

REPORT OF THE ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Robert Thomas, Chair
One Parkway, 1515 Arch Street, 13th floor
30 November 1999

Present

Robert Thomas, Chair
Suzanne Pentz

Randal Baron, Assistant Historic Preservation Officer
Laura Spina, Historic Preservation Planner
Richard Tyler, Historic Preservation Officer

Also

Heather Davis, Bryn Mawr College
Munn Johnson, University of Pennsylvania
Edward Jackson, Department of Licenses and Inspections
Jonathan Weiss, Templetown Realty
Dale Frens, Frens and Frens
Anthony Marinucci, 125 North 11th Street
Jack Conroy, 8101 Verree Road
Christina Romano, 8101 Verree Road
William F. Menke, Menke and Menke
Joseph Pongonis, 626 South Front Street
Charles McHugh, 2100 Green Street
Charles Tonetti, National Park Service, INHP
Claire Donato, Mark Thompson Associates
Fred Kaulbach, Armstrong Kaulbach
Charles R. Mottershead, Capital Programs Office
Arthur Klein, American Revolution Patriots Fund
Winchell Carroll, American Revolution Patriots Fund
Don Nardy, Church of the Holy Trinity
Terence C. Roper, Church of the Holy Trinity
William Jordan, Church of the Holy Trinity
Ben Heinzen, Church of the Holy Trinity
Jerrold Adler, 1233 Locust Street

Robert Thomas, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:45. Mr. Baron explained to each applicant that, owing to unforeseen circumstances, a quorum was not present and offered the option of postponing the review of the application until the next time the Committee has a quorum. None of the applicants or anyone from the public objected to the lack of a quorum.

1425 West Diamond Street

Jonathan Weiss, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1875

PROPOSAL: Repair brownstone facade

The proposal calls for removing the stucco from the façade and repairing the details that remain in brown stucco to mimic brownstone. Other areas will receive the overall form but not the detail of the original. Mr. Baron explained that normally the Commission asks for complete restoration, including all details, when the whole façade receives a new surface. Jonathan Weiss, the owner, noted that he would repair existing details, such as the window hoods and beltcourse, but it would prove too expensive to replicate the missing details.

The Committee voted to recommend denial, but to send the application to the Financial Hardship Committee once the Commission receives a financial hardship application.

2951 Market Street, 30th Street Station

Amtrak, Owner

Matthew Madeira, Applicant

DATE: 1929-30

PROPOSAL: Louvers; garage doors

The proposal calls for creating a garage for rental cars inside the north end of 30th Street Station, the least visible of the four façades. This involves installing new roll down grates for two garage openings and air louvers cut into several brick panels between piers on the north façade.

The Committee voted to recommend approval.

3900 Woodland Avenue, Woodlands Mansion

Woodlands Cemetery Company, Owner

Dale Frens, Architect/Applicant

DATE: c. 1742; expanded/embellished c. 1770-1810

PROPOSAL: New railing and steps

This proposal for a new staircase on the side of the porch returns to the Committee with some modifications. A center stair would run into an existing driveway, violating the Building Code. Mr. Frens proposes two symmetrical wood stairs at the sides of the porch and a metal railing between each column. Staff originally asked for the railing to be set back behind the columns, but Mr. Frens noted that it would obscure the view of the columns from inside the house and the scheme poses other problems of attachment. He also stated that the stairs and railing are a temporary solution so that the house can reopen. When funding becomes available, a more permanent solution will come back to Committee and Commission.

The Committee voted to recommend approval with staff to review details.

125 North 11th Street

Robert Weinstein, Owner

Anthony Marinucci, Contractor/Applicant

DATE: 1888

PROPOSAL: Install vinyl windows

Mr. Baron stated that the owner, without a permit, installed vinyl windows on the 2nd floor. The owner now wishes to legalize those windows and replace the remaining wood two-over-two windows with vinyl windows with snap-in nine-over-nine muntins. Mr. Baron also explained that the owner built an entrance vestibule on the side of the building, obtaining a building permit without the approval of the Historical Commission. Anthony Marinucci, the contractor for the project, stated that the owner believes that the building has lost enough integrity to allow the vinyl windows and also that the owner wishes to install aluminum panning on the window frames. Committee members disagreed.

The Committee voted to recommend denial of the existing vinyl windows and denial of the application to install the other vinyl windows and aluminum panning.

