

~~MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE~~

OF THE

PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

8 January 1987

David Hollenberg, Chairman

- Present: David Hollenberg, Chairman
Theodore T. Bartley, Jr., F.A.I.A., Preservation Committee
American Institute of Architects, Philadelphia Chapter
Penelope H. Batcheler, Historical Architect, Independence
National Historical Park
David DeLong, University of Pennsylvania, Preservation Program
John Dickey, F.A.I.A.
Herbert W. Levy, A.I.A.
Mark MacQueen, Esq., Assistant City Solicitor, Law Department
Patricia Siemiontkowski, Assistant Historic Preservation
Officer
Randal Baron, Preservation Planner
Terri Koob, Executive Secretary
Maureen Heaney, Clerk Stenographer I
- Also: Kathleen McKenna, Executive Director, Art Commission
James Tayoun, Applicant, to present a proposal to build
a one story glass enclosure onto the public way and attached
to the front facade of 126 Chestnut Street
C. William Fox of C. William Fox Associates and Sharon Pendelton
Developer, to present a preliminary proposal for substantial
rehabilitation of 1923-1925 Brandywine Street
Neil Schlosser of Schlosser/Rivera/Krumholz, to present a
renovation proposal for 3432-3436 Sansom Street
Elliot Rothschild and Mike Hauptman of the Rothschild Company,
to present plans for the stabilization of the Governor's
Residence and Surgeon General's house; the proposed treatment
of the gatehouse and fence; the proposed site plan and
landscaping design; and plans for new construction on the
site
Mike Scholnick of Growth Properties and Albert Taxis, applicant
and owner of 149 S. Hancock Street, to present a request for
permission to demolish the building located at 149 S. Hancock
Street
Alan Hurt, Developer, to present a proposal for the renovations
to 503 Woodland Terrace
Mary Lou McFarland, Executive Director, Preservation
Coalition of Greater Philadelphia
Lenore Millhollen of the Preservation Coalition of Greater
Philadelphia and Center City Residents Association
Patrick Starr, Foundation for Architecture
And others.

126 Chestnut Street, James Tayoun, Applicant. Ms. Siemiontkowski reported that on 18 December 1986 Councilman Beloff introduced a bill into City Council which proposes to allow Mr. Tayoun to build an enclosed one-story glass sidewalk cafe on the public way in front of the Middle East Restaurant at 126 Chestnut Street. Ms. Siemiontkowski continued that at a City Council hearing on 7 January 1987, representatives of the Art Commission and Historical Commission requested that a decision on this proposed ordinance be postponed pending review of the Art Commission and the Historical Commission. This deferral was granted.

Mr. Tayoun appeared before the Architectural Committee to seek approval of a proposal which calls for the removal of brick infill between the piers on the front facade of 126 Chestnut Street and the construction of a glass enclosed greenhouse-type structure on the sidewalk. A masonry base has already been constructed without the benefit of a permit from the Department of Licenses and Inspections. Work on this project has been stopped.

After considerable discussion, the Committee agreed to recommend that the Commission not approve this project. The Committee stated that this type of alteration would set a bad precedent and noted that a similar proposal was recently rejected by the Historical Commission. According to the Committee, the proposed alteration would compromise the architectural integrity of the building and the streetscape. Moreover, the construction of an addition attached to a major facade of an historic building does not conform with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings. The Committee further stated that even if it accepted the concept of an addition to the facade, the drawings submitted contained insufficient information for evaluation. Mr. Tayoun was advised that should he disagree with the recommendation of this Committee, he may present his case to the Commission at its meeting of 28 January 1987.

1923-1925 Brandywine Street, C. William Fox of C. William Fox Associates and Sharon Pendelton, Developer. Mr. Fox and Ms. Pendelton appeared before the Architectural Committee to present a preliminary submission calling for the removal of the front facades and the construction of a rear addition to 1923-1925 Brandywine Street, two-story brick carriage houses built c. 1865. The plans call for the replacement of the carriage house facades with new front walls residential in character. Ms. Siemiontkowski stated that an evaluation of the existing structural condition of these facades was conducted by Keast and Hood. Although settlement has resulted in distortions to the fronts of these two buildings, Mr. Leidigh noted in his letter of 29 December 1986 that these settlements stabilized many years ago leaving the walls in a state of equilibrium.

The Committee agreed to recommend an approval for the construction of the rear addition. However, the Committee strongly recommended that the existing front facades be retained and repaired. The Committee asked the architect to reevaluate his proposed facade design keeping the front walls and masonry openings as they exist. Mr. Fox agreed to undertake this study and to meet with the staff and a committee member for advice.

The Committee agreed to recommend an approval of this project subject to the receipt and approval of an acceptable treatment for the carriage house facades.

The Committee further noted that should this proposal remain unchanged it would be treated as a demolition request. As such, the new historic preservation ordinance would require the submission of economic data to substantiate the necessity for demolition.

3432-3436 Sansom Street, Neil Schlosser of Schlosser/Rivera/Krumholz. Mr. Schlosser presented a proposal calling for renovations above ground floor level to the front, side and rear elevations to 3432-3434-3436 Sansom Street. These renovations include the repair of the wood cornice and slate mansard and the reconstruction of the dormer windows. Mr. Schlosser stated that a permit was issued for work on the roof. An existing canopy on the building facade was removed to permit erection of a standing scaffold to allow this roof work to be performed. The canopy will be reinstalled upon completion.

