Kolodner, Esq., Kleinbard Bell & Brecker
Avis Allman
John Gallery, Preservation Alliance

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Amburn called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. Ms. Gutterman and Messrs. Cluver and McCoubrey joined him. Ms. Pentz joined the Committee later in the meeting.

225 S. 18TH STREET

Owner: Rittenhouse Regency Affiliates

Applicant: Stuart G. Rosenberg

History: 1929, Zantizinger, Borie & Medary, architects, altered c. 1950

Designated: Contributing to Rittenhouse Fittler Historic District, 2/8/1995

Project: Install louvers in terracotta parapet

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to install six exhaust louvers at the 11th floor of this building facing Rittenhouse Square. None of the louvers would be installed on the façade directly across from the Square. They would be located along Locust and Chancellor Streets. The applicant proposes to paint the louvers the same color as the masonry surrounding them. Their installation would require the removal of original terracotta units in the parapets.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Denial, pursuant to Standard 9.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Danta presented the application to the Architectural Committee. Architects Sarina Rose and Greg Mastalerz represented the application.

Ms. Rose stated that the vents in question are extant, but currently exit up, through the roof. She explained that the vents exhaust bathrooms and kitchens on lower floors in the building. She is proposing adding six louvers to vent the exhaust out away from the building rather than up. She stated that a prospect buyer of a residential unit will not purchase the unit, which overlooks Rittenhouse Square, unless the some of the vents are removed from two areas at the corners of the building, which the buyer would convert to terraces. She asserted that they investigated all other potential solutions before proposing to cut through the terracotta parapet. Ms. Rose stated that they considered installing the vents through a crawl space located above the 10th-floor ceiling and then through the brick wall. This potential solution proved impossible because the unit owner refused to allow the work to be undertaken and because the space was too small for the contractors to work safely. They also considered hiding the existing vents with plantings and other covers. However, the potential buyer rejected this solution. Therefore, they are proposing to redirect the existing vents through the terracotta-clad parapets and install louvers on the outside of the parapets. Ms. Rose explained that the louvers would be painted to match the terracotta. She stated that they reluctantly concluded that they needed to cut into the terracotta; it is their only option.

Mr. Amburn asked how closely the louvers would match the terracotta panels in size. He suggested that the louver should match the panel size to avoid having to cut into panels. Ms. Rose stated the louvers would be sized to match the size of one of the terracotta panels. No panels would be cut; they would be removed.

Mr. Amburn suggested leaving the existing vents in place and screening them with planters. Ms. Rose stated that the prospective buyers would not consider the unit unless the vents were removed from the areas that would be converted to terraces. The prospective buyers are opposed to retaining the vents in place because they are bathroom vents. Ms. Rose clarified that they are not sewer line vents, but bathroom fan vents. Ms. Gutterman objected to removing the terracotta when the vents could be left in place and shielded.

Ms. Rose claimed that the louvers would be minimally visible. She stated that no louvers would be installed in the 18th Street façade. They would be installed in the Chancellor and Locust Street facades. The louvers in the Chancellor Street façade would be minimally visible. The

louvers in the Locust Street façade would be visible, but not conspicuous. She added that the existing loud fans would be replaced with much quieter fans.

The Committee members asked if a railing would be required when the areas are converted to terraces. Ms. Rose stated that, if railings were needed, the unit owners and their designer would submit a subsequent application.

Mr. Cluver stated that, in general, he objected to cutting or removing original fabric. However, the applicants have demonstrated that there are no better alternatives and the louvers will have little or no discernable impact on the buildings appearance. He concluded that the louvers would be innocuous and should be approved.

Ms. Gutterman stated that she would like to see more details on the installation before the Committee formulates a recommendation. She asked about the construction of the wall. She asked about the alignment of the lintels, which will be necessary to span the openings. She asked whether the parapet would be dismantled for the installation. Ms. Rose explained that the locations would be scaffolded, the terracotta removed, and lintels and louvers installed. Ms. Rose again asserted that the design team explored all possible options and only arrived at this solution after significant analysis.

Mr. McCoubrey asked about the locations of the penetrations in the parapets relative to the roofline. Ms. Rose replied the penetrations would be located 8 inches or more above the roof to maintain the roof warranty.

Ms. Gutterman stated that she would like to review drawings of the louvers showing the relations between the louvers and the terracotta panels.

Mr. Cluver stated that he deemed the proposal acceptable, but thought that the deck or terrace work should be coordinated with the vent work. Ms. Rose stated that that would not be possible because the developer would undertake the vent work before the unit is sold; the new owner would construct the terraces. Mr. Cluver stated that the project should only be undertaken if the prospective buyer is going to close on the property. Ms. Rose informed the Committee that there is an addendum in the agreement of sale that stipulates that the new owner must seek the Commission's approval for all alterations. Mr. Danta stated that the Commission would review the terrace project; he noted that the staff would be able to approve it if it was not visible from the street.

