

REPORT OF THE ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Robert Thomas, Chair

Commission Conference Room, One Parkway, 13th Fl., 1515 Arch St.
30 March 1999

Present

Robert Thomas, Chair
Penelope Batcheler
J. William Cornell
Herbert Levy
Daniel McCoubrey
Suzanne Pentz

Randal Baron, Assistant Historic Preservation Officer
Kristin Cardi, Historic Preservation Planner
R. Scott Jacob, Executive Secretary
Laura Spina, Historic Preservation Planner
Richard Tyler, Historic Preservation Officer

Also

Aliko Strakes, Preservation Alliance
William Burke, Art Commission
Elizabeth Armour, Society Hill Civic Association (SHCA)
J. Randall Cotton, Preservation Alliance
Robert Solvibile, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Licenses and Inspections
Bernice Hamel, SHCA
A. F. Phelan, Law Department
Lanny Leibowitz
Kristin Mullaney, Amburn/Jarosinski Architects
Neale Quenzel, John Milner Associates
Elizabeth Johansen, University of Pennsylvania
Wendy Bennett, Redevelopment Authority
Vicky Ziegler
S. Neil Schlosser, SRK Architects
John Cluver, Voith and Mactavish Architects
Joel Spivak
Janet Potter, Philadelphia Historic Northwest Coalition
John Imperitore, Lord and Taylor
Charles Evers, Atkin Olshin Lawson-Bell Associates, Architects
S. Scofer, Lord and Taylor
Tina LeCoff, Penn Knox Neighbors
Peter Norton
Carl Weener, Center City Residents Association (CCRA)
Lenore Millhollen, CCRA
Merlin Schreiner, Assets Engineers

William G. Schwartz, Esq.
M. Schmitt
Philip DiDonato, Hoodco, Inc.
Gerry Maguire
Judith Robinson, Partridge Tackett Architects
Michael Carosella

Mr. Thomas recognized a quorum and called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

401-417 West Johnson Street, Mayfair House

City of Philadelphia, Owner
Robert Solvibile, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Licences and Inspections, Applicant
DATE: 1925
PROPOSAL: Complete demolition

This proposal calls for the complete demolition of the Mayfair House on the grounds of financial hardship. Upon demolition, the property will go to Fairmount Park. Robert Solvibile, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Licenses and Inspections, gave a brief history of the fourteen-story landmark apartment house and explained how the building arrived at its current state of dilapidation. Over the last few decades developers have attempted to reuse the Mayfair but have failed. Mr. Solvibile stated that this building is not imminently dangerous in structural terms, but noted that falling debris and asbestos have posed health risks for neighbors and those individual illegally occupying the building. The Department of Licenses and Inspections has sealed the building and provided some maintenance.

The Architectural Committee voted unanimously to deny the proposal on architectural or structural grounds and to send the issue to the Financial Hardship Committee with the submission of the required materials.

227 Market Street (216 Church Street)

Ilan Sidenwar, Owner
Janice Woodcock, Architect/Applicant
DATE: c. 1845
PROPOSAL: Rehabilitate facades; fire escapes

This proposal involves the rehabilitation of a property that fronts both Market and Church Streets. The applicant seeks to;

1. Restore and replace in kind the windows and storefront on Church Street.
2. Retain the altered facade on Market Street and add a new storefront entrance.
3. Add fire escapes on both facades.

Mr. Baron presented the proposal, which includes the in-kind replacement of windows and shopfront details. The proposal calls for the alteration of the Market Street storefront with a second recess on the left end to match the existing recess on the right end. Committee members thought the applicant should cut the added door into the flat glazing of the storefront without creating another recessed, faux-historic alcove and retain the details of that facade. The Committee did not object to the proposed restoration work.

Mr. Baron explained that the unusual layout of this building with two fronts and connected only on the first floor requires special consideration regarding fire safety issues. The applicant must go to the Board of Building Standards regarding the fire escapes, but has come to the Historical Commission first for comment and direction. The Committee requested more detailed plans to determine why the fire escapes must go on the exteriors, as well as possible interior solutions. Committee members thought the applicant should find a way to meet the fire codes without adding these exterior fire escapes, such as sprinklers.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend:

Denial of:

1. The proposed fire escapes. The applicant should install sprinklers or another less obtrusive means of meeting fire code regulations.

