

REPORT OF THE ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Arlene Matzkin, Chair
Commission Conference Room
Suite 1301, 1401 Arch Street
25 March 1997

Present

Arlene Matzkin, Chair
Tony Atkin
Herbert Levy
Daniel McCoubrey
Suzanne Pentz

Randal Baron, Assistant Historic Preservation Officer
Laura Spina, Historic Preservation Specialist

Also

Joseph Bento, Philadelphia Housing Development Corporation
Albert Tantala, Tantala Associates
Siraik Zakarian
Stephan White, Stephan White Associates
Matthew Compton
Mark Ueland, Ueland Junker McCauley
Howard Lebold, Ueland Junker McCauley
Fr. Francis Beech, Roman Catholic High School
Dan Jalboot, Voith & Mactavish Architects
Beryl Rosenstock, Atwater Kent Museum
Jeffrey Ray, Atwater Kent Museum
Douglas Grainge
Sandra Kelly
Judith Eden, Center City Residents Association
Ruth Peters, Friends of Rittenhouse Square
Dan Vicencio
Lenore Millhollen, Center City Residents Association
Gregory Myers, BH Engineers
James Harter, Sr., Basco Associates
Paul Kleim, AT&T Wireless of Philadelphia
Evan Rosenberg, AT&T Wireless of Philadelphia
Evelyn Federico
Joanne Phillips, Ballard Spahr Andrews & Ingersoll
Tina Makouljian, Ballard Spahr Andrews & Ingersoll
George Sfedu, 1907 Spruce Street

Ms. Matzkin called the meeting to order at 12:45 p.m.

126 Richmond Street

Philadelphia Housing Development Corporation, Owner
Joseph Bento, Applicant
DATE: c. 1860
PROPOSAL: New windows

Without a permit, the owner replaced the original wood two-

over-two windows with vinyl six-over-six windows with snap-on muntins. The owner now proposes to replace the new windows with wood, two-over-two, true-muntin windows.

The Committee voted to recommend approval of the wood, two-over-two windows.

1919 Green Street

Hugh O'Callaghan, Owner

Warren Kerschbaum, Applicant

DATE: c. 1890

PROPOSAL: Legalize re-stucco of former party wall

Without a permit, the owner re-stuccoed the former party wall.

The Committee voted to recommend approval.

322-330 Race Street, Old First Reformed Church

Michael Hauptman, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1836-37

PROPOSAL: Asphalt parking area

Previously, the Committee and Commission approved the paving of a parking area next to the church using pavers that would allow grass to grow through them. These pavers proved too costly, and the church now wishes to pave the parking area with an asphalt that would not allow any plant growth.

The Committee voted to recommend approval.

1223 Pine Street

Ian Canham, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1825

PROPOSAL: Legalize door infill, roof deck, dormer

Mr. and Mrs. Canham, the current owners, presented the proposal to the Committee. The building had two doors on the corner of the first floor. Without a permit, the previous owner closed off the side door and bricked in the opening. The Department of Licenses and Inspections issued a violation, but the owner did not cure the violation and sold the property. Mr. Canham does not know if the original door, frame or transom remain behind the brick.

The Canhams, also without a permit, built a deck on the rear ell and a dormer at the rear with a door to the deck. The department issued a violation for this work as well. Mr. Baron noted that the railing may not satisfy code requirements. The owner now wishes to have all of the work legalized.

After some discussion, the committee voted to recommend

approval of the dormer, door and deck on the rear ell. The Committee further discussed the bricked doorway. Mr. Levy noted that since the violation existed when the property changed hands the title insurance company may be responsible for the cost of restoring the door. The Committee asked the owner to inquire into the title insurance company's liability for restoring the door. The Committee decided that the door is an important feature and expressed interest in having the door replaced, but did not want the owners to be burdened with the cost.

The Committee voted to recommend approval of the dormer, door to the deck, and deck, with staff to approve a code compliant railing detail; table the decision of the door infill until the owner has investigated the responsibility of the title insurance company. If the owner must carry the costs of reinstalling the door, the Committee's decision divided evenly, two to legalize the work and two to have the door reinstalled.

