

**THE MINUTES OF THE 458TH STATED MEETING OF THE
Philadelphia Historical Commission
11 October 2000**

**Commission Conference Room, 18th Floor, 1515 Arch Street
Wayne S. Spilove, Chair**

Present

Wayne S. Spilove, Chair
Melissa Heller Batzer, Office of City Council President, Director of Economic Development
David Brownlee, Ph.D.
James J. Cuorato, City Representative, Director of Commerce
Joseph James, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Public Property
Shelley Merhige, Office of City Council President
Ernest Leonardo, Director of Policy and Strategic Planning, City Planning Commission
David Perri, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Licenses and Inspections
Michael Sklaroff, Esq.
Robert Thomas
Dennis Ward III
Scott Wilds, Assistant Director, Office of Housing and Community Development
Stephanie G. Wolf, Ph.D.

Randal Baron, Assistant Historic Preservation Officer
Diane M. Hughes, Executive Secretary
Richard Tyler, Historic Preservation Officer

Mark Zecca, Esq., Senior Attorney , City of Philadelphia Law Department

Also

Harry Hewitt, Center City Residents Association
Lanny Leibowitz, 2036 Rittenhouse Square
Stephen Allen, Teknika Design Group
Janet Potter, The Foundation for Architecture
Pat Freeland, Spring Garden
Manuel Delgado, Spring Garden
Sara Jane Elk, Eastern State Penitentiary
Robert Powers, Powers and Company
Douglas Randall, 1610 North Street
Ronald Pierce, Spring Garden
Tom Schweiker, 1610 North Street
Michael Isador, 1901 J.F.K. Boulevard, #2415
Margie Weber, Nextel
Chris Thomas, Nextel
Cynthia Tedeschi, Nextel
Matt Hallowell, Nextel
Stephan White, Spring Garden
Allen Rubin, Spring Garden
Miquel Santiago, 1601 Mt. Vernon Street
Troy Groth, 400 South 22nd Street
Robert Wright, Philadelphia Department of Streets

Ken Weinstein, Cresheim Cottage Café
Mark Howell, Jamison Contractors
Martin Fricko, 250 South 18th Street

Wayne S. Spilove, Chair, recognized the presence of a quorum and called the 458th Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission to order at 9:10 A.M.

Minutes of the 457th Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Wilds and duly seconded, the Commission unanimously approved the minutes of the 457th Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission held on 13 September 2000. Mr. Spilove welcomed the newest Commission member, designee of Council President Anna Verna, Melissa Heller Batzer and announced the postponement of the 1801 Walnut Street proposal.

SPRING GARDEN HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION

Mr. Brownlee stated that after further review, the Commission adjusted the boundaries and with the endorsement of the City Planning Commission, the designation process can move forward.

Mr. Tyler drew the attention of the Commission to a letter from Maria Fontanez, a concerned resident who opposes the designation and asked that the designation be delayed for thirty days owing to its impact on people of modest means in the community.

Mr. Leonardo made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation to enter the Spring Garden Historic District on the Register of Historic Places. Ms. Merhige seconded the motion which carried with 11 votes. Mr. Sklaroff abstained.

2-10 Shurs Lane

Councilman Michael Nutter spoke to the Commission in support of the proposed alterations to a warehouse at 2-10 Shurs Lane. He stated that the proposed project would secure some 250 hi-tech jobs for the area. He also stressed that time is a critical issue and asked that the Commission expedite this matter.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Commission had an executive session to consult with counsel concerning the 1983 Manayunk Main Street National Historic District Ordinance. Clarification of the Commission staff's jurisdiction to approve permit applications in the District without referral to the full Commission prompted this session.

THE REPORT of the Special Committee for Germantown Avenue, 25 September 2000.

This proposal involves repaving the crosswalks in concrete at the intersections of Gemantown Avenue with Broad Street, Butler Street, Luzerne Street Lycoming Street, Pike Street and Hunting Park Avenue. This proposal will preserve the granite block paving in shoulder/parking areas with finished concrete in the track area.