Approval of:

*1. The restoration of the Church Street facade, with staff to review and approve details.
2. The Market Street alterations, with the proposed second door placed flush within the storefront, with staff to review and approve details.*

220 Market Street

Michael Singer, Owner/Applicant

Lanny Leibowitz, Architect/Applicant

DATE: c. 1840; storefront c. 1930

PROPOSAL: Facade and storefront alterations

This proposal to cure a violation involves reestablishing the location and appearance of the historic storefront. In order to allow access for furniture to this antiques store, the proposed store window will swing inward on hinges and a wheel. The architect for the proposal stated that he will have a mill work shop replicate the historic details.

The area above the facade's storefront will receive a new storefront cornice and windows. The area between the storefront and the second-floor windows is currently stuccoed. The cornice will match the one on a neighboring building with a sign band underneath. Mr. Baron suggested the Committee recommend approval of a sign band within the cornice. Ms. Batcheler and Mr. Thomas expressed concern over replicating the neighboring cornice, owing to the uncertainty that these buildings were built together. Committee members discussed the possibility that the brickwork under the stucco may have sustained too much damage to re-expose it, and thought staff should review a sample. The applicant proposes installing six-over-six windows on the second floor, and removing the non-historic shutters. He also confirmed plans to remove the roll-down grate.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval, with the sign band incorporated into the storefront cornice, and staff to review a sample of the brick above the storefront.

266-270 South 2nd Street, Abercrombie House

John and Karen Sirlin, Owners

David Amburn, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1759

PROPOSAL: Addition

This proposal includes:

1. A new fence around the north end of the yard.
2. A new screen fence around the HVAC on the roof of the new garage.
3. The reconstruction of the balustrade on the roof with a roof deck and safety fence.

Ms. Batcheler expressed concern that the color and materials of the proposed fence will not match the woodwork of the cream colored trim of the house and the new alleyway gate, and that painting it a light color will draw too much attention to it. She preferred painting the fence and the ally gate a darker color such as rust red.

The owner also seeks to establish a deck on the roof with a code compliant safety fence. He proposes to position this fence behind the balustrade to minimize visibility. The Committee strongly objected to the safety fence, which will be visible in any position. The Committee thought this house too significant for this alteration and noted that it already has a great deal of outdoor space. The Committee did not object to the balustrade, and suggested constructing it in fiberglass for easier maintenance and to minimize the superstructure required to support it.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend:

Approval of:

- 1. A new fence around the north end of the yard, painted a dark color, with staff to review and approve details.*
- 2. A new screen fence around the HVAC on the roof of the new garage.*
- 3. The balustrade reconstruction, with staff to review and approve details.*

Denial of:

- 1. The proposed roof deck and safety fence.*

253 South Quince Street

Alexander Zausner, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1830

PROPOSAL: Demolish rear cinder block wall

This proposal calls for the demolition of a cinder block wall at the rear of the property. The wall faces the 200 block of South Jessup Street, on which several houses front. The applicant has

not submitted plans to replace the wall, and has implied the possibility of leaving the yard open. Committee members did not object to the demolition of the wall, but wanted to see it replaced, with staff to review and approve details.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the proposal, conditioned upon the replacement of the wall, with staff to review and approve details.

1115-1131 Market Street, Reading Terminal Headhouse

Redevelopment Authority, Owner

Wendy Bennett, Applicant

DATE: 1895

PROPOSAL: Entrance canopies; signage; flags

This proposal involves the installation of a new bowed metal marquee on the front of the headhouse to signify the entrance to the Convention Center. The signage for the marquee includes two rows of bracketed individual letters in two sizes. The top row will consist of 2'9" high, white, internally illuminated letters. The bottom row consists of 10" high pale blue letters attached to the pewter colored sign board.

The proposal also seeks preliminary approval of first-floor awnings for the other tenants of the headhouse. The canopies match the existing ones for the Hard Rock Café at the southwest corner of the headhouse in design only. The future tenants will come before the Commission individually for signage and colors for the awnings. Committee members thought all the awnings should have complementary colors, if not the same. The proposal also includes the installation of five flagpoles across the loggia section of the facade. The Committee did not object to the flags or the method of their installation.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the proposal.

Mr. Baron asked the applicant about the removal of the old neon "Reading Terminal Market" sign at the southwest corner. Neale Quenzel, architect for the proposal, stated that the sign was removed by the Marriott Hotel, per its policy of no neon signage. He also thought the sign postdated the building's period of significance. Mr. Baron stated that the sign did represent a very significant aspect of the building's history. The Reading Terminal Market descends from the old Market Street "market," and serves as a reminder of the origin of Market Street's name. Mr. Baron also recollected asking a previous applicant for a Marriott Hotel proposal to retain the sign. He said he will look through the old building permit applications to verify this.

