

MINUTES OF THE ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE

OF THE

PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

28 July 1988

David Hollenberg, Chairman

Present: David Hollenberg, Chairman
David DeLong, University of Pennsylvania, Preservation Program
John Dickey, F.A.I.A.

Maria Petrillo, Esq., Assistant Chief City Solicitor, Law
Department
Richard Tyler, Historic Preservation Officer
Randal Baron, Preservation Planner
Maureen Heaney, Clerk Stenographer I

Also: Harlan Crider, Architect, and Douglas Simon to present a
proposal for new construction at 2224-26 Green Street.
Shraga Berenfeld, Architect, to present a proposal for extensive
alterations to the properties located at 409-11 S. 20th
Street.
Fred Peltier and Margaret Michel, of H2L2 Architects, to present
a proposal to cut into original 18th century brick walls of
two row houses and installing four metal louvered vents to
238-240 S. 4th Street.
Alex Generalis, Developer, to present a proposal for the
installation of new windows along the west wall of 315-319
Arch Street.
Mark Bower, consultant to present a proposal for the
installation of a canopy and two lanterns to the Sansom
Street side entrance of the Union League at 140 S. Broad
Street.
John Breen, owner, to present a proposal for the installation of
a new wooden folding electric garage door into an existing
opening at 1520 Latimer Street.
Tony Piccari, Piccari Construction Company, to present a
proposal for building a handicap access ramp to the Cathedral
of Sts. Peter and Paul located at 222 N. 17th Street.
Nancy Silber, owner, to present a proposal for the installation
of a new electric metal roll up gate at the rear yard of 600
Pine Street.
Zen Mazurkevich, Architect, to present a proposal for window
changes to 1328 Pine Street.
Randal Baron presented a proposal for exterior changes to the
mid 19th century commercial building located at 221 Chestnut
Street.
Randal Baron present a proposal for cutting a doorway and
constructing a fire stairway at the ground floor level of
Building 15 of the Frankford Arsenal, located at Tacony and
Bridge Street.

2224-26 Green Street, Harlan Crider, developer and architect. This submission concerns the property at 2224 Green Street, a free standing house with surrounding yard and fence that was designated by the Historical Commission on 5 December 1974. Mr. Crider began by explaining that he purchased the 26 foot wide lot next to the historic building at 2224 Green Street from Mr. Barbelius, the owner of 2224 Green Street. He claims that Mr. Barbelius sold him the lot adjoining the historic house representing that the subdivision of the property was legal. He also claims that the sale contract states that Mr. Barbelius would remove the side bay of 2224 Green Street so that it would not encroach upon the adjacent lot. Mr. Crider obtained both a zoning and building permit to construct a four-story multi-family house on the lot.

Those permits have since been revoked and he is now seeking to obtain new permits without a variance for a single family three-story house. Mr. Crider's letter of application to the Historical Commission asks for permission to remove a stairway and to rebuild the ornamental five sided bay of 2224 Green Street into a smaller rectangular bay to allow for construction of a new house on the adjacent ground. At different points in the meeting Mr. Crider asked for permission to:

- a. change the bay and remove the stair, and;
- b. only to remove the stair.

He stated that in his opinion the house he wishes to build should not be reviewed by the Historical Commission because it is new construction on a vacant lot.

Mr. Sklaroff, a neighbor and member of the Spring Garden Civic Association, then provided his version of the issues. He stated that the property was illegally subdivided because a multi-family house such as the house at 2224 Green Street must have an eight foot side yard and the present lot division only retains a five foot side yard. Mr. Sklaroff claims that Mr. Crider fraudulently obtained his original zoning and building permits by presenting to the Department of Licenses and Inspections a drawing of 2224 Green Street without its bay and with only a five foot side yard. Mr. Sklaroff has since shown the inaccuracies to Mr. Pugliese and Mr. Hall at Licenses and Inspections and the original zoning and building permits have been revoked. Additionally, Mr. Sklaroff has gone to court and obtained a temporary restraining order which has halted construction on the site.

Mr. Sklaroff claimed that the Historical Commission has control not only over the building at 2224 Green Street but also its historic grounds and surrounding cast iron fence. Therefore, he expressed the opinion that the greater issue of whether anything should be built on the lot at all should be addressed by the Historical Commission. Additionally, the issues of demolishing the historic fence, removing

a mature tree, and creating a curb cut and an unsympathetic driveway on an important block of historically designated houses need to be reviewed. Mr. Sklaroff said that the Spring Garden Civic Association opposes Mr. Crider's development proposal. Because of all of these issues Mr. Sklaroff asked the Committee to deny Mr. Crider's application.