8101 Verree Road, Knowlton Estate Caretaker's Cottage

John Conroy, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1880

PROPOSAL: Large addition to caretaker's cottage

The owner, without a permit or Historical Commission approval, began constructing a large addition to the gatekeeper's house at Knowlton. The Department of Licenses and Inspections issued a stop-work order. Jack Conroy, the owner, stated that he believed that the Historical Commission did not have jurisdiction because the house stands on a different plot of land from Knowlton and that there is no evidence that Frank Furness designed the house. Mr. Tyler noted that the gatekeeper's reflects many architectural elements found at the main house. The National Register nomination describes the property as twelve acres. Mr. Conroy admitted that the entire 12 acres, including Knowlton and the gatekeeper's house, has a single deed and tax bill. Mr. Thomas stated that the Historical Commission has jurisdiction over the entire property and, therefore, does have a right to review the addition to the gatekeeper's house.

Committee members discussed the proposed addition. The design calls for a large, 2-story, L-shaped wing off the back of the house with a three-car garage. The addition will have a stone base and clapboarding. Staff noted that the scale of the addition overpowers the house and the roof stands taller than the original. Staff suggested lowering the pitch of the roof and using a different material, such as tern-coated metal. The original house has stone walls and a slate roof. Mr. Conroy stated that it would prove too expensive to change the addition now and he has already ordered the roof trusses. Mr. Thomas suggested that Mr. Conroy should sit down with his architect and try to come to a solution that would minimize the scale of the roof.

The Committee voted to recommend approval of the building plan, but denial of the roof scheme as proposed. The Committee suggested that the applicant return with a differently scaled roof and a roof material different from slate.

2100 Green Street

Charles McHugh, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1885

PROPOSAL: New rear wall, garage and deck

Mr. Baron explained the proposal, which included the demolition of a cinder block rear wall and construction of a new wall of wood and stucco, a garage with a paneled roll-down door and a deck. Charles McHugh, the owner, noted that the garage entrance will stand on Wilcox Street at the rear of the property, not 21st Street.

The Committee voted to recommend approval with staff to review details.

626 South Front Street

Joseph Pongonis, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1760-75

PROPOSAL: Legalize vinyl windows

Mr. Baron explained that Mr. Pongonis sold the building several years ago when it had the historic wood windows, but held the mortgage. The new owners installed aluminum sash in the windows and panned the original frames without a permit. A violation issued to those owners; however, the building reverted back to Mr. Pongonis before the owners cured the violation. Mr. Pongonis wishes to have the windows legalized and the violation cured. Mr. Thomas noted that even though Mr. Pongonis did not do the work, he inherited the violation when he regained the property. Mr. Baron noted that the building is very rare owing to its age and form. He also noted that it has a large number of windows. He suggested a compromise that perhaps the Commission could legalize several of the sash, but ask for the removal of the panning on the frames and replacement of most of the sash in wood. Mr. Thomas agreed, but noted that the compromise has to be made at Commission level, the Committee cannot recommend the compromise because it violates the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards*.

The Committee voted to recommend denial.

Fairmount Water Works

City of Philadelphia, Owner

Claire Donato and Mark Thompson, Architects/Applicants

DATE: 1820s – 1870s - Water Works

1920s and 1998 - Museum and Lloyd Hall sites

PROPOSAL: Site rehabilitation

Claire Donato, architect for the project, presented the two proposals for the landscaping around the Waterworks, Art Museum and Lloyd Hall. The first proposal simply clarifies the materials and details of the parking and path proposal approved by the Committee and Commission. The second proposal reestablishes paths and landscape elements on the hillside of the former reservoir.

For the first proposal, Ms. Donato stated that the lighting fixtures would match those around the Art Museum that were designed by Paul Cret. The driveways will have asphalt with brick pavers at the sides, brick crosswalks and curbs of batter-faced pre-cast stone made to look like granite. The sidewalks will have broom-finished paneled concrete and the recreation trails will have asphalt with brick edging. The entrance at the Waterworks' forebay will have colored concrete pavers that match those in other sections of the Waterworks. Fred Kaulbach, architect for Lloyd Hall, objected to the recreation trail's running parallel with Aquarium Drive. He stated that by having the trail as designed, too many trees would be lost and that the trail should follow the old runner's trail that arched away from the road. Bill Menke, landscape architect, stated that the serious condition of the trees would require their removal anyway. Also, one of the trees has a large system of surface roots and the path, no matter in what position, would cause damage. Mr. Thompson also stated that the runner's path through the landscape was a very small feature, whereas the recreation trail is much larger and would detract from the landscape if put in the same position. Also, the recreation trail will serve those who park on Aquarium Drive.