Ms. Pentz stated that she would abstain from the vote because she missed the first part of the discussion. Messrs. Amburn, Cluver, and McCoubrey concluded that the project was acceptable because it would have a minimal impact on the building. Ms. Gutterman dissented.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval, with the staff to review details.

1805 PINE STREET

Owner: Brendan Kelley

Applicant: Doug Whitfield

History: c. 1850; contributing within the Rittenhouse Fittler Historic District, 2/8/1995

Project: Remove fire escape and install doors, balconies, and deck

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to remove a rear fire escape and install fifteen-light wood doors within existing openings and Juliet balconies with iron picket railings on the rear or north elevation. This application also proposes to install a rear fourth-story roof deck. The roofline of the ell is not consistent. The piazza section, where the ell meets the main block, is taller than the remainder of the ell. To create one continual deck surface, two-thirds of the roof deck would be elevated more than four feet above the third-story rear ell on wooden trusses and cross-bracing to create a continuous space. The deck would be set back from the edge of the lower roof line. Enlargement of a fourth-story window to a door is proposed for access to the roof deck. This application also proposes the installation of French doors and Juliet balconies in one window on the second story and one window on the third story of the rear ell and enlargement of the kitchen entrance to the courtyard with double French doors and steps. It should be noted that the dimensions are incorrect as shown on the plans.

In January 2009, the Commission approved an application for construction of a two-car garages on the rears of 1803 and 1805 Pine Street with a second-story roof deck, provided that all brick is salvaged during the demolition and reused in the construction and that wood garage doors are installed in place of the proposed doors, with the staff to review details. The Commission also approved the conversion of an existing first-story rear window to a single-leaf door to the courtyard with steps.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval of the removal of the fire escape and installation of doors and Juliet balconies on the rear and side elevations, pursuant to Standard 9; denial of the elevated portion of the deck, pursuant to Standard 9 and the Roofs Guidelines.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Sell presented the application to the Architectural Committee. Property owner Brendan Kelley represented the application.

Several Committee members suggested redesigning the proposed deck with two levels and steps between them to avoid a deck that would stand many feet above the roof of the rear ell. Mr. Kelley explained that it would be inconvenient to climb four flights of stairs to the top floor of the row house to access the deck and then walk down about eight steps to get to the main level of the deck. He suggested that the Committee was forcing him to consider removing the historic skylight at the piazza to allow him to create a larger deck at the higher level, thereby obviating the need for the lower deck with steps. The Committee members noted that the Commission has jurisdiction over the skylight, which is an exterior feature. Mr. Kelly noted that the deck would overlook a service alley, not a main street. Mr. Kelly again threatened to remove the historic skylight, which lights the stairway, to build a deck at the upper level. He noted that several of his neighbors have removed their skylights. Mr. Cluver stated that the raised deck would be inappropriate and contended that the two-level deck would be more dramatic and interesting than the very large single deck space proposed. He suggested that the Committee recommend denial of the proposal. Mr. Amburn agreed, stating that approving a deck that would stand more than five feet above the roof would set a bad precedent. Mr. Kelly claimed that the deck would not be visible from the public right-of-way. The Committee members disagreed.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval of the removal of the fire escape and installation of doors and Juliet balconies on the rear and side elevations, pursuant to Standard 9; denial of the elevated portion of the deck, pursuant to Standard 9 and the Roofs Guidelines.

1022 WAVERLY STREET

Owner: Adrian Paulus and Ashim Paul

Applicant: Adrian Paulus

History: c. 1830; individually designated 11/24/1959

Project: Construct roof deck

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to construct a roof deck on a later rear addition of this house. However, the access to the deck would be constructed on the front slope of the gable roof of the historic house, with a hatch and stair.

The Architectural Committee reviewed a similar proposal in December and recommended denial. At that time the Committee noted that the drawings did not appear to meet the building code. The Committee also suggested that the deck not cantilever off the rear of the roof but remain within the confines of the building. The current proposal addresses the code requirements and the cantilevering; it proposes to use clear Plexiglas railings to avoid significant visibility. The staff contends that the deck would be visible from the public right-of-way and the approval of a roof deck on the front slope of an historic building would set a negative precedent. The staff contends that decks should be located behind and below the peak of the roof on gabled row houses.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Denial, pursuant to Standard 9 and the Roofs Guidelines.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Cote presented the application to the Architectural Committee. Property owners Adrian Paulus and Ashim Paul and architect Lawrence Gilbert represented the application.

Mr. Paulus explained that they had redesigned the deck since they last appeared before the Committee. A railing has been added around the access walkway at the hatch and the cantilever at the rear has been removed. He stated that the railing would be slightly visible. Sections of the railing would be made of plexiglas to reduce visibility. He displayed a sample of the railing material and photographs of a mock-up of it. Mr. Gilbert stated that the railing is now set back approximately six feet from the front of house and would be minimally visible. He added that the visibility would decrease seasonally, when the trees had leaves. Mr. Amburn asked if the access hatch could be relocated behind the ridgeline of the roof. Mr. Gilbert replied that the existing stair extends up through the roof hatch. Ms. Gutterman stated that it would be inappropriate to locate the walkway from the hatch to the deck on the front slope of the roof. The applicants noted that a chimney would block some of the view of the railing. The Committee members agreed that an access on the front slope of the roof would not comply with the standards.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial, pursuant to Standard 9 and the Roofs Guidelines.

