

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

19 May 1982

Herbert W. Levy, A.I.A., Chairman

Present: Herbert W. Levy, A.I.A., Chairman, Architectural Advisor to the Commission.
Theodore T. Bartley, Jr., A.I.A., Preservation Committee, American Institute of Architects, Philadelphia Chapter.
Penelope H. Batcheler, Architect for Independence National Historical Park.
Janet Klein, Vice Chairman of the Commission
Russell Milnor, A.I.A., Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority
Richard Tyler, Historian
Patricia Siemiontkowski, Architectural Historian.

Also: Mike McCann, Architect, to present plans for the construction of a glass enclosure for a sidewalk cafe at 100-104 Market Street.
Tom Gavin, Architect, of H2L2, to present plans for renovations to 431 Chestnut Street.
Herman Wolfman, Developer, to discuss with the Committee changes made to the approved plan for Musical Fund Hall during construction.
Neil Schlosser, Architect and Dr. William Steinman, Owner, to present plans for the restoration of 409 Gaskill Street.

SUBMISSIONS FOR ALTERATIONS

100-104 Market Street, Mike McCann, Architect. Mr. McCann presented to the Committee a preliminary proposal for the construction of a glass enclosure for a sidewalk cafe at 100-104 Market Street, a five-story, mid-nineteenth century, commercial building.

While the Committee agreed to recommend an approval of the architect's proposal, in concept, a further study of the design detailing is required. For example, the Committee strongly urged the use of a curved glass form, rather than an angled one, which would emerge from the wall just below the frieze of the storefront cornice. In addition, the Committee recommended that the facade on the inside be restored and unified and that the framing of the new glass structure follow the rhythm of the existing granite piers. Some concern was expressed also over the treatment of the base of the glass structure as it meets the sidewalk.

Since the ordinance allowing the construction of enclosed sidewalk cafes has not yet been approved by City Council, no formal action on this proposal was taken. Should the pending legislation eventually become law, however, the Committee recommended to the architect that he restudy the design and prepare another presentation for the Committee's consideration.

- 431 Chestnut Street, Tom Gavin, Architect, H2L2. Mr. Gavin presented to the Committee for review a proposal for renovations to 431 Chestnut Street, a three-story, bank building constructed for the Pennsylvania Company for Insurance on Lives and Granting Annuities by Addison Hutton in 1871-73. In addition to interior alterations, the plans, as drawn, call for the cleaning and repairing of the existing window frames and sash, the installation of interior storm windows and the restoration of the original, front entrance.

While the Committee found the proposed alterations to be acceptable, it strongly urged the architect to check local repositories for early photographs of the original entrance doors to the building. Mr. Gavin agreed to undertake such a search and to report his findings to the Committee. In all other respects the plans met with the Committee's approval.

- 808 Locust Street, Musical Fund Hall, Herman Wolfman, Developer and Hugh Zimmers, Architect. Mr. Wolfman, Developer, appeared before the Architectural Committee to discuss a deviation from the approved plans for Musical Fund Hall.

Mr. Tyler reported to the Committee that because of plan considerations, an entrance frame and doors which do not fit the existing masonry opening, were constructed and installed. Although the height of the frame is correct, the width is not and the vertical dimensions of the doors and transom remain open to question. Now two, unequal, side panels flank the frame and doors to fill the remaining space within the masonry opening.

Mr. Wolfman explained to the Committee that, unfortunately, the decision to change the size of the doors and frame was made on site without the approval of the Historical Commission or the Redevelopment Authority. He further explained his intention to face the side panels with either wood paneling or stucco as determined by the Committee and the Commission.

Following considerable discussion of the problem and various solutions to it, the Committee agreed that the present condition is unacceptable and that it must be corrected. This will entail the removal of the existing incorrect frame and doors and the milling of new ones which will fill the existing masonry opening completely as shown on early photographs of the building and the approved plan.

Since the detailed drawing submitted by the architect was found to contain inconsistent dimensions, the Committee asked that an accurately measured drawing be prepared based on true field measurements. The Committee further provided the developer with a guide to the proportions of the panels, stiles and rails of the doors. It was agreed that correctly measured shop drawings must be prepared and submitted to the Committee for a final review.

Finally, the Committee also considered Mr. Wolfman's proposal to install two large, Victorian light fixtures at the entrance to the building. These fixtures were found to be of an acceptable design and their approval is recommended.

409 Gaskill Street, Neil Schlosser, Architect, and Dr. William Steinman, Owner. Mr. Schlosser presented to the Architectural Committee plans for the restoration of 409 Gaskill Street, a three-and-a-half story house built c. 1812.

The Committee members examined the architect's proposal and agreed to recommend its approval subject to the submission of door and shutter profiles and a section through the lattice work over the alley gate. The Commission staff will provide Mr. Schlosser with appropriate details for the house. The Committee also asked that the architect call for the addition of a rounded moulding along the top rail of the dormer window frame.

922 Spruce Street, Arquitectonica. Mr. Milnor, staff architect for the Redevelopment Authority, presented to the Committee for its consideration plans for the rehabilitation of 922 Spruce Street.

The Committee found the proposal for the front elevation, except for the entrance door, to be in conformance with recommendations made by the Committee at an earlier meeting. The entrance door should be of a Victorian design in keeping with the turn-of-the-century alterations made to the original building. Regarding the treatment of the sunken areaway, the Committee recommended eliminating the proposed stub wall, as shown on the architect's drawing, and using instead an iron grille to cover the open well below the floor of the areaway. Finally, on the rear elevation, all original openings must be retained.

A resubmission incorporating the above changes is required.

PLAQUES

1812 Delancey Street. The Committee reviewed the owner's application for a plaque for 1812 Delancey Street. It was agreed that Mr. Levy would inspect the building and report his findings.

Subsequent to the 19 May meeting, Mr. Levy reported to the Commission staff that 1812 Delancey Street was not eligible for a Commission plaque at this time. To be eligible for receipt of an Altered Plaque, the following changes are required:

1. properly remounting of the call box on the entrance door frame;
2. removal of the wire leading from the third floor to the roof; and
3. repainting of the door, door frame and shutters.

118 Queen Street. The Committee recommended that a plaque not be awarded to 118 Queen Street since the house has not yet been completely and accurately restored. For the house to be eligible for a plaque, plans for the restoration must be reviewed and approved by this office and the work carried out accordingly.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Siemiontkowski
Architectural Historian