The Committee voted to recommend approval as proposed and voted to recommend approval of moving the recreation trail, using the proposed materials, if the Fairmount Park Commission wishes to do so.

Ms. Donato explained the second proposal for restoring the trails along the cliffside of the hill. The original trails date back to Frederick Graff's design of 1829 and were kept in the design of the 1870s. The project will be phased as fundraising continues. The Mercury Pavilion, seen from the Art Museum, and the bridges along the trails will be restored. The cast-iron railing will be restored, with modifications to stabilize it and extend its longevity. The original paths had gravel with brick swales for drainage. The proposal calls for installing asphalt paving, with aggregate to simulate gravel, and brick swales. The Cret lighting fixtures will be installed at the top of the hill and the rest of the trails will have foot lights. The ravine will have flood lights to illuminate the various levels of the cliff. The historic overlook will be restored, *sans* canopy at this time, with a brick path and steps installed, leading to the Art Museum drive.

The Committee voted to recommend approval.

Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Washington Square

City of Philadelphia, Owner

John Carr, Fairmount Park Preservation Trust, Applicant

DATE: 1957

PROPOSAL: Replacement of the monument in granite

This application revisits the proposal seen last month to replace the limestone memorial Tomb of the Unknown Soldier of the Revolution in granite. The stone memorial has weathered badly, and has suffered from inappropriate maintenance. The National Park Service wrote a letter of opposition to the proposed replacement. The Committee recommended tabling the conceptual proposal for one month, awaiting further information regarding the condition of the monument and its replacement. Win Carroll, of the American Revolution Patriots Fund, stated that they have been in negotiations with the National Park Service. Charles Tonetti of the NPS stated that the Park Service values the historic material of the monument and its deterioration forms a part of its history; therefore, the Park Service prefers the spot stabilization of the monument. If that does not prove

feasible, then the Park Service would allow the replacement of parts of the monument in limestone, with the retention of the ornately carved pieces. John Carr, conservator for the project, stated that spot stabilization or the proposed hybrid replacement does not do justice to a commemorative monument and will damage the public perception of its care and maintenance.

The Committee voted to recommend approval of the stabilization and approval of the partial replacement in limestone, if necessary.

27-29 Bank Street

Allen Cohen, Owner

Neil Rosenberg, Applicant

DATE: c. 1830

PROPOSAL: Replace fire escape

The owner wishes to replace the existing fire-escape with a new one. The extant fire-escape does not meet code requirements, and the building must have a second means of egress. The proposed fire-escape does differ slightly from the existing one.

The Committee voted to recommend approval, with the fire-escape painted black or an appropriate dark color.

1900 Walnut Street, Church of the Holy Trinity

Church of the Holy Trinity, Owner

Donald Nardy, Applicant

DATE: 1857-59; tower - 1868

PROPOSAL: Facade lighting

The church wishes to light its façade at night. The proposal has two aspects: light fixtures at the top of the tower to highlight the tower's details and light fixtures on poles at the curb to illuminate the rest of the façade. The lights at the tower will not be mounted on the brownstone, but will hang from behind the parapet. The church needs four poles to illuminate the façade, three on 19th Street and one on Walnut Street. The poles will be painted green to match the flagpoles and lights from the Center City District.

The Committee voted to recommend approval.

1105 Spruce Street

Leroy Kean and Jerrold Adler, Owners/Applicants

DATE: 1889

PROPOSAL: Legalize windows

The windows of this building had nine-over-three windows on the second floor, unique nine-light upper sash and a single-light lower sash on the third floor, and four-over-four sash in the dormer. The owner replaced these windows with aluminum one-over-one windows, without a permit or Historical Commission approval. Mr. Baron explained that the Department of Licenses and Inspections issued a violation five or six years ago and the owner is now coming to cure the

violation. Jerrold Adler, owner of the property, stated that the vinyl windows existed when he purchased the property in 1982.

The Committee voted to recommend denial.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura M. Spina
Historic Preservation Planner