2116-32 CHESTNUT STREET, 2115-27 SANSOM STREET

Owner: Sidney Hillman Medical Center of the Male Apparel Industry

Applicant: William Schwartz, Esq.

History: 2116-32 Chestnut Street, Commission approved demolition, 6/12/2009

Contributing to Rittenhouse Fidler Residential Historic District, 2/8/1995

2115-27 Sansom Street, Herman Polss, architect, 1959

Non-contributing in Rittenhouse Fidler Residential Historic District, 2/8/1995

Project: Demolish non-contributing building, construct mixed-use tower with parking

OVERVIEW: This application proposes the construction of a 30-story, mixed-use tower with parking on the lots at 2116-32 Chestnut Street and 2115-27 Sansom Street. The Architectural Committee reviewed an earlier version of this proposal at its 21 April 2009 meeting.

A contributing building stands on the Chestnut Street lot. However, at its 12 June 2009 meeting, the Commission found that retaining the building would impose a hardship on the property owner and approved its demolition, provided the property owner demonstrates that the financing and building permits for the new development have been secured before the demolition permit is issued. At that same meeting, the Commission voted to table the new construction portion of the application and remand the current, revised design to the Architectural Committee. The demolition of the building at 2116-32 Chestnut Street is not before the Committee; the Commission has already acted on that portion of the application.

The application proposes the complete demolition of the building at 2115-27 Sansom Street. It is classified as Non-contributing in the district. The Commission may approve the demolition of a Non-contributing building without a finding of hardship.

The application proposes the construction of a 30-story, 315'-8"-tall, mixed-use tower on the cleared site. The base of the building would be four stories in height. It would house a parking garage, retail and office spaces, and the residential lobby. The offices, retail space, and residences would be entered from Chestnut Street. The offices and an atrium would wrap and hide the parking garage. The garage entrance and loading docks would be located on Van Pelt Street, a service alley. The south section of the base, facing Sansom Street, would house offices for the current owner, the Sidney Hillman Medical Center, which will partner with the developer. The base would be clad in brick with a limestone base, stone copings, and glass and aluminum window and door systems. A large terrace would sit atop the north and east sections of the base. The tower would now rise from the center of the base. The earlier revision of the design situated the tower at the northeast corner of the site. The tower has been shifted to the south and west on the base to move it away from the churches that stand across Chestnut and Van Pelt Streets. It has also been reduced in height by two stories. The tower would be clad in a glass and aluminum window wall system. Small, recessed balconies would be located at the four corners of the tower. The tower would have a north-south orientation, with its broader facades facing east and west.

Two standards provide guidance for the Commission when reviewing new construction applications. First, Section 14-2007(7)(k)(.4) of the preservation ordinance stipulates that:
In making its determination as to the appropriateness of the proposed ... demolition [and] construction, the Commission shall consider ... the compatibility of the proposed work with the historic district ..., including the effect of the proposed work on the neighboring structures, the surroundings and the streetscape.

Second, for new construction on lots with no historic resources, Rehabilitation Standard 9 stipulates that:

“new works shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the ... environment.”

To employ these standards, which are predicated on compatibility with surroundings, one must first determine the character of those surroundings. The Rittenhouse Fidler Historic District is comprised of two sections with distinct, coherent characters. The first section, which encompasses the vast majority of the district, is generally located south of Locust Street at the east end of the district and south of Walnut Street at the west. It is homogeneous and primarily comprised of mid and late nineteenth-century, masonry, row houses of three and four stories. This first section is dotted with nineteenth-century churches and occasional, later, mid-rise residential buildings. A small proportion of the residential buildings in this first section, especially at street corners, have been converted for commercial use. The second section of the district, surrounding Rittenhouse Square, is comprised of mid- and high-rise residential buildings, mid-rise commercial buildings, and row houses converted for commercial use. Each of these two sections of the Rittenhouse Fidler Historic District is generally homogeneous and has a discernable character.

The parcels at 2116-32 Chestnut and 2115-27 Sansom are located in a protrusion extending from the northwest corner of the historic district that is unlike the two primary sections of the district. The protrusion stretches out from the main body of the district to reach three important churches, but, in doing so, incorporates a disparate collection of unrelated buildings into the district. It includes low, mid, and high-rise residential buildings; row houses converted for assorted uses; institutional buildings of various sizes and ages; sundry commercial buildings, and parking garages and surface parking lots. The district boundary is irregular in this area, jutting in and out to include the nineteenth-century churches and exclude parking facilities and various large-scale twentieth-century buildings with school, office, and commercial uses. Aerial views show that this disparate section of the historic district is very different from the two distinct sections of the district to the south. It includes radically different buildings that share little. However, a review of this area's history demonstrates that its built environment does share an important characteristic that can be used as the basis for assessing compatibility.

