

REPORT OF THE ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Robert Thomas, Chair
Commission Conference Room Suite 1301, 1401 Arch Street
26 May 1998

Present

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

Richard Tyler, Historic Preservation Officer
Randal Baron, Assistant Historic Preservation Officer
R. Scott Jacob, Executive Secretary

Also

J. David Grace, Pennsylvania Hospital
C. Anthony Junker, Ueland, Junker and McCauley Architects
Mary Anne Hunter, Fair Hill Burial Ground Committee
Craig Klofach, Ueland, Junker and McCauley Architects
Jonathan Weiss
Linda Hwang
Robert Sieger
Arthur J. Eyre, Episcopal Community Services
Lawrence Gilbert
Lenore Millhollen, Center City Residents Association
Terry Graboyes, Graboyes Commercial Window Company
Matthew W. White, Tenth Presbyterian Church
Marvin J. Gerstein, Temple University
George Schmidheiser, Temple University
Janet Stegman, Stegman and Associates
Steven Mione
Carl K. Zucker, Esq.
Walter J. Suber
Martin Dorph, Temple University
Bennur Koksuz, City Planning Commission
Patricia Wilson Aden, Preservation Alliance
Kristl Wiernicki, Temple University
George Yu, George Yu Architects
Patricia Clifford, Temple University
Michael Fink, International Consultants, Inc.
Joanne Phillips, Ballard, Spahr, Andrews and Ingersoll Attorneys
Patrick O'Bannon, Kise, Straw and Kolodner Architects
Thomas Anderson, Temple University
Dan Peter Kopple, D. P. Kopple and Associates
George Ingram, Temple University
Joseph James, Department of Public Property
Jack Noonan
Michael Carosella
William Kramer, City Planning Commission

Mr. Levy, Vice Chair, recognized a quorum and called the meeting to order at 1:45 p.m.

800 Spruce Street, Pennsylvania Hospital

Pennsylvania Hospital, Owner

J. David Grace, Applicant

DATE: c. 1870 - Gate house

PROPOSAL: Door in 8th Street gate house

This proposal entails replacing an existing panelled door on the east gate house of the hospital with a glazed door to match other doors on that building. The hospital plans to use the gate house as a valet office. J. David Grace, the applicant, explained that a sheet of plywood currently covers a glass panel in the top half of the door. The hospital does not want to restore this door because the new use of the gate house requires a dutch door. Committee members inquired about the placement and thickness of the shelf on the bottom leaf of the dutch door. Mr. Grace explained that the narrow shelf will jut outward to provide a surface for patrons using the valet service to drop off car keys. Mr. Thomas noted that the new use warrants the proposal.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval.

1320-1322 Arch Street

Peter Antenucci, Owner

L. Dietrich Adonis, Applicant

DATE: 1904

PROPOSAL: Mural

The applicant requests permission to paint a mural on the party wall of the former Elks Lodge. The wall faces a parking lot. L. Dietrich Adonis, the applicant, explained that the theme of the mural will honor the Horticultural Society. Committee members requested that Mr. Adonis limit the mural to the stuccoed portion of the wall in order to retain the "ghost" of the former neighboring building that exists above the stucco line. Committee members explained that the term "ghost" refers to the raised brick markings left on party walls after demolition of the neighboring buildings. Mr. Adonis asked whether he could redesign the mural to incorporate the "ghost" and other elements of the demolished building. Mr. Adonis stated that he will notify the Commission if he decides to change the mural design.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of a mural in the stuccoed portion of the wall.

2901 Germantown Avenue, Fair Hill Cemetery

Fair Hill Burial Ground Corporation, Owner

Craig Klofach, Architect/Applicant

DATE: c. 1875 - Fence

PROPOSAL: Fence renovation

This proposal involves rehabilitating portions of the fence around this historic cemetery. Because the management cannot afford to remake the stolen historic portions, they propose to consolidate the surviving historic sections on three sides, and build a new, simplified but sympathetic fence on the fourth side of the block.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval.

1423 Diamond Street

Jonathan Weiss, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1885

PROPOSAL: Windows in turret

The applicant wishes to install flat windows in the corner turret rather than exceed his budget to purchase curved windows. Although the turret windows do not currently exist, the designation photo shows flat windows. Jonathan Weiss, the owner, explained that he has applied for tax credits to help him fund the total restoration of this house. Mr. Tyler pointed out that the State Bureau for Historic Preservation and the National Park Service must approve this proposal before he can receive the tax credits. Mr. Weiss stated that he would install curved windows if receipt of tax credits requires it.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval.