Mr. Brownlee made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation for approval. Mr. Ward seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

THE REPORT of the Committee on Telecommunications , 6 October 2000.

1216-1220 Arch Street

Symth Condominium Association, Owner

Marie Weber, Applicant

DATE: 1902

PROPOSAL: Rooftop antennas

The Architectural Committee recommended referral of the proposal to the Telecommunications Committee.

The applicant received a permit for the temporary installation of antennas for the Republican Convention, subject to applying for a new permit for the Commission to consider a permanent installation. The antennas are highly visible.

The Committee met to discuss the permanent placement of the rooftop antennas. The applicant presented a revised proposal of a lowered and less visible design. The applicant also agreed to put a mock-up on the roof. The Committee suggested painting the antennas, two in a brick color and two in a sky blue color with the bottom of the antennas meeting the top of the penthouse.

Ms. Wolf made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation for approval of the following:

- 1. Lower the front antennas while moving them closer to the parapet wall;*
- 2. Reduce rear antennas's height;*
- 3. Paint the antennas a brick color, and*
- 4. Subject to a letter saying that Nextel will remove the antennas upon their becoming obsolete.*

Mr. Ward seconded the motion which carried with 10 votes. Mr. Wilds recused himself.

THE REPORT of the Architectural Committee, 26 September 2000

221 Fitzwater Street

Zilian Munas, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1830-1899

PROPOSAL: Remove wood siding and stucco rear addition

The Architectural Committee recommended denial of the submission as proposed but approval of the alternative of restoration in wood siding to match the existing.

The proposal involves removing the shingles and the original beaded board wood siding from the visible rear ell of the house and applying stucco. The staff recommended denial per Standard 6. The addition should be reclad in beaded wood siding.

Mr. Wilds questioned its visibility.

Mr. Brownlee made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Ms. Wolf seconded the motion which carried with 9 votes. Mr. Sklaroff abstained.

1801-1813 Walnut Street and 126-132 South 18th Street

Rittenhouse Club Development, L.P., Owner

Jack Weiner, Esq., Applicant

DATE: 1801-03 Walnut Street, 1896-1898

1805-09 Walnut Street, c. 1923

1811-13 Walnut Street, c. 1845; combined and refacaded 1901

126-32 South 18th Street, c. 1845; 126 and 132 altered 1920s

PROPOSAL: Conceptual review for substantial demolition of five buildings and two-phase development of commercial and residential tower

This application in concept calls for a two-phase development project involving six properties that wrap around the Fell-Van Rensselaer mansion at the northwest corner of 18th and Walnut Streets.

Phase one involves demolishing all but the front facade of the Rittenhouse Club at 1811-13 Walnut Street and of 132 South 18th Street, and front and side façades of 126 South 18th Street. The applicant proposes the complete demolition of the buildings at 128 and 130 South 18th Street and the construction of a building entrance. An “L” shaped eight story commercial building will sit back about five feet from the facades of the two remaining 18th Street facades. The dormers which define the 19th century architecture of the buildings as well as the roofline and structure of the buildings will be demolished. The new construction will rise in stages beginning with a single story 16 feet behind the Rittenhouse Club façade and a second rise of two more stories approximately 32 feet behind the façade.

In the second phase, the applicant proposes to build a 33-story residential tower atop the eight story commercial construction. Drawings show the cutting of a porte-cochere into the 18th Street and Sansom facades. The Sansom Street façade, which the Committee spent a great deal of time reviewing in 1996 for a previous proposal to create a pedestrian friendly façade, will now feature two large ground floor loading docks in both phases.

The staff recommended denial of the proposal as drawn per Standards 9 and 10. The applicant has provided no hardship argument to support the demolition of the currently occupied 18th Street properties or the substantial demolition of the Rittenhouse Club. The public good as a basis for demolition should be used for projects of major public benefit such as a convention center or symphony hall, not private development. Historic preservation should be the predominant public interest. The 18th Street properties consist of mid-19th century houses converted to commercial use that contribute to the character and history of the district.