An exploration of the history of this area demonstrates why it does not share the character of either of the distinctive sections of the historic district to the south and east. While those areas developed in the mid nineteenth century as residential areas with the land subdivided for row house development and the occasional church or school, the area in question at the northwest corner of the historic district was initially developed very differently. It was developed as the city's building materials supply center and, although the facilities associated with those businesses are long gone, the built environment still bears the imprint of that industry. Those businesses occupied very large sites. When the businesses left, the sites were not subdivided, but were redeveloped intact. Therefore, the buildings in this area are very large because the sites upon which they were built are very large, especially when compared to the small row house sized lots to the south and east.

Beginning in the early nineteenth century, quarried stone and other building materials were transported from around the world to wharfs on the east bank of the Schuylkill from Locust to Chestnut Streets. The processing, storage, and sales of these materials was conducted inland from the expensive riverside parcels, between Market and Walnut and 20th and 23rd Streets. The stone and other building supply companies that dominated the area occupied very large

sites, typically from one-quarter to entire city blocks. This area was developed as the nineteenth-century equivalent of today's big-box retail. The nineteenth-century equivalents of Home Depot lined the blocks in this area. Maps of 1860 and 1885 show that the 2100 and 2200 blocks of Chestnut, Sansom, and Walnut Streets and the numbered streets running perpendicular to them were lined with commercial enterprises listed as stone yards, granite yards, marble yards, lumber yards, and wire works. Even as late as 1895, a lumber yard, stone yard, two granite yards, window manufacturer, and planing mill were situated in the immediate neighborhood. Row houses were the exception, not the rule, in this area. The site in question at 2116-32 Chestnut and 2115-27 Sansom was a stone yard. The site later redeveloped as the Swedenborgian and Unitarian churches on the 2100-block of Chestnut was a stone yard. The site redeveloped as the Lutheran church to the east of the site in question was a lumber yard. The site redeveloped as the Coronado Apartments was a granite yard. The site redeveloped as the College of Physicians was a stone yard. When changes in shipping and development pressure pushed the building materials companies out of the area at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries, very large sites were available for redevelopment. During the redevelopment, large buildings, not row houses, were constructed on the sites. In addition to the large churches, large apartment buildings like the Coronado at 22nd and Chestnut, large institutional buildings like the College of Physicians on 22nd, and large commercial buildings like the Art Deco retail building and parking garage at 21st and Chestnut were constructed. The site in question, which had been a stone yard, was redeveloped as the sprawling, 10-story Rittenhouse Hotel about 1890; the hotel was lost to a fire in 1943.

Delimited by an irregular boundary, the northwest section of the historic district is heterogeneous in many ways, but it does have one distinct character-defining feature: the buildings are typically large in size and scale because of the early development history. The existing built fabric of very large buildings bears the imprint of the area's early history. The churches, institutions, and apartment and commercial buildings, all of which are large, are clues to the area's past, not as a row house neighborhood, but as the center of the city's stone and other building supplies industry. Beyond this one characteristic, the buildings share little. There is no one set of common materials, features, proportion, massing, or styles. The large size and scale is the one common characteristic in this section of the district. The proposed development may not be compatible with the small size and scale of the historic district many blocks to the south and east, but it is entirely compatible with the size and scale of this zone of the historic district. The base, not the tower, will primarily determine the experience of the building. The four-story base is entirely in keeping with its surroundings.

Moreover, the proposed building relates to the nearby buildings. The four-story brick base restores the street wall lost with the construction of the Hillman Center and connects the building to the row houses to the west. The brick base is fenestrated with three-window-wide bays that replicates the rhythm of the nearby row houses, but, at the same time, retains the size and scale of the large buildings in the area. Inset and surrounded by stone coping, the windows in the base have the weight, depth, and shadow lines of historic windows in the area. The base steps down at the west end of the Chestnut Street façade to address the important Wilson Eyre house at the corner of 22nd and Chestnut Streets. The windows and coping of the new building align with the roofline, dormer, and floor heights of the important but altered Eyre house. The base hides the parking garage, which is above grade but does not detract from the streetscape. The loading docks and parking entrance are appropriately located on Van Pelt Street, a service alley. The proposed building satisfies the differentiation requirement; is not historicist, but is clearly contemporary. Since the first version of the design, which was reviewed in April, the tower has been relocated on the site to avoid blocking views of the steeple at the Lutheran Church and to reduce its impact on the light and air to the Lutheran and Unitarian churches. It is

tall, but the heterogeneous northwestern section of the district and its immediate surrounds include many tall buildings. In recent years, the Commission has approved three very tall buildings in the area including 10 Rittenhouse on the 1800-blocks of Walnut and Sansom Streets, which is 35 stories and 398 feet tall; 1706 Rittenhouse on the 1700-block of Rittenhouse Square Street, which will be 31 stories and 320 feet tall; and the Boyd Theater tower on the 1900-blocks of Chestnut and Sansom Streets, which will be 24 stories and 329 feet tall. 10 and 1706 Rittenhouse are in the historic district. The Boyd tower is located on the district boundary and two blocks from the site in question.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends approval of the demolition building at 2115-27 Sansom Street and the construction of the proposed building on the lots at 2116-32 Chestnut and 2115-27 Sansom Streets, pursuant to Section 14-2007(7)(k)(.4) of the preservation ordinance and Standard 9.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Cluver disqualified himself from the review owing to his firm's involvement in the project.