225 South 3rd Street, Old St. Paul's Church

Episcopal Community Services, Owner

J. William Cornell, Contractor/Applicant

DATE: 1746

PROPOSAL: Handicap accessible door

J. William Cornell recused himself from the discussion and vote to present this application.

This proposal calls for converting a pair of double doors on the side of the church to a single door to provide handicap accessibility. A wall partially hides this entrance from the street. Mr. Cornell stated that the existing doors date from 1987. Ms. Batcheler suggested installing the door to one side to allow for a larger sidelight. Mr. Levy recommended placing raised moldings to create panels. Mr. Cornell rejected Ms. Batcheler's suggestion owing to concerns that an off-center door would not complement the door's other design details. The Committee agreed to recommend approval of the proposed door configuration.

The remaining Committee members voted unanimously to recommend approval of the single door, centered, with raised trim panels.

161 North 3rd Street

Linda Hwang, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1840

PROPOSAL: Painted wall sign and rail

The applicant seeks approval to paint a sign on the side facade and to install a railing on a handicap ramp. The Applicant stated that the proposed concrete ramp will measure six feet in length. Committee members asked the applicant to install a simple pipe-style or square section rail without inner balusters.

Linda Hwang, the owner, stated that the proposal also entails hanging a sign over the storefront. Ms. Batcheler recommended creating a new board sign to replace the existing sign at the first-floor cornice, and eliminating the proposed hanging sign. Ms. Hwang agreed to comply. Committee members did not object to the proposed sign on the building's side.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the sign board on the side of the building, the ramp with a simple pipe-style or rectangular rail without inner balusters, and a board sign to replace the existing sign at the first-floor cornice, with staff to review and approve details.

858 South Front Street

Albert and Judy Plasket, Owners

Lawrence Gilbert, Architect/Applicant

DATE: c. 1850

PROPOSAL: Rear dormer

The Committee and Commission reviewed an earlier proposal for this property, which was denied. The applicant has returned with a new proposal that reflects the Commission's recommendations. This proposal entails installing a dormer in the rear roof to provide access to a previously approved rear deck.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval.

220 West Rittenhouse Square Street

220 West Rittenhouse Square Association, Owner

Terry Graboyes and Suzanne Myers, Applicants

DATE: 1958

PROPOSAL: New aluminum windows throughout building

This proposal involves replacing all of the remaining original windows in this eighteen-story building. Terry Graboyes, the applicant, explained that a previous renovation replaced about one third of the windows with aluminum with much wider sight lines. She designed the proposed windows to resemble the existing, original windows in color and basic design, but the sight lines fall in between the originals and the older

replacements. Committee members recommended Ms. Graboyes confer with Commission staff regarding the final design, but did not object to the proposal. Mr. Levy suggested stipulating that all future window replacements on this building match the pattern of this proposal.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval, with staff to review and approve details, and a stipulation that all future window replacements on this building match this proposal pattern.

1700-1708 Spruce Street, Tenth Street Presbyterian Church

Tenth Presbyterian Church, Owner

Matthew White, Applicant

DATE: 1859

PROPOSAL: Rooftop HVAC and vents

This proposal calls for the installation of HVAC units and ducts on the roof of the church and ancillary buildings. Committee members did not object to the proposal, but requested that staff approve the color of the units and vents.

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

315 South 16th Street

Stephen Mione, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1840

PROPOSAL: Door replacement

The applicant would like to replace his front door. The existing and probably original door has two lower panels and an upper pane of glass covered with an ironwork grill dating from a late nineteenth century alteration. Committee members agreed that a four panelled door would better suit this building. The applicant explained that a six raised-panelled door would cost much less money. The Committee recommended approval of this type owing to lack of definitive documentation.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of a new door with six raised panels, with staff to approve details.

220 West Rittenhouse Square Street

220 West Rittenhouse Square Association, Owner

Edward Arendt, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1958

PROPOSAL: Cut louver into wall

This proposal involves cutting a vent in the secondary west facade. This will allow the library to have its own HVAC system, as requested by the building's condominium association.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval.

Temple University

1820-1830 Park Mall

1938-1948 Park Mall, Park Avenue M. E. Church/Thomas Hall

Temple University, Owner

George Schmidheiser, Applicant

DATE: 1872 - Rowhouses; 1886 - Thomas Hall

PROPOSAL: Demolition of seven buildings

Suzanne Pentz recused herself from the discussion and vote owing to her professional association with this proposal.

Martin Dorph, Vice President and Chief Financial Officer of Temple University, addressed the Committee concerning Temple's intention to demolish seven historically designated buildings on the main campus. He also announced that the University has withdrawn its proposal to demolish in whole or in part the Baptist Temple and to study reuses in cooperation with architectural and preservation organizations. The executive summary of the program as submitted by the University details the proposal as follows:

Temple University is currently involved in a major effort to revitalize the university's main North Philadelphia campus in response to a well-documented need to provide a more active and vibrant campus environment. Several projects completed in recent years have contributed to the revitalization efforts, including the Apollo of Temple and the rehabilitation of historic Shusterman Hall, Rock Hall, and College Hall. Two projects associated with the revitalization efforts constitute this submission.