Although not mandatory, the Committee strongly recommended the rehabilitation of the ground floor which would greatly enhance the quality of this project.

The Committee agreed to recommend approval of this proposal for 3432-3436 Sansom Street as presented. However, a submission of color selections was requested prior to completion of this phase of the project.

U.S. Naval Home, Elliot Rothschild and Mike Hauptman of the Rothschild Company. In August of 1985 the Architectural Committee reviewed plans for the rehabilitation and conversion of Biddle Hall into 62 apartment units and for the landscaping of the grounds immediately surrounding the structure. At that time, the Architectural Committee agreed to recommend an approval of the proposal to rehabilitate Biddle Hall and its immediate surrounding grounds subject to the submission of specifications for this project.

Messrs. Rothschild and Hauptman appeared before the committee today to propose the following:

- 1) plans for the stabilization of the Governor's Residence and Surgeon General's house;
- 2) the proposed treatment of the gatehouse and fence;
- 3) the proposed site plan and landscaping design;
- 4) plans for new construction on the site including elevation drawings, details and building material specifications.

Included in today's submission is the proposal to demolish Laning Hall. Laning Hall, built in 1868, is one of Philadelphia's last remaining works of John MacArthur, Jr., the architect for City Hall. An application to demolish Laning Hall and other structures on the Naval Home site was approved by the Historical Commission in March 1983 under the former preservation ordinance which carried a six month demolition delay. A demolition permit was secured and extensions on its expiration granted until December 1986. Subsequent to the Committee meeting; it was learned that the Department of Licenses and Inspections granted an additional extension until 26 March 1987.

The Committee reviewed the submission for the U.S. Naval Home and reiterated its prior recommendation concerning the Biddle Hall rehabilitation, approved by the Historical Commission in 1985. The Committee further agreed to recommend approval for the stabilization of the Governor's Residence and the Surgeon General's House. In addition, the Committee stated that the proposed security system at the site was acceptable; however, the members requested that the fence design be modified by reducing the height of the masonry base. The Committee also expressed concern over the manner in which the fence abutted the gatehouse. Enlargement of the gate opening at the street was determined to be acceptable.

A restudy of the general organization of the site plan was requested by the Committee in addition to more complete information of the proposed landscaping. The Committee agreed that the design of the new construction was unsympathetic with the historic character of the existing buildings. The Committee stated that the proposed buildings were improperly designed in terms of scale, materials, colors, rhythm and the placement of solids and voids in their placement on the site.

After considerable discussion, the Committee voted to recommend to the Commission that a resubmission be prepared taking into account all of the issues discussed in the preceding paragraphs. In addition, if the demolition permit for Laning Hall is determined to have expired, any new application for permission to demolish must conform to the provisions of the new historic preservation ordinance.

- 149 S. Hancock Street, Albert Taxin, Applicant, and Mike Scholnick of Growth Properties. Mr. Scholnick appeared before the Architectural Committee today on behalf of Mr. Taxin to request permission to demolish the building at 149 S. Hancock Street.

Mr. Taxin's request for permission to demolish this structure first came to the Commission's attention of 5 September 1985. The applicant was twice scheduled for review before the Architectural Committee - 12 September 1985 and 14 November 1985. The applicant rescheduled an appearance on 16 June 1986 at which time the Architectural Committee recommended the submission of data as prescribed by Section (7)(f)(.1.7). This recommendation was approved by the Commission.

Prior to today's meeting, an economic feasibility study which was prepared by Growth Properties was forwarded to each Committee member for their review. Messrs. Taxin and Scholnick appeared before the Committee to seek the approval of the demolition application based upon economic infeasibility of the rehabilitation of 149 S. Hancock Street as alleged in the Growth Properties study.

Ms. Batcheler informed Mr. Taxin that approval for demolition must also be secured from the National Park Service owing to 149 S. Hancock Street being located within Area F.

The Committee reviewed the report and voted to recommend that the Historical Commission secure the services of an independent consultant to evaluate the economic data contained in the report submitted by Growth Properties. The staff agreed to handle this matter in an expeditious manner.

- 130-132 Delancey Street, Gerald F. Schwam Associates, Architects. Ms. Siemiontkowski reported that the drawings and details requested by the Architectural Committee at its meeting of 14 August 1986 have been received.

The Committee reviewed the additional information submitted and agreed to recommend a final approval of this proposal for 130-132 Delancey Street.

- 503 Woodland Terrace, Allan Hurt, Developer. Mr. Hurt presented a proposal calling for a one-story addition at the rear of 503 Woodland Terrace. The addition will be constructed of rock face CMU to match the color and texture of the existing brownstone building. The proposal also calls for the installation of an eight-over-eight window sash on the side elevation. Mr. Hurt presented photographs of the property to the Committee. The existing cornice will be retained.

The Committee reviewed the proposal and recommended the use of a vertical casement window with single lights of glass in lieu of the eight-over-eight sash on the side elevation.

The Committee agreed to recommend approval of this project for 503 Woodland Terrace pending receipt and approval of revised drawings. Black and white photographs showing the detail of the interior and exterior of the privy were requested for the Historical Commission files.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Heaney
Clerk Stenographer I