Mr. Farnham presented the application to the Architectural Committee. Attorneys William Schwartz and Hercules Grigos, developer David Radomski, and architect James Plunkard represented the application.

Mr. Farnham presented a lengthy review of the history of the site and this section of the historic district. He explained that the staff's research into the history of this area demonstrates why it does not share the character of the two distinctive sections of the historic district to the south and east, the row house area and the Rittenhouse Square area. While those areas developed in the mid nineteenth century as residential areas with the land subdivided for row house development and the occasional church or school, the area in question at the northwest corner of the historic district was initially developed very differently. It was developed as the city's building materials supply center and, although the facilities associated with those businesses are long gone, the built environment still bears the imprint of that industry. Those businesses occupied very large sites, usually one quarter to an entire block. When the businesses left, the sites were not subdivided, but were redeveloped intact. Therefore, the buildings in this area are very large because the sites upon which they were built are very large, especially when compared to the small row house sized lots to the south and east. Mr. Farnham stated that this fact forms a basis for assessing compatibility in the area. He asserted that the proposed building would be compatible with this section of the historic district and would satisfy the evaluation criteria in the historic preservation ordinance and the Secretary of Interior's Standards. The four-story base of the building would dominate the experience of it; the tower is set back significantly from all three street facades. The base is of the size and scale of the nearby buildings in the historic district; whether institutional, residential, or commercial, they are predominantly very large.

Mr. Schwartz introduced himself and stated that he represents the Sidney Hillman Medical Center, the deed owner of 2116-32 Chestnut and 2115-27 Sansom Streets, and the John Buck Company, the development partner.

Mr. Plunkard introduced himself and stated that his firm as well as the firm of Voith & MacTavish had developed the design. Both architectural firms, Hartshorne & Plunkard and Voith & MacTavish, have significant experience with historic buildings and areas. He explained that the design has been revised and the tower has been moved to the center of the site from the northeast corner. He stated that he believes that the proposed building is compatible with the

Rittenhouse Fittler Historic District. He stated that the project will significantly improve the pedestrian experience, increase property values in the area, and bring a new vitality to the neighborhood.

Mr. Plunkard displayed a Powerpoint presentation on the project, site, and neighborhood. He agreed with the staff's overview of the context and the district. He stated that, south of Walnut, the district is primarily made up of three and four-story row houses with mid-rise residential buildings at some corners. Around Rittenhouse Square, the development is much denser and the buildings larger. He noted that a zone of larger buildings extends from the northwest corner of Rittenhouse Square to the northwest and envelops the site in question. He asserted that the sites and buildings in the northwest section of the historic district are much larger in size and scale than those to the south and east. The area around 22nd and Chestnut is very different than most of the district. He noted that the height and density increases as one moves toward Market Street, with the tallest buildings on Market. He displayed a map of the historic district with tall buildings and their heights indicated. He stated that there are 15 structures around Rittenhouse Square that range from 200 to 400 feet in height. He stated that there is a transitional area north of the Square that includes buildings in the 200-foot range. Mr. Schwartz stated that the proposed building would be 315 feet in height. Mr. Plunkard noted that it would be shorter than the Boyd Theater tower, which the Commission recently approved. He pointed out buildings in the area of the proposed tower that are 291, 260, 180, 160, 149, and 146 feet tall. He pointed out that the building diagonally across Chestnut Street from the site is 171 feet tall. He asserted that there is a precedent for tall buildings in the historic district. He observed that a 337-foot tall building stands three blocks to the west on Chestnut. He stated that the Commission recently approved a 329-foot tall addition to the Boyd Theater on the 1900-block of Chestnut Street, two blocks east of the site in question. He noted another building in the area that is 245 feet tall. He concluded that there are numerous tall buildings in the historic district and also along Chestnut Street.

Mr. Plunkard turned his attention to the site and the design of the proposed building. He stated that the neighbors consider this part of Chestnut Street a "black hole." He stated that many buildings in the area are very large and have intermittent uses. He stated that the large residential building at the northwest corner of 21st and Chestnut "turns its back on the street." The windows are very small. There are very few "eyes on the street." He contended that his project would revitalize the area.