The Committee expressed the opinion that there are unresolved questions concerning the legality of the subdivision of the lot and the extent of the Commissions jurisdiction. Maria Petrillo, of the City Law Department, promised to review these issues and advise the Committee for a rehearing of this submission. The Committee decided to table the issue with no recommendation at this time.

409-411 S. 20th Street, Shraga Berenfeld, Architect. Mr. Berenfeld appeared before the Architectural Committee to present a proposal for extensive alterations to the early 20th century storefront of these buildings. Mr. Berenfeld wishes to move the double doors and marble stoop of 411 S. 20th Street over one bay to 409 S. 20th Street in order to accomodate the placement of the lobby. The wooden storefront would be extensively replaced owing to rotting of wooden members. The applicant wishes to replace some glass panels with stuccoed panels in the area of the stairway for fire safety. He also wishes to divide the large glass windows into separate lights carrying down the divisions of the transom windows.

The Committee voted to recommend a rejection of the plans as proposed.

238-240 S. 4th Street, Fred Peltier and Margaret Michel, of H2L2 Architects. This proposal calls for cutting into the original 18th century brick walls of two row houses and installing four metal louvered vents in a variety of visible locations. These openings are meant to vent air conditioning, heating systems, and an elevator. A number of smaller vents have been introduced into the facade many years ago. Two of the proposed new vents would be eight square feet in size.

The Committee recommends an approval of the elevator louver, if it can be lowered. The Committee also recommends a rejection of the air conditioning and heating system vents and suggested that the applicant find alternative locations for these vents.

315-319 Arch Street, Alex Generalis, Developer. This proposal calls for the installation of new windows along the west wall to match the original windows, some of which still exist.

The Committee voted to recommend an approval of steel or aluminum replacement windows in their original openings which will match the original industrial windows in terms of muntin pattern and profile.

The Committee also requested that the Historical Commission write a letter in support of retaining the window along the fire wall. The Committee agreed that the Commission should support the code variance because the low buildings adjacent to 315-319 Arch Street are

designated historic buildings which will greatly reduce the chances of someone building next store and because the windows are necessary to find a reuse that will allow preservation of the building.

- 140 S. Broad Street, Mark Bower, Consultant. Mr. Bower appeared before the Commission and presented a proposal for the installation of a canopy and two lanterns over a modest Sansom Street side entrance of the Union League addition. The purpose of the canopy and lights is to create a more inviting and important entryway across from the parking garage where many members park their cars.

The Committee voted to recommend an approval of this project.

- 1520 Latimer Street, John Breen, owner. Mr. Breen appeared before the Architectural Committee to present a proposal for the installation of a new wooden folding electric garage door into a mostly existing opening and cutting a new doorway in place of an existing window.

The Committee voted to recommend an approval of this project.

- 222 N. 17th Street, Cathedral of Sts. Peter and Paul, Tony Piccari, Contractor. This application calls for the building of a handicap access ramp onto the highly visible Race Street side of the Cathedral.

The Committee voted to recommend a denial of the application as presented. The Committee requested that the ramp be 90 degrees so it is parallel to the side of the building and that the number of turns be reduced from three to two. A submission of a more complete drawing that details the materials of the ramp and railing and shows the method of attachment to the building need to be submitted to the Committee before a final approval can be recommended. The color of the ramp should match the water table of the church.

- 600 Pine Street, Nancy Silber, owner. This submission calls for the installation of a new electric metal roll up gate at the highly visible rear yard of 600 Pine Street in place of an existing two leaf wooden gate. The applicant seeks the security of an electric gate and has concluded that there is not enough room for either a sliding gate or an electric two leaf gate. Ms. Silber proposes to build up the brick walls of the yard to hide the mechanism of the gate.

The Committee recommends rejecting the proposal as submitted but approved the raising of the entire wall instead of just the portion near the gate. The Committee also suggested that Ms. Silber investigate the possibility of using an electric bi-fold gate and submit the findings to the Committee for its review.

- 1328 Pine Street, a.k.a. 1231 Waverly Street, Zen Mazurkevich, Architect. Mr. Mazurkevich presented a proposal to the Committee that involves a small trinity house connected to the rear of 1328 Pine Street. This house was completely rebuilt with new roof and front wall, c. 1985, to match approximately the other trinity houses across Waverly Street. Mr. Mazurkevich is proposing to close up the two windows on the third floor and build a pair of French doors and a balcony in their place.

The Committee unanimously recommends an approval of this project, owing to the fact the the entire front wall of this building was rebuilt in 1985.

221 Chestnut Street. This proposal calls for removing the existing doors and transom configuration on the ground floor of this mid 19th century commercial building and restoring the original ground floor treatment. This original configuration has been documented through photographs, some existing fabric, and an insurance survey. The applicant also proposes moving the steps from one entrance to the other.

The Committee voted to recommend an approval of this project.

Frankford Arsenal