The new construction, sitting approximately 16 feet behind the front façade of the Rittenhouse Club, will create the appearance that the façade attaches like a postage stamp onto the new building rather than remaining as a separate building. The staff thought the new construction should sit behind the existing 18th Street buildings and the entire new construction at the Rittenhouse Club should sit behind the main block of the building. The staff also held that the applicant could remove the rear ells of the Club for new construction but only if Sansom Street gets a new pedestrian-oriented façade.

The Architectural Committee recommended denial of the conceptual proposal for demolition and new construction as submitted.

The applicant requested a postponement of one month of the consideration of the proposal.

1528 Waverly Street, SE corner of Mole Street

Ursula Hobson, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1910

PROPOSAL: Install garage doors

The Architectural Committee recommended approval with staff to review details.

This proposal involves alterations to a carriage building. The applicant seeks to remove modern brickwork and install garage doors in the former garage opening. The staff recommended approval.

Mr. Wilds made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Ms. Wolf seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

400 South 22nd Street

James Wheeler, Owner

Troy Groth, Applicant

DATE: c. 1860

PROPOSAL: Replace and enlarge roof decks

The Architectural Committee recommended denial of the proposal as submitted but approval of the front deck reduced to 12 feet in width and the rear deck reduced to 10 feet.

The proposal involves rebuilding and expanding decks which a former owner built apparently without building or zoning permits. The decks have visibility from 22nd Street and from Croskey Street. The staff recommended approval if pulled back farther from the sides of the building to reduce visibility.

Mr. Wilds questioned the existing decks, since they were grandfathered into the district's designation.

Mr. Sklaroff made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Mr. Cuorato seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

2036 Rittenhouse Square Street

David Halpern, Owner

Lanny Liebowitz, Architect

DATE: c. 1880

PROPOSAL: Alter façade, convert shopfront to garage opening

The Architectural Committee recommended approval with the staff to review details.

The proposal involves converting a storefront into a garage. The building once served as a carriage house. The louvered design of the garage doors derives from a modern treatment on another carriage house nearby. The applicant also wishes to use the louvered design on the second floor as well. The staff recommended approval, although the applicant should better research the historic design of the building.

The applicant consulted with the former owner about the previous design; however, the former owner was unable to convey this information.

Mr. Wilds made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Ms. Wolf seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

250 South 18th Street, SW corner of Rittenhouse Square Street

Condominium Association, Owner, Mark Rogers, Manager

Martin Fricko, Applicant

DATE: 1923

PROPOSAL: Coat terra cotta with Thoro-Coat

The Architectural Committee recommended approval with samples and color to be reviewed by the staff.

The applicant seeks to coat the terra cotta belt courses and decorative arches above the windows with Thoro-Coat to address some spalling of the masonry. The staff recommended approval, although with concerns about the vapor permeability and appearance of the coating.

It is the belief of some Commission members that this coating could cause more damage; however, without additional information a case cannot be made to substantiate this claim.

Mr. Wilds made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Mr. Ward seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

7402-04 Germantown Avenue, NW corner of Gowen Avenue

Ken Weinstein, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1770

PROPOSAL: Rear addition

The Architectural Committee recommended approval.

The proposal involves two additions at the rear of the property, one for more dining space and a second for a walk-in refrigerator. The staff recommended approval per Standard 9 and 10.

Mr. Cuorato made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Mr. Sklaroff seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

1703 Jefferson Street, NE corner of Bouvier Street

Philadelphia Housing Development Corporation, Owner

Brenden McHugh, Architect

DATE: 1886

PROPOSAL: Demolish rear, restore front

The Architectural Committee recommended approval based on the limited visibility of the rear ell and its present condition.

The proposal calls for removing the partially visible rear ell and restoring the front façade. Although the rear ell has significance, The Philadelphia Housing Development Corporation finds the whole house too large to renovate and sell as affordable housing. The house stands vacant and the City might demolish the shell as they have the neighboring historic house. The staff recommended approval.

