

THE REPORT OF THE ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE OF THE
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Arlene Matzkin, Chairperson
David DeLong, Acting Chairperson
Commission Conference Room
Suite 1301, 1401 Arch Street

25 March 1993

Present

David DeLong, University of Pennsylvania, Acting Chairperson
William Cornell, P.E., Carpenters' Company of Philadelphia
Don Stevenson, AIA

Richard Tyler, Ph.D., Historic Preservation Officer
Randal Baron, Preservation Planner
Ira Kauderer, Executive Secretary

Also

Judy Moroz, J.A. Moroz Architects, Inc.
John Teets, John A. Teets, R.A.
Leon Clemmer, Bartram's Garden
James Dart, Bower Lewis Thrower
Roger Pratt, Roger Pratt & Associates
Lanny Leibowitz, Architect
Joe DiAco
Bruce Cianpitti
Joel T. Fry

2321-25 North Broad Street, formerly Dropsie University: This proposal comes to the Committee as the first part of a phased renovation of the three buildings in this former university campus. The buildings will be adapted for use as single room occupancy housing, a community center and administrative space. The former classroom and library building will be the first to be renovated and is the subject of this proposal. Initially this building will be used for SRO housing, but it will become a non-residential community center within five years as houses in the surrounding neighborhood are acquired and renovated.

Windows and Doors: Originally all seven first floor openings held full-length glazed French doors. The applicant proposes to install casement windows in the four peripheral bays. These windows will be milled to match an extant example of the originals, but a sill and a wooden panel will be installed below the window. The three openings at the center of the building

will continue to operate as doors, again, milled to match the originals. The Department of Licenses and Inspections requires that the bottom 18 inches of these doors and windows be solid and so the architects propose placing wooden panels at the bottom of each of these first floor openings. The remaining windows on all facades will be restored or remilled to match the originals. The muntins are wide enough to hold insulated glass which will replace the existing single panes of glass.

Wheelchair Ramp: This ramp will be added to the north end of the front of the building. Ms. Moroz proposed facing this ramp with split faced block so it would read as new fabric. Dr. Tyler thought that the rough texture of split faced block would draw attention away from the original building. Committee members agreed and suggested instead that smooth faced block would be a better choice. Smooth faced block would be distinguishable from the original sandstone because the size of the blocks and the mortar joints would be different. At the same time it would be a more contextual material. The Committee agreed to the proposed illuminated pipe handrail which would attach to the ramp.

Front Steps: Several steel handrails, painted black, will be added at the front of the building.

Masonry: This project includes cleaning the exterior surfaces. The Committee asked that the staff review specifications for cleaning the stone.

Recommendation: Approval contingent on review of shop drawings for the windows and specifications for cleaning the masonry. Revised drawings should show the facing of the ramp with smooth faced stone.

Spring Garden College, 7500 Germantown Avenue: This property is in the process of being sold to the New Covenant Church. They plan to convert a two-story 1960s classroom building, described as an "intrusion" in the nomination, into a new large church which will be more in scale with other buildings on the campus. The applicants are seeking conceptual approval at this time before the sale. Other buildings on the campus will be rented out for different uses.

A second issue is that of roofing for several of the buildings. Some of the buildings have deteriorated slate roofs and others have asphalt shingles.

The Committee voted unanimously for conceptual approval of the conversion of the 1960s building into a large church building

with a tower.

The Committee reviewed the exiting roof conditions on the campus. The members recommended that the slate roofs previously replaced with asphalt shingle can be reroofed with premium asphalt shingle to look like slate. Mr. Baron will conduct a site visit to identify the parts of the most visible slate roofs which the Committee recommends repairing with slate, supradur or an equivalent.

700 Washington Square South: This proposal calls for the construction of a rear addition along the highly visible 7th Street side of this early 19th century townhouse which faces Washington Square. The addition would house a garage, accessible from 7th Street, with a small breakfast room above. Plans call for a planter on the roof above the addition. This planter would rise to the existing roofline. The proposed garage would cover three existing 6/6 sash windows at the rear of the building. The window sash would be removed but the window openings would remain. An opening would be cut into the east wall of the ell to extend the garage length to 18 feet. Architect Roger Sherman Pratt addressed the Committee.

The Committee granted unanimous approval of the garage and breakfast room portion of the proposed addition. They expressed concern, however, that the proposed rooftop planter would reach the floor-line of the existing second-floor open porch and hide the configuration of the original building. The Committee recommended that the planter be deleted from the design and that the addition be topped with a pitched metal roof. Mr. Pratt agreed to submit drawings that respond to these recommendations to Mr. Baron.

325 South Street: Architect Lanny Leibowitz addressed the Committee. Mr. Leibowitz's client plans to open a retail clothing shop in the ground floor of this building. The building currently has a recessed turn-of-the-century storefront with a double leaf entrance door.

Mr. Leibowitz proposed replacing the existing exterior white tile floor with brown quarry tile to match the color of the wooden floor in the show window. Dr. DeLong thought that the existing smaller white tiles were an integral part of the Victorian shop-front design and were more sympathetic to the delicate composition of the original storefront than quarry tile. Committee members agreed and suggested that if a single color in the entry area was crucial to the applicant, the flooring of the show window could be changed to match that of the exterior tile.

Mr. Leibowitz also proposed replacing the double leaf door with a single central door flanked by sidelights. Mr. Leibowitz explained to the Committee that his client thought that the existing narrow double leaf doors would make it difficult for customers to enter the store. Committee members unanimously agreed that they would like the applicant to again consider retaining the existing doors. They stated, however, that they would consider approval of a single central arched door with two fixed sidelights upon submission of shop drawings to the Committee. Dr. DeLong added that reapplying original paint colors could further improve the storefront. Mr. Baron suggested that if a single door is installed, the Committee could recommend that the original double doors be saved. The Committee agreed with this suggestion.

626 South Front Street: This proposal calls for alterations to this 18th century corner house. The house had already received a new facing of brick on the first floor by the time of designation. The applicant only seeks to make minor changes to the sign and ground floor window bays. On the later rear addition to the property, the owner seeks to fill in window openings with brick and glass block.

Mr. Baron explained that interior work began on this building without a permit. This work included installing dry wall behind the window openings. Mr. Cornell suggested that infilling the openings with a brick reveal would solve several problems. It would help solve the problem of matching the existing brick without facing Bainbridge Street with a long unarticulated wall. The Committee stated that revised drawings showing the brick reveals in the windows and door should be presented to Mr. Baron for final approval. The Committee recommended approval for the metal cellar bulkhead and signage and revised bay window.

Bartram's Garden, 54th Street & Lindbergh Boulevard: This proposal calls for alterations to the 18th century stone barn at Bartram's Garden. These alterations include interior renovations that would adapt the interior for use as a multi-purpose space. On the exterior, the architect proposes to add a covered wooden stair at one of the end walls of the building, that would reach an existing above grade door. James Dart, architect, addressed the Committee.

Mr. Tyler conducted a site visit to Bartram's Garden with Ms. Batcheler prior to the Committee meeting. He reported that there is no historic fabric being lost inside the barn. Committee members reviewed the design of the exterior stair,

found it sympathetic with the historic structure, and unanimously recommended approval for the project.

Respectfully submitted,

Ira Kauderer