City Hall

City of Philadelphia, Owner

Robert Thomas, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1870 - 1901

PROPOSAL: Railings

Mr. Thomas recused himself from the discussion and the vote owing to his association with the proposal.

This proposal involves a new baluster railing design for the handicap access rails already approved for City Hall. Mr. Thomas explained that the previously approved railing is no longer available, and showed the Committee an illustration of a comparable design.

The five remaining Committee members voted to recommend approval.

1815-1837 North Broad Street, College Hall, Temple University

Temple University, Owner

Neil Schlosser, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1893

PROPOSAL: Entrance pavilion

This proposal calls for building an entrance pavilion on the rear of the south side former party wall. The applicant explained that the new addition will serve as the entrance for the building's new use. The University has developed a new campus "plaza" along Park Mall, and this new entrance will provide access to the building from that location.

The addition will be faced with limestone on the first level and brick on the second, with a slate roof. Mr. Baron wanted to ensure that the brick and stone used in the addition complement the historic building. Ms. Batcheler and Mr. Baron suggested reconfiguring the design of the stonework to correlate with the existing stone base. The other Committee members disagreed, and preferred the submitted design because it reads as an addition.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the proposal as submitted.

3142 Market Street, Centennial National Bank

Drexel University, Owner

John Cluver, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1876

PROPOSAL: Restore bank; addition

Ms. Pentz recused herself from the discussion and the vote owing to her engineering firm's association with the project.

This proposal calls for restoring the Frank Furness designed bank and adding a new wing containing the handicap accessible main entrance.

The new wing will sit at the rear of the old bank building and will complement the historic structure in material and scale. Committee members thought the design appeared appropriate in that it does not mimic the historic portion and is clearly a modern addition. Mr. Levy thought the grey brick base of the addition should continue up to the bases of the windows, as the grey stone

base does in the existing section. Committee members also recommended that the applicant finish the mullions of the new "storefront" entrance of the building in a reddish color to complement the brickwork. The architect agreed to comply with the architectural Committee's recommendations.

The restoration work proposed for the historic portion includes:

1. Replacing the roofing with a faux slate shingle or Slate-line type asphalt.
2. Reconstructing the window grates from old drawings and photographs.
3. Re-establishing the transom, doors and front steps.
4. Restoring the clock.
5. Removing the deteriorated brownstone sign inset from the front of the tower and replacing it with a new cast stone sign that bears the name of the new use of the building, "Peck Alumni Hall."
6. Additional signage incised onto the fronts of the steps leading to the old entrance.

Old drawings and photographs were consulted to aid the architect with all of the restoration work. The Committee did not object to the proposed restoration work, and expressed appreciation to the applicant for such a commendable treatment of this important and long neglected building. Committee members did express reservations over the signage aspects of the proposal, and asked the applicant to consider mitigating the impact of the incised lettering on the front steps. The Committee also asked for the retention of the original sign band, with a new cast stone sign carefully installed over it. Committee members and staff discussed possible means of installing the new sign, and cited other examples where this procedure has been executed. The architect said he would examine possible means of installing the new sign in the joints of the retained historic sign.

The five remaining Committee members voted to approve:

- 1. The addition, with the grey brick base of the addition continuing up to the bases of the windows and finishing the mullions of the new "storefront" entrance of the building in a reddish color to complement the brickwork, with staff to review and approve details.*
- 2. Replacing the roofing with a faux slate shingle or slate line type asphalt.*
- 3. Reconstructing the window grates from old drawings and photographs.*
- 4. Re-establishing the transom, doors and front steps with incised lettering.*
- 5. Restoring the clock.*
- 6. The retention of the original sign band, with a new cast stone sign carefully installed over it, with staff to review and approve details.*

3214 Powelton Avenue

3214 Powelton Avenue Associates, Owner

Tim Jaskolski, Applicant

DATE: 1882

PROPOSAL: Rebuild porch railing

This proposal seeks to cure a violation involving the rebuilding of a center rail on the porch between two designated houses. The applicant will have the missing newel post re-milled on a lathe and will reconstruct the rail with a baluster pattern based on a mix of designs in the row. The Committee suggested the applicant also rebuild the stair portion of the railing.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval, with staff to review and approve details.

309 South Street

Nicole Loughran, Owner

Joel Spivak, Architect/Applicant

DATE: c. 1850; Storefront - c. 1930

PROPOSAL: Roll-down grate; signage

This proposal calls for the installation of a roll down grate in place of the existing scissors gate. The applicant also proposes a sign installed on the face of the gate housing. The gate house would cover the historic glass transom. The Committee opposed the proposal and suggested installing an internal gate behind the line of the front door that can protect the internal contents of the store while the scissors gate protects the windows. The Committee also thought the sign should project rather than conceal the decorative cornice.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend denial of the proposal.