2201-2205 Green Street, Bergdoll Mansion

Siraik Zakarian, Owner/Applicant

DATE: 1890

PROPOSAL: New gate, parking area

Siraik Zakarian, owner of the property, presented the proposal with her architect, Stephan White. She wishes to have a small parking lot in the rear of the house and needs to cut a gate into the brownstone wall. Mr. Baron noted that the wall leans badly and needs rebuilding in this area. Mr. White explained that the Streets Department wants an eighteen-foot wide opening into the parking area and that Ms. Zakarian prefers only a twelve-foot wide opening. The proposal includes cast stone or cement plaster posts that mimic those at the front of the house on both sides of the entrance with a wrought-iron picket gate with decorative scrolls. The Committee noted that an original side gate does not have posts but only a simple return. The Committee stated that the side gates should not be as ornate as the front and emphasize the secondary status of that facade. The architect agreed. Also, the Committee asked that the wrought-iron gate mimic other fencing, with arrows atop the pickets instead of the proposed scrolls. Again, the architect and owner agreed.

The Committee voted to recommend approval of the twelve-foot or eighteen-foot opening in the wall with only a simple return, wrought-iron picket gates with decorative arrows, with staff to approve gate details.

1024 Race Street

Kuo Cheung Lee and Lai Lee, Owners

Albert Tantala, Applicant

DATE: c. 1825

PROPOSAL: Cut new storefront in residential facade

Mr. Tantala explained that the owner of the building has had a grocery store in the first floor for a number of years. They wish to emphasize the presence of the store by installing a formal storefront in the residential facade. Mr. Baron noted that, without any permits, the owner replaced four of the original windows, rerouted the front gutter, painted the building a cream color and installed an awning. The building had never been painted.

The Committee discussed the proposal and decided that too much historic fabric would be lost with the proposal. The decision to recommend denial conforms with the recommendations for other proposals which the Commission has reviewed regarding removal of residential windows to create commercial fronts. The Committee asked that the Department of Licenses and Inspections issue violations for the work performed without a permit.

The Committee voted to recommend denial.

301-313 North Broad Street AKA 1345 Vine Street, Roman Catholic High School

Mark Ueland, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1886

PROPOSAL: Addition on Vine Street

Mark Ueland and Howard Lebold presented the plans for an addition to the high school on Vine Street. The addition would be primarily made of brick, to match the eastern wall of the school, with a limestone entrance and granite watertable. The Committee noted that the addition follows the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards*: it is compatible with the original building in size, scale and massing; it echoes the style of the original building, and it represents present building design.

Mr. Atkin and Ms. Matzkin questioned the need for the "zipper", the thin connector between the old building and addition with a vertical row of windows. Mr. Ueland explained that this area houses the elevator and must accommodate the many floor levels of the buildings. The floor levels of the addition match the 1950s addition at the rear of the property, which differ from the original building. A pedestrian will see the different floor levels through the glass.

Also, the proposal includes a parking lot with fencing and landscaping and two basketball half-courts.

The Committee voted to recommend approval.

2051 Walnut Street AKA 119-151 South 21st Street

Vladimir Tamarkin, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1855; c. 1950 - 1st floor alterations

PROPOSAL: Exhaust fan

The Committee and Commission previously approved a less visible exhaust fan on the Moravian Street facade. The ductwork cannot travel on the interior of the building because of the landing of the fire stairs. The owner wishes to have the exhaust fan exit the building from under the stair landing and exterior ductwork to bring the fan to the required ten feet above the ground. Mr. Tamarkin stated that the exposed ductwork would only measure one foot with the mushroom fan on top although the drawing clearly shows the ductwork measuring three feet plus the fan.

The Committee voted to recommend approval.

337 South Camac Street

Richard Schiro, Owner

Robert Kurtz, Applicant

DATE: c. 1865; c. 1920 - 1st floor altered

PROPOSAL: Legalize removal of cornice brackets; cover cornice and bays in aluminum

Mr. Kurtz explained that he had had the cornice and three projecting bays covered in aluminum owing to their very deteriorated condition and the cost of repair in-kind. This necessitated the removal of the modillions from the cornice and one bay where they existed. The contractor could not replicate the details, e.g. the modillions, in aluminum. Mr. Kurtz also stated that he did not know that the Commission had designated the property or that the work required a permit.