Mr. Plunkard explained that the project would include 306 residential units. The Sidney Hillman Medical Center would be housed in a portion of the building on Sansom Street. The base of the tower would also include office and retail space. Van Pelt will be significantly improved, changing it from an alley to a landscaped street. The property along the rears of the buildings on 22nd Street would be improved, creating an egress area and a green space. He displayed plans showing the relocation of the tower, 37 feet off Van Pelt, 36 feet off Chestnut, and 35 feet off Sansom. He stated that they have been working with the neighbors including the churches. He reported that the base of the tower is located 13 feet west of Van Pelt. The 13 feet of land has been given over to the street to improve it. He displayed plans showing the interior layout. He displayed aerial photographs. Van Pelt is currently a narrow alley with no landscaping. Mr. Schwartz added that Van Pelt does not currently meet City requirements for cartway and sidewalk widths. Mr. Plunkard stated that they will landscape both sides of the street. He pointed out the entries to the residences and medical center at the corners on Van Pelt at Chestnut and Sansom. A café will be included on Van Pelt. He showed photomontages depicting the views down the surrounding streets. He claimed that the project would significantly enhance the area. He explained that the building will be situated 6'-8" off the western property

line to allow for egress from the neighboring buildings. He stated that there had been a three-foot egress alley along the property line, but the neighbors have built into it and also dumped trash in it. He pointed out an urban garden that they are creating for the residents. Mr. Schwartz added that the residents will now have two directions of egress at the rears, where they only had one.

Mr. Plunkard explained that the parking garage will be wrapped with office space and a lobby on Chestnut. He pointed out that the building will only be one story in height at the far western edge with a green roof to give more light and air to the neighbors. The parking garage is entirely enclosed and ventilated through the roof. A green screen will shield the garage at the west. Mr. Plunkard showed the rooftop terrace on the four-story base.

Mr. Plunkard stated that the tower footprint is 32% of the site area. The tower is a glass and aluminum window wall system. The base is clad in masonry including cut stone and brick. He described the Chestnut façade and showed how it relates to the neighboring Wilson Eyre house. He explained that the façade bays are about 18 feet wide and the windows 12 feet wide. He contended that this produces appropriate rhythms and proportions for the neighborhood. He stated that the windows relate to the historic windows in the Coronado, which is at the northwest corner of 22nd and Chestnut. The brick that they have selected is based on the brick at the Lutheran Church across Van Pelt. He concluded that the base is very important to the experience of the building and is designed to be compatible with the surrounding buildings in the historic district.

Mr. Plunkard pointed out the parking and loading entrances on Van Pelt. He showed renderings of the Sansom Street façade and remarked that the base has a slightly smaller scale on Sansom to be compatible with the scale of that smaller street. The bay width is 14.5 feet and the window width is 10 feet. The materials are the same as Chestnut. He showed photomontages of the street views before and after the construction of the building to demonstrate that the streetscape will be greatly improved. He noted that, by relocating the tower, the steeple on the Lutheran Church will remain visible from the west on Chestnut Street.

Mr. Plunkard concluded his presentation, stating that the proposed project is compatible with the historic district. The revised design with the tower set back will protect the historic environment. The lightness of the glass tower will reduce its presence; the tower will be compatible with the historic district. The building will have a tremendous positive impact on the area, adding to its street life. The medical center, which serves the area, will be retained. The 22nd Street neighbors have been respected and their properties protected and enhanced.

Mr. Schwartz informed the Committee that the design team had reached a settlement in principle with the two neighboring historic churches. Attorneys Anthony Forte and Michael Mattioni, representing the Lutheran and Unitarian Churches respectively, addressed the Commission. Mr. Forte noted that the hardship matter had been concluded and that they were not opposing the demolition of the buildings. He stated that they like many aspects of the plan including the residential use, which will bring people to the neighborhood, and the ground-floor retail, which will bring vitality to the street. He stated that they liked the fact that the garage is screened. He stated that they appreciate the proposal to widen and landscape Van Pelt. He stated that the parking and loading is appropriately located on Van Pelt. He reported that the former location of the tower had caused concern for the churches. It would have blocked views of the steeple as well as light and air to the churches. He stated that they have worked very closely with the developer with the assistance of Alan Greenberger and have reached a good compromise with the relocation of the tower to the center of the site. He observed that they are

very encouraged by the design and look forward to working with the developer on the final details. He concluded that they are very “supportive and encouraging.” Mr. Mattioni stated that the developer and architect have addressed their concerns by shifting the location of the tower. He thanked Alan Greenberger for all of his efforts. He reported that the sun studies show a substantial improvement to the Unitarian Church’s light with the movement of the tower. Mr. Forte stated that the churches did not object to the style of the building. He said that, “if it is modern and of today’s design aesthetic, that is fine with” the churches.