Temple University is applying for a demolition permit for six rowhouses in the 1800 block of Park Mall, part of the City-certified Park Avenue Historic District. The demolition of these houses will permit creation of a quadrangle space providing access to the main entries of Wachman, Conwell, Carnell, and College Halls. The quadrangle will provide much needed open space on the campus and will separate pedestrian and vehicular traffic along Watts Street. As part of this project the remaining twenty-five rowhouses in the 1800 and 1900 blocks of Park Mall will be rehabilitated and reused as student-oriented retail establishments, offices, and apartments.

The second project included in this submission is a new student residence hall, to be located at the southeast corner of Broad Street and Norris Street. This project entails the demolition of Thomas Hall, a late-nineteenth century church building located within the Park Avenue Historic District. The university conducted a study of six possible locations for this project and determined that the Broad and Norris Street site best met the university's program requirements. Following completion of the location studies the university developed four design alternatives. The three alternatives that preserve all or part of Thomas

Hall, either by restricting the residence hall to a smaller site or incorporating Thomas Hall into the residence hall design, fail to meet the university's program requirements for a mid-rise building containing 500 beds. Additionally, the cost of each of these alternatives exceeds Temple's budget by a minimum of \$10,000 per bed. Program requirements and economic considerations led to selection of an alternative that necessitates demolition of Thomas Hall.

Mr. Levy expressed concern that the Thomas Hall location will remain vacant after its demolition. Mr. Dorph stated that the University intends to have the new residence hall completed by September of 1999. Mr. Dorph also stated that Temple will not receive Federal or state funding for this project, and that the University will raise the funds through the sale of bonds. Mr. Tyler asked that the University re-figure the various economic considerations to incorporate the cost of demolishing Thomas Hall. He also asked that Temple provide the numbers supporting the totals for each alternative. Mr. Dorph stated that the \$500,000. required to raze Thomas Hall would not sufficiently lower the cost of the alternatives that include its retention to make them feasible.

Carl Zucker, Temple's legal council, cited passages from the Philadelphia Historical Commission's Rules and Regulations and the City Ordinance to argue that the demolition of these buildings falls under the category for the public interest. Representatives of the University commented on the necessity to make Temple more desirable to students and prospective students on the basis of economic, social, safety and enrollment considerations. Mr. Zucker stated that the University does not intend to claim economic hardship, although financial limitations do play a major role in the decision to demolish Thomas Hall instead of incorporating it into the new residence hall.

Mr. Baron asked if the University had given any thought to using the rowhouses of Park Mall, perhaps with rear additions, for student housing. He noted that many Temple students reside in rowhouses off campus. Mr. Dorph explained that a developer has proposed that the University use the upper levels of the remaining rowhouses for housing. Mr. Dorph stated that these would necessarily cost more than the dormitory housing.

Patricia Aden of the Preservation Alliance expressed concern over what the University defines as "public interest," and asked the Committee to consider seriously that issue before recommending approval of the demolition. She also wanted Temple to address the future of the Baptist Temple. Mr. Dorph explained that Temple has met with the Mayor and City Council President, and that the University has committed to studying possible reuse of the Temple with the preservation community and the American Institute of Architects in exchange for their support of the present project. If they cannot find a new use for the Temple, the University will return with a demolition request.

Committee members asked to see plans and elevations of the proposed new residence hall Temple plans to build should the Commission approve the demolition of Thomas Hall. George Yu, architect of the project, explained that he did not have them available at that time. Committee members and representatives of Temple University decided to schedule a special meeting to discuss the proposed new construction on 4 June 1998.

Mr. Atkin made a motion to approve the demolition proposal in the public interest, conditioned upon HABS photographic recordation, the Chief Financial Officer of Temple University's certification that Temple has the funds to build the new structure, and the issuance of a building permit for the new construction. Mr. Levy seconded the motion which carried with four votes. Mr. McCoubrey dissented. Ms. Pentz recused herself.

140 South Broad Street, Union League, rear building

Union League, Owner

Dan Peter Kopple, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1910 - Rear addition

PROPOSAL: Cut down window into door

This proposal entails converting a large ground-floor window into a door to provide a necessary second means of egress. The new door follows the panel pattern of a door further east on this facade. Mr. Atkin recommended lowering the top rail of the side panels to line up with the top rail of the door panels.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval.

1829 Pine Street

Michael Carosella, Owner/Contractor/Applicant

DATE: c. 1850

PROPOSAL: Brick veneer on first floor facade

The applicant requests permission to reinforce the first floor facade with a four inch thick brick veneer. Michael Carosella, the applicant, explained that removing such a large amount of damaged facing material on the first floor to restore the facade may cause structural weakness and jeopardize the rest of the newly restored facade. He also stated that the specially made bricks will match the rest of the facade. Mr. Atkin recommended lowering the top of the veneer as much as possible. Mr. Carosella stated that he will build the wall as low as possible.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval.

Respectfully submitted,



R. Scott Jacob