Mr. Baron informed the Committee that this work had taken place several years ago and that he had asked the Department of Licenses and Inspections to issue a violation. Mr. Kurtz noted that the owner only now received a violation. Mr. Kurtz could not provide documentation of the deterioration of the elements or cost-estimates given for repairing the cornice or bays.

The Committee noted that the *Standards* do not recommend covering historic fabric and state that all work should have the same visual look as the original elements. The current work does not have the same visual look, and the Committee and Commission consistently have denied proposals to cover cornices with aluminum.

The Committee voted to recommend denial.

6331 Malvern Avenue, Overbrook School for the Blind

Daniel Jalboot, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1896

PROPOSAL: Remove non-historic stairtower; erect elevator tower, ADA ramp

Mr. Jalboot, architect for the project, presented the proposal. On this very large complex, the school had added a

stairtower on a side elevation. The school now wishes to remove the stairtower and erect an elevator tower in its place. It will also install a handicap access ramp along that wall to the elevator tower. As required by fire code, the window on the first floor, closest to the tower must be closed. The Committee noted the improved design and that the size of the work is minimal compared to the size of the overall complex.

The Committee voted to recommend approval.

1801-1835 North Broad Street, College Hall

Temple University, Owner

David Murray, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1893

PROPOSAL: Roof, cornice work

Mr. Baron explained that the Committee and Commission approved work for this building several years ago, including the removal of the pitched roof and installation of a flat roof. At the front and rear of the building the contractor would erect a gable so the roof would have the same look from the street. This new proposal includes extending the pitch of the roof further back, removing the visible exhaust vent and rebuilding the cornices. David Murray, the architect, explained that the cornices must be removed when the roof is changed and much of the metal is too deteriorated to repair. He proposes rebuilding the cornices in fiberglass instead of metal. The fiberglass will mimic the look of metal and prove cheaper. The Committee discussed having the color integrated with the fiberglass or painted afterward and agreed that either would be acceptable.

The Committee voted to recommend approval of changing the slope of the roof to go further back; removing the exhaust vent; replacing the metal cornices with fiberglass, with staff to approve cornice details. Ms. Pentz abstained.

1919 Wallace Street

Matthew Compton, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1865

PROPOSAL: New windows, door

Mr. Compton explained that he purchased the property in November with the understanding that it was zoned for multi-family use. When he applied for a building permit, the Department of Licenses and Inspections sent him to Zoning for a variance. After several months and the Zoning process, the Department then told him that the building is on the Philadelphia Register.

When Mr. Compton purchased the property the building the previous owner had boarded the openings. To seal the building, he installed vinyl six-over-six windows with sandwiched muntins. A previous owner installed glass block in the basement windows.

The designation photograph shows wood, two-over-two windows. Mr. Compton proposes to have the sandwiched muntins changed to a single vertical bar and apply muntins to the exterior. The Committee expressed concern that the vinyl window is too flat to allow a full profile of the applied muntin. In the basement the glass block should be removed and two-pane hopper or awning windows installed. Mr. Compton agreed.

Mr. Compton also wishes to change the non-historic front door. He wants a single-leaf door that mimics a double-leaf door, but the Committee noted that the single-leaf door might be too large and heavy.

The Committee voted to recommend approval of two-over-two vinyl windows if the muntin has the correct profile and depth; if not then the Committee recommends approval of wood, two-over-two, true-muntin sash; approval of two-pane hopper or awning windows in the basement; approval of a double-leaf door or a single-leaf door that mimics a double-leaf door with staff to approve all details. The applicant must submit a better drawing or an actual door sample for the staff to review.

15 South 7th Street, Atwater Kent Museum, Old Franklin Institute

City of Philadelphia, Owner

Joseph James Ahern, Applicant

DATE: 1825

PROPOSAL: Tent pavilion in rear

Beryl Rosenstock and Jeffrey Ray of the Atwater Kent Museum described the outdoor pavilion. The yard behind the museum has a cement patio which will become the platform for the tent-like pavilion. The tent will have a sloping roof and a "fascia" which will say "The History Museum of Philadelphia". The tent will only be erected during the warm months and will be removed in winter.