John Gallery of the Preservation Alliance stated that the Committee must determine whether the proposed building is compatible with the historic district. He contended that buildings outside the historic district are not relevant to the discussion. He asserted that the circumstances of the area in 1880 as shown in the staff presentation are not relevant. He asserted that the fact that the parcels are large in this section of the historic district is not relevant. He showed a map of the historic district and asked if the project is compatible in size with it. He discussed the Greenfield School, which is nearby but not located in the historic district, and concluded that it is on a large parcel but is not a large building. He claimed that there is no relation between parcel size and building size. He claimed that buildings on larger parcels do not tend to be larger than buildings on smaller parcels. He displayed a map with some of the buildings in the district that are taller than 100 feet marked in black. He stated that the building diagonally opposite the site is 170 feet tall. He stated that the Wanamaker House, which is nearby and in the district, is very tall. The others are not as tall. He concluded that the proposed building is out of character with this section of the district. Only one other building in the immediate section of the district is related in size. He said that no other building in the area is massed in this way, with a tower on a base. He stated that it is not compatible in scale. He claimed that the base is “not architecturally in scale with the character of the area.” He stated that no buildings in the area have four-story glass like this building. He stated that the upper floors in buildings in the district have “a preponderance of masonry.” He said that the Sansom Street elevations are much more sympathetic than the Chestnut Street elevations. The Sansom Street façade is in scale; the Chestnut Street façade is not. The architectural features of the surrounding buildings include large amounts of masonry; this building does not. From an architectural point of view, this building is not in character. He objected to the extensive use of glass. He stated that the other tall buildings approved for the district recently, 10 Rittenhouse and 1706 Rittenhouse, included more masonry. He asserted that buildings in historic districts should be clad predominately in masonry. He showed the Committee a page from a pamphlet he had compiled about the types of architecture he considered compatible and incompatible with historic districts. He stated that, using the criteria he laid out in this pamphlet, the project under review is not compatible in height; is compatible regarding maintaining the street line; the wall is not a masonry surface; the building does not have a traditional tripartite composition of base, middle, and top; the excessive use of glass, even in the base, is not characteristic of the district; and it is compatible in rhythm. He discussed the 218 Arch Street project in Old City, which was never built; he claimed that building had been redesigned to be more compatible with the district. He concluded that this design does not seem to be compatible with the district, but another design that accommodates this program may be. He asked the Committee to recommend denial.

Avis Allman, the owner of 113 S. 22nd Street, stated that the staff presentation was very interesting. She stated that she had not had an opportunity to review the revised design until the evening before the meeting. She stated that she showed it to some of her neighbors, but none has had much time to review it. She stated that the design has been revised to the detriment of the 22nd Street neighbors. She stated that the new design will block light and air. She stated that she spoke with Tim Kerner, the zoning chair of Center City Residents Association, about the project. She stated that Mr. Kerner told her about a third alternative that would have moved

the tower 28 feet south and west. She stated that she wanted to see light studies of all of the alternatives. She asked for more information. She asked for more time to evaluate the design. She stated again that she only learned of the design one day before the meeting. She stated that she needs one week to review the design. She stated that she is currently opposed to the project. She contended that the churches involvement in negotiating the new design calls into question "the concept of faith" and "concern for the neighbors." Mr. Farnham noted that Ms. Allman was informed of the revised design by email one week before the meeting. He stated that the revised plans have been available to the public for one week before this Committee meeting in the Commission's offices. He observed that Ms. Allman elected not to review the plans until one day before the meeting. The Commission has not restricted the review of the plans in any way.

Mr. Amburn stated that the Committee did not consider the merits of the new design during its last review. It only addressed the hardship portion of the application. He remarked that the question of the Contributing building has been resolved. The Commission found that it would constitute a hardship to retain it and approved its demolition with conditions. Mr. Farnham reminded the Committee that the application also proposes the demolition of the Non-contributing building on Sansom Street. He reported that the staff recommended approval of this demolition because it would have no adverse impact on the historic district. He noted that the Commission had included conditions on the demolition approval for the Contributing building that would ensure that it was not demolished until the new construction was ready to commence.

Mr. McCoubrey asked Mr. Plunkard to describe the changes to the tower. He responded that the height was reduced by two stories. He explained that the tower was moved an additional 18 feet west away from Van Pelt Street and an additional 12 feet south from Chestnut Street. Mr. Plunkard stated that he believes that revised location balances the needs of all of the neighbors. He stated that the movement of the tower would have a minimal impact on Ms. Allman's house. He noted that he is having a new sun study prepared. He also stated that taller and thinner is the new and best way to achieve density on urban sites. He pointed to the building at the northwest corner of 21st and Chestnut, the Riverwest Condominiums, which Mr. Gallery suggested as a model, as the wrong way to plan a high-density urban site. It is bulky, has small windows, and no open space or retail. It has more gross square footage than the building proposed. It is not a good neighbor. He noted again that it is larger than the building proposed in terms of square footage. Mr. Schwartz stated that they could build a by-right building that would be 285 feet tall on Sansom Street and would block much more light and air. The proposed building allows corridors of light.