118 North Broad Street, PAFA, sw corner at Race Street

Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, Owner

Charles Evers, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1876

PROPOSAL: Wheelchair lift

The architect proposes to meet A.D.A. by installing a lift in the stairwell to the side of the main door. An internal elevator connects the basement to the other floors. To achieve this, the applicant proposes to remove the top two rows of bricks within the stairwell, and trim back the stone cap surrounding the well at street level. The Committee thought these alterations minimally visible and did not object. The proposal also calls for the placement of new stone treads on top of the stairs and a metal grate at the floor of the well.

The applicant asked the Committee about removing the historic gate to the stairwell and having it reproduced in a more appropriate size. This issue was not dealt with by the Committee. The Committee also rejected the applicant's suggestion of installing a canopy over the stairwell.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the, with staff to review and approve details.

315 South American Street

Eric Tucker, Owner/Applicant

DATE: 1846

PROPOSAL: Star bolts

This proposal calls for the installation of star bolts to secure the front facade. The applicant submitted a structural engineer's report detailing the necessity of this procedure.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval.

1300 Market Street, Wanamaker Building

Lord and Taylor, Tenant

John Imperatore, Applicant

DATE: 1902-1910

PROPOSAL: Black-out doors; signage

This proposal calls for closing two of the three store entrances on Chestnut Street and blacking out those glass doors. Directional signage at each location will inform patrons that these are no longer entrances. The Committee objected to blacking out the doors, both interior and exterior, and thought the combination of directional signage and removing the hardware would serve to alert customers not to use these locations to enter the store. Ms. Batcheler asked the applicant to save the hardware in case they want to reopen the doors at a later date.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend denial of blacking out the windows, and to approve directional signage and removal of the hardware.

Germantown Avenue, Broad Street to Hunting Park Avenue

Charles Denny, Streets Department, Applicant

DATE: c. early 19th century

PROPOSAL: Reconstruct roadway in asphalt

Kristin Cardi, staff member of the Commission, began by explaining the project as proposed by the Streets Department. The portion of Germantown Avenue slated for reconstruction extends from Broad Street to Hunting Park Avenue and currently consists of granite block between the trolley tracks and asphalt from the tracks to the curb. The street appears on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places as part of the recently designated Historic Street Paving Thematic District. In addition, Ms. Cardi explained that the Streets Department's alternative to the complete reconstruction in asphalt consists of reconstructing the shoulders of the roadway in granite block and the area between the trolley tracks in concrete similar to the northern portions of Germantown Avenue that have been previously reconstructed. Both proposals call for the replacement of the trolley rails. According to Ms. Cardi, the Streets Department believes that granite block exists under the asphalt currently extending to the curb.

Two engineers from the Streets Department, Robert Wright and Charles Denny, explained that their alternative to full-width reconstruction in asphalt does not include granite block between the tracks owing to the replacement of the rails. The rail size commercially available today measures only seven inches in depth, not the nine inches that was originally used and is necessary to anchor the granite block in place. This change in rail size necessitates the use of an alternative material (e.g. concrete or asphalt) between the tracks. Mr. Tyler suggested considering asphalt as a replacement material between the rails rather than concrete since it is a more flexible material and is more resistant to cracking.

Several concerned area residents including Janet Potter of the Philadelphia Historic Northwest Coalition, Tina LeCoff of the Penn Knox Neighborhood Association and Joel Spivak attended the meeting. Ms. Potter and Ms. LeCoff testified as to the importance of this portion of Germantown Avenue. They strongly urged the submission of additional information prior to making a decision regarding the paving for this street. Ms. Potter disagrees that granite block cannot be used in between the rails and was supported by Mr. Spivak who made suggestions relating to an alternative rail tie that may make using the seven inch rails with the granite block possible.

Mr. Thomas agreed that further information needs to be collected and examined prior to making a final decision and suggested that the Streets Department explore five options.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend that the Streets Department explore the following five options and supply the Committee with a cost estimate that also includes future maintenance of the paving material.

1. *Reconstructing the street in granite block from curb to curb.*
2. *Granite block between the tracks, asphalt to the curb.*
3. *Asphalt or concrete between the tracks; granite block from tracks to curb.*
4. *"Town square enhancement" – examining the intersection of Germantown Avenue, Broad Street and Erie Avenue more closely.*
5. *Asphalt from curb to curb.*

225 South 18th Street, Rittenhouse Regency

Rittenhouse Regency Affiliates, Owner

William Schwartz, Esq, Applicant

DATE: 1929

PROPOSAL: Awnings

This proposal involves installing new awnings with a six foot projection to cover an outdoor eating area on the Potcheen Restaurant on Locust Street. The proposal originally called for a nine foot projecting awning, but zoning required a three foot reduction.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval.