Mr. Brownlee questioned the rear ell's material and said that this has not been reviewed as a hardship but a design issue that involves demolition of a piece of the building. Mr. Wilds stated that without a special grant from HUD the property would have been completely lost and that the only way to save this property is to remove the rear. The removal of the rear ell preserves a greater amount of historic fabric. Mr. Sklaroff raised the question of a public interest case.

Mr. Sklaroff made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Mr. Ward seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

1708 Jefferson Street, SE corner of Bouvier Street

Philadelphia Housing Development Corporation, Owner

Brenden McHugh, Architect

DATE: c. 1885

PROPOSAL: Demolish and rebuild side wall into a modern design, restore front façade

The Architectural Committee recommended approval of a design modified with greater retention of the existing brick wall cut on a straight line with the arch to be constructed in a more durable material with the staff to review details.

The proposal calls for rehabilitating the surviving portion of Cecil B. Moore's residence into a private house. The plan calls for removing about ten feet of the surviving brick side wall and adding a new stuccoed side wall containing a memorial mural to Cecil B. Moore. A giant arch creates a frame for the mural.

Mr. Baron stated that the applicant's revised drawings show more symmetry, the retention of the parapet wall and two circular windows.

Mr. Ward made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation for approval of a revised submission. Mr. Brownlee seconded the motion which carried

2319 Green Street, NE corner of 24th Street, St. Francis Xavier Church

Philadelphia Archdiocese, Owner

Audrey Jamison, Applicant

DATE: c. 1859

PROPOSAL: Ramp

The Architectural Committee recommended approval. Three Committee members favored the grey split-face block units and one member favored concrete.

The application calls for the installation of a handicap accessible ramp on the 24th Street side of St. Francis Xavier Roman Catholic Church, a Romanesque Revival church built in 1894. The plans show the infill of existing basement windows, and the removal of granite treads and an existing door and transom to accommodate the ramp. The applicant proposes to infill the

basement windows with concrete masonry units, and relocate the existing granite treads at the base of the ramp. The plans show a ramp of concrete faced with split-face grey concrete masonry units with a black horizontal railing system.

Mr. Sklaroff asked that the Commission get more information on the new federal statute governing the regulations of religious properties.

Mr. Ward made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Mr. Sklaroff seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

1610 North Street

Douglas Randall, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1886

PROPOSAL: Full third floor roof addition, cornice replacement

The Architectural Committee recommended denial as submitted, but approval of an addition with a setback with staff to review details.

The application calls for the addition of a third floor to an existing circa 1900 two-story carriage house. The applicant proposes to clad the addition with vertical aluminum panel siding and three large glass and aluminum windows. The application also includes plans for a new wood deck off the rear of the third story and an extension of an exterior staircase clad with new aluminum siding on the side and rear elevations. He proposes to replace the metal cornice on the primary façade with either a fiberglass or wood cornice to match the original design. The rear of the carriage house has visibility from 16th Street.

The applicant submitted revised drawings which included the Committee's recommendation for a setback. He also spoke to the Commission to express his need for additional space. Thomas Schweiker, the architect, stated that the mansard's setback measures two feet on either side and 6 feet from the face of the original building.

Mr. Brownlee stated that there is a need for air to highlight the cornice, therefore a small setback would be appropriate. Ms. Wolf believed that the new addition should not be confused with what originally existed.

A discussion of the applicant's spacing needs ensued and the Commission and the applicant agreed upon a three-foot setback.

Mr. Sklaroff made a motion to reject the Committee's recommendation but approve an addition with a setback of at least three-feet from the face of the wall. Mr. Ward seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Mr. Spilove passed the gavel to Ms. Wolf, Vice-chair.

1612 North Street

Spring Garden Community Development Corporation, Owner

Stephan White, Architect

DATE: c. 1850

PROPOSAL: Façade restoration, new garage gate

The Architectural Committee recommended approval with the staff to review details.