Ms. Gutterman stated that she is concerned about the height and the use of glass. She suggested a masonry material like stucco. She asked if the architect considered any masonry materials for the tower. She said that, as designed, it looks like an office building. Mr. Amburn strongly disagreed. He stated that the glass was a better solution. It is lighter. He stated that the revisions are very successful. He stated that moving the tower reduces the impact on Chestnut. He asserted that the base, not the tower, will produce the primary experience of the building. Mr. Plunkard agreed. He stated that he intended to create a glass and steel tower that would be more reflective. It would reflect the church steeple. Also, after moving the tower to the center of the site, it is even more important to have a light tower. Having the tower emerge from the base, but clad in masonry makes no sense.

Mr. Farnham reminded the Committee that the Commission has approving two tall glassy buildings in the area recently, 1706 Rittenhouse Square and the Boyd Theatre tower. Mr.

Gallery pointed out that the Boyd Theater tower is not located in the Rittenhouse-Fitler Historic District. Mr. Farnham replied agreed that it is not in the district. The Boyd tower would stand on the north side of the 1900-block of Sansom Street, adjacent to but not in the district. The district boundary runs down the center of the 1900-block of Sansom along the Boyd Theater site.

Mr. Plunkard asserted that the historic district boundary in the northwest corner of the district is nothing more than an imaginary line. He stated that that the context in which this building would stand extends beyond the imaginary line. He stated that the Boyd tower is a perfect example. It is not technically in the district, but will have a significant impact on the district. He stated that the configuration of the district in this area makes a discussion of compatibility impossible if that discussion is limited to buildings within the district. There is no district around this site. It is gerrymandered to include and exclude buildings.

Mr. Gallery reminded the Committee that the Commission restricted its review to the site itself when it reviewed the proposed building for the individually designated site at 400 S. 40th Street. It did not take into account the surrounding area. To do so here, would set a new standard. Mr. Schwartz commented that Mr. Gallery's comparison of sites many miles apart was "inapposite."

Mr. Farnham asserted that the primary characteristic of the built environment of this part of the district is the size and scale of the buildings. He stated that this section of the historic district is and was historically an area with large buildings because large lots that redeveloped without subdivision in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The buildings in this area within the historic district are primarily large; they are not primarily row houses. They may not be tall, but they are large in size and scale. He rejected the representation of the proposed building that Mr. Gallery had displayed to support his claim that it was not compatible with the district. Mr. Farnham stated that the representation, an elevation of the north façade of the proposed building, was an idealized view that no human being would or could ever experience. No human would or could see the base and tower in that way. He asserted that the base, not the tower, which is set back, would determine the true experience of this building. He contended that the base is entirely compatible with this section of the historic district and satisfies the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. He added that the Committee must not lose sight of the definition of compatible, which means "able to exist in harmony." Mr. Gallery asserts that it means "the same as." It does not. The proposed building may not look exactly like many of the buildings in the historic district, but it is compatible with them.

Mr. Plunkard distributed the map depicting the heights of the tall buildings in the area.

Mr. Amburn stated that he considers the proposed building to be compatible with the historic district. The way that it is situated on the site, pulled back from the streets, allows it to be compatible. He noted that 1706 Rittenhouse Square, which the Commission approved for the district, is 32 stories tall and is compatible. Mr. McCoubrey agreed. He stated that the use of glass and the set backs from the streets minimizes the impact of the tower on the surrounding area. He stated that he found it compatible with the district. He rejected Mr. Gallery's suggestion that a masonry building would be appropriate. He stated that masonry would make the tower heavy and obtrusive. He also objected to the use of a dark glass. He suggested that the large rendering including in the application package shows a glass that is too dark. Mr. Plunkard stated that the glass would not be that dark. He distributed photomontages depicting the site before and after construction, which showed the impact of the tower. He observed that they showed that the tower would have a minimal impact on the observer on the sidewalk or street.

Ms. Pentz remarked that the staff's research is very important in this case. She contended that the applicants had made great efforts to work with the neighbors and minimize the impact of their project on the neighboring properties. She stated that she agreed with the staff recommendation. The proposal would be compatible with the historic district and would satisfy the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. Messrs. Amburn and McCoubrey agreed with Ms. Pentz. Ms. Gutterman stated that she did not agree with the staff's recommendation.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval of the demolition building at 2115-27 Sansom Street and the construction of the proposed building on the lots at 2116-32 Chestnut and 2115-27 Sansom Streets, pursuant to Section 14-2007(7)(k)(.4) of the preservation ordinance and Standard 9.

ADJOURNMENT

The Architectural Committee adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES CITED IN THE MINUTES

Standard 9: New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new works shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

Roofs Guideline: Recommended: Designing additions to roofs such as residential, office, or storage spaces; elevator housing; decks and terraces; or dormers or skylights when required by the new use so that they are inconspicuous from the public right-of-way and do not damage or obscure character-defining features.

Section 14-2007(7)(k)(.4): In making its determination as to the appropriateness of the proposed alterations, demolition or construction, the Commission shall consider the following:
the compatibility of the proposed work with the historic district or with the character of its site, including the effect of the proposed work on the neighboring structures, the surroundings and the streetscape.