The applicant informed the Committee that the owner no longer intends to execute the connecting piece at the southwest corner between the two marquees that the Commission previously approved. The Committee did not object to the elimination of the connecting portion.

1530 Locust Street, The Versailles, se corner at 16th Street

Versailles Affiliates, Owner

William Schwartz, Esq., Applicant

DATE: 1920

PROPOSAL: New aluminum windows

This proposal involves replacing all of the windows in the building with aluminum. The applicant proposes a reasonable, though not exact match on the brick mold panning. The applicant also proposes half screens. The Committee thought the proposed windows sufficiently replicate the originals.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval.

2300 Spruce Street, a.k.a. 300 South 23rd Street

T. L. Wolfson, Inc., Owner

Philip DiDonato, Hoodco Inc., Applicant

DATE: c. 1845

PROPOSAL: Visible ductwork

This proposal involves installing a new duct and fan for a grill in the visible rear court of this corner property. Committee members discussed other possible locations for the duct, including next to the existing chimney and nestled in the corner of the party wall. The fan must rise at least forty inches above the roof line, so either of these locations place it over the roof deck of the neighboring building. Committee members did not want to have the neighbors property infringed upon in this way, so considered other possible locations. The applicant did not want to install the vent inside the building as the apartments are quite small. He offered to install it on the roof of the one story rear portion of the building next to a rear deck for the subject property. It will sit recessed back from the street. Committee members did not object to this location.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend denial of the proposal as submitted, and approval of installing it on the roof of the one story rear portion of the building next to a rear deck for the subject property, recessed back from the street, subject to the submission of drawings reflecting this change and staff to review and approve details.

1701 Locust Street, Warwick Hotel, ne corner at 17th Street

Warwick Hotel, Owner

Judith Robinson, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1925

PROPOSAL: Front doors; canopy lights

This proposal calls for the installation of new multipane doors and lighting at the already altered front entrance to this hotel. Committee members did not object to the proposal.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval.

421 South 16th Street

Michael Maguire, Owner/Contractor/Applicant

DATE: c. 1850

PROPOSAL: Rebuild facade

This proposal involves rebuilding the front and visible rear facades of this rowhouse. The front and rear side wall have been declared Imminently Dangerous and Mr. Maguire took down the front wall with a permit. The applicant proposes to rebuild the front wall, changing the opening sizes, using vinyl windows and a simplified door and frame. On the rear he seeks to change the shape of the rear ell to a full width structure, and use the backyard for parking. The rear ell currently forms half of a gable end shared with the neighboring building. The owner took detailed measurements of the facade prior to demolition.

Committee members thought the applicant should use true divided light, wood windows with cast stone lintels in the same dimensions as the historic windows. The neighboring buildings can serve as models for the window details. The applicant stated that interior design issues have necessitated the shortening of the first-floor front windows. Ms. Batcheler described ways of concealing interior details within the appropriate sized windows. Mr. Levy did not agree with the other Committee members, and thought the owner may make the required alterations to this new facade.

The Committee voted to recommend approval of the proposal, with true divided light, wood windows, cast stone lintels, and in the same dimensions as the historic, with staff to review and approve details.

1829 (1827-1831) Pine Street

Michael Carosella, Owner/Contractor/Applicant

DATE: c. 1850; altered - c. 1950; rehabilitated - 1998-99

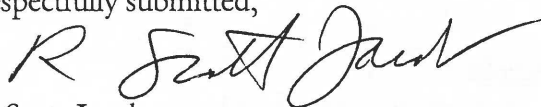
PROPOSAL: Re-clad rear bay; half screens

The owner would like to install half screens on the bottom half of the windows and re-clad the rear bay in vinyl shingles. The Committee did not object to the half screens, but asked the applicant to paint the frames to match the window trim. The applicant said he did not know the original cladding material for the rear bay, but evidence shows remnants of asphalt shingles. Committee members did not recommend approval of the proposed vinyl shingles and thought the applicant could paint the wooden face of the bay after removing the surface material and replacing damaged sections. The Committee asked the applicant to use a dark color and to incorporate corner boards.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of:

- 1. The half screens*
- 2. Painting the wooden face of the rear bay using a dark color after removing the surface material, replacing damaged sections and incorporating corner boards, with staff to review and approve details.*

Respectfully submitted,



R. Scott Jacob
Executive Secretary