The application calls for renovation of a three-story row house built circa 1850. The plans show new 2/2, true divided light, double hung windows on the second and third floors and new crossbuck garage doors fitted into the existing ground floor opening. In addition, the applicant plans to restore the original stone and steps while installing a new door, a frame and transom to match the existing original at 1614 North Street. The applicant will also scrape and repaint the existing cornice. The staff recommended approval of the façade renovation.

Mr. Brownlee made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Mr. Wilds seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

1614 North Street

Spring Garden Community Development Corporation, Owner

Stephan White, Architect

DATE: c. 1850

PROPOSAL: Façade rehabilitation

The Architectural Committee recommended approval with the staff to review details.

The application calls for façade renovation to a three-story circa 1850 row house. The applicant proposes to install 2/2, true divided light, double hung windows on the second and third stories, closing a later window opening, a new door frame and transom to match the existing original, and a new four panel door. Plans show four new bi-fold eight light and two-panel garage doors that match the existing. The application also entails the restoration of the existing cornice and chimney. The staff recommended approval per Standard 6.

Mr. Wilds made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Mr. Ward seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Ms. Wolf returned the gavel to Mr. Spilove, Chair.

1616 North Street

Spring Garden Community Development Corporation, Owner

Stephan White, Architect

DATE: c. 1886

PROPOSAL: Façade rehabilitation, enlarge masonry garage opening

The Architectural Committee recommended approval with staff to review details.

The application calls for the renovation of a three-story carriage house built circa 1886. The proposal calls for the enlargement of an existing garage opening and the fitting of new crossbuck garage doors with hinges to match original hinges on second and third floor doors. The enlargement of the garage entrance would result in the removal of 18 inches of original brick as well as require a new lintel and cornice. The installation of new crossbuck loft doors on the second and third floor will reuse existing hinges, and the owner will install new 2/2, true divided light, double hung windows on the first through third floors. The applicant also proposes to add a new door and a stone stoop. The applicant plans to scrape and repaint the existing cornice.

Mr. Sklaroff made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Mr. Ward seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

12 North 3rd Street

Stephen Allen, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1860

PROPOSAL: Awning

The Architectural Committee recommended approval.

The application calls for the installation of a cloth awning over the first floor storefront on this five-story brick building. The proposal shows the awning attached to the flat section of the cornice and a one-foot high lip. The awning would project thirty inches from the face of the building. The black awning will have lettering on the lip. The staff recommended denial per Standard 9.

Mr. Brownlee made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Mr. Wilds seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

609 North 17th Street

Andrew Tull, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1859

PROPOSAL: Legalize rear addition

The Architectural Committee recommended approval.

This application calls for legalization of a cinderblock and stucco rear addition placed on the building by a former owner before the consideration of the Spring Garden District. The addition has little public visibility. The staff recommended approval per Standard 9 and 10.

Mr. Wilds made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Ms. Wolf seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

2107 Fairmount Avenue, Eastern State Penitentiary

City of Philadelphia, Owner

Sally Jane Elk, Applicant

DATE: 1825; altered 1889

PROPOSAL: Electrical transformer

The Architectural Committee recommended approval.

This proposal involves the placement of an exterior electrical transformer at the corner of Brown Street and Corinthian Avenue and is highly visible. The equipment is five feet high and sits on a concrete raised pad. It will be surrounded by a chain link fence and shrubbery.

Mr. Wilds questioned whether the installation could go into the wall, against the wall or in a vault; however, it was determined that it has to be accessible for PECO.

Mr. Sklaroff made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Mr. Ward seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Ms. Wolf asked for the presentation of information concerning the new federal statue pertaining to religious rights at the special Commission meeting on 18 October 2000.

THE REPORT of the Activities of the Historical Commission Staff, September 2000.

Mr. Tyler asked if members of the Commission had any questions about the report. There were none.

HARRY A. BATTEN MEMORIAL FUND

Mr. Tyler asked the Commission to approve the expenditure of \$21.61 for Architectural lunches.

Mr. Brownlee made a motion to approve the expenditure. Mr. Wilds seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Mr. Wilds made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Brownlee seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 11:10 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane M. Hughes,
Executive Secretary