The Committee voted to recommend approval.

1034 Spruce Street

Camille Partnership, Owner

Danilo Vicencio, Applicant

DATE: 1845; 1920 - facade alterations

PROPOSAL: Exhaust vent

The Committee and Commission approved an altered storefront for this property last month. The owners of the restaurant wish to install a louvered exhaust vent flush on the Cypress Street facade, with the exhaust fan and ductwork on the interior.

The Committee voted to recommend approval.

Rittenhouse Square

City of Philadelphia, Owner

Ruth Peters, Applicant

PROPOSAL: Fencing for planting beds

Ms. Peters described the fencing for the planting beds in Rittenhouse Square. The four-foot-high fencing will prevent dogs from damaging the flowers planted by volunteers each year. Ms. Peters showed photographs of a square in London with the hair-pin type of fencing she proposed. The Committee noted that the fence in the photographs did not match the drawing a contractor made to bid on the project. The Committee asked that the staff see a sample of the fence.

The Committee voted to recommend approval with staff to approve sample.

321 Chestnut Street

Liberty Museum, Owner

Sandra Kelly, Applicant

DATE: c. 1890; 1905 - addition

PROPOSAL: Step replacement, signage, remove window gates

The former Maritime Museum will now house the new Liberty Museum. Sandra Kelly from the Museum and architect Douglas Grainge presented the proposal which includes: reinstalling cascading granite steps, a sign over the front door, and removing non-historic grates on the first floor windows. The steps will match the originals which can be seen in an historic photograph in the Commission files. The sign, made of smoked glass with raised white letters that say "Liberty Museum", will hang over the front door, in front of the middle window.

Ms. Kelly noted that the Museum wishes to have other work performed on the building. The Committee instructed her to have drawings made and submit a formal proposal.

The Committee voted to recommend approval of the curved, cascading steps; approval of the sign; approval of removing the window grates with staff to approve details.

1839-1841 Spruce Street AKA 269-275 South 19th Street

Rittenhouse Place Condo Association, Owner

Dan McInerney/AT&T Wireless of Philadelphia, Applicant

DATE: c. 1925

PROPOSAL: Antenna tower

Joanne Phillips and Tina Makoullian of Ballard Spahr Andrews & Ingersoll represented AT&T Wireless of Philadelphia. AT&T wishes to install a metal skeleton on the roof of the maintenance shed to support antennas for its wireless communications system. The skeleton, a large triangle six feet high, will support nine, and later possibly fourteen, antennas which measure four feet,

two inches (4' 2"). The roof of the shed has a three-foot parapet, but the entire length of the antennas will rise above it. The proposal also includes an equipment shed on the roof of the main building, next to the maintenance shed, and a cable tray leading from the equipment shed up to the antennas.

AT&T will paint all of the equipment to match the color of the maintenance shed and, as part of its lease, will remove all of the equipment when it becomes obsolete. The Committee discussed the proposal and expressed concern that more companies may want to use this site to locate more antennas.

The Committee voted to recommend approval of the support skeleton and antennas with several conditions: none of the equipment projects higher than five (5) feet above the parapet of the maintenance shed; AT&T paints out all equipment to match the shed; AT&T removes all equipment when it becomes obsolete.

1901 Spruce Street AKA 264-276 South 19th Street

Rite Aid Corporation, Owner
Richard Janezic, Applicant
DATE: c. 1950
PROPOSAL: Signage

Mr. Janezic proposes installing a shield-shape wood sign on the corner of the building over the front door.

The Committee voted to recommend approval.

1719 Rittenhouse Square Street

Franco Bonsignore, Owner
Evelyn Federico, Applicant
DATE: 1921
PROPOSAL: Storm doors

Evelyn Federico presented a proposal for exterior storm windows for the property. The owner wishes to have exterior storm windows for energy efficiency, sound insulation and to protect the windows. Committee members expressed concern that the storm windows hide too much of the original windows and will read as one sheet of plate glass instead of individual lights. Interior storm windows allow the same energy efficiency and sound insulation without hiding the original window features. If the owner maintains the windows with proper care and paint, which Ms. Federico says they have, the windows do not need extra protection from the elements.

The Committee voted to recommend denial of the exterior storm windows, but approval of interior storm windows.

324-328 South 19th Street AKA 1901-1905 Panama Street

Rittenhouse Management Corporation, Owner

Palmer Masonry Restoration, Applicant

DATE: c. 1925

PROPOSAL: Rebuild brick corners, repair balconies

The applicant explained that harsh weather over the years has cracked the brick at the four corners and some horizontal bands and damaged the balconies. He wishes to repair the balconies and rebuild the corners in brick, and remove the brick in damaged areas, any corroded shelf angles and flashing and replace in-kind.

The Committee asked if the contractor could reuse any of the bricks especially at patches that run across the building. Mr. Spilove explained that twenty to thirty years ago, in an attempt to clean the brick, a previous owner washed the building with a chemical solution. That solution damaged the brick, eroding much of the glazing and causing some of the brick to spall. It would not be feasible to reuse any of this old brick. Committee members thought that it would probably take a custom brick to get a good match. The contractor explained that they were looking at several stock bricks but had yet to find a good match.

The Committee voted to recommend approval with staff and perhaps a Committee member to approve a brick match and pointing sample. The new brick should match the yellowed, weathered look of the old brick rather than the original whiter glaze.

2108 Walnut Street

GiaVanni Scott, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1868; c. 1920 - storefront installed

PROPOSAL: Re-cover awning

Mr. Baron presented the proposal. The building has a bubble-shaped awning over the front door. The owner wishes to keep the extant frame and recover it with a matte fabric that would bear the house number.

Judith Eden, Vice-President of the Center City Residents Association, noted that the Zoning Board of Adjustment approved a variance for the building with certain conditions. The conditions include removing the awning completely and removing the light bar that runs across the facade above the first floor.

The Committee voted to recommend approval of a new awning cover of matte fabric; approval of removing the awning completely; approval of removing the light bar.

1924 Rittenhouse Square Street

Basile Al-Ramadi, Owner
Daniel Foley, Applicant
DATE: c. 1850; c. 1925 - resurfaced
PROPOSAL: Paint masonry

Daniel Foley presented the paint scheme for the Mediterranean Revival facade: cream base, burnt orange accents and black window trim. The owner will reinstall the iron work over the windows.

The Committee voted to recommend approval.

1907 Spruce Street AKA 1906 Manning Street

George Sfedu, Owner/Applicant
DATE: c. 1875
PROPOSAL: Partial rear demolition; new rear deck and door; lighting fixture; brownstone repair on front facade; storm windows

The Committee and Commission approved a rear garage addition to this house several months ago. The owner, George Sfedu, wishes to remove the third floor rear shed addition and install a balcony on top of the second floor extension. The Committee members questioned the shape of the doors leading to the balcony and offered Mr. Sfedu three options that would better complement the facade design. Mr. Sfedu agreed to change the doors to one of the options. The Committee also questioned the shape of the balusters of the balcony railing. Mr. Baron suggested a Victorian-style turned baluster. The Committee agreed.

The proposal includes a new light fixture on the front facade and brownstone repair of the front steps and watertable. The Committee rejected a two-armed sconce with globe-shaped lights in favor of a single-arm sconce. Ms. Matzkin objected to the globe shape of the light. The Committee asked that Mr. Sfedu work with staff for a fixture design. Mr. Sfedu also proposed exterior storm windows.

The Committee voted to recommend approval of the removal of the shed and installation of the deck with three door options: doors and sidelights within the same arch, arched doors with wood side panels, or squared doors and sidelights, with staff to approve door and baluster details; approval of a single-arm Victorian style light fixture with staff to approve detail; approval of brownstone repair with integrated color with staff to approve patch. The Committee recommended that Mr. Sfedu use interior storm windows.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura M. Spina

Laura M. Spina
Historic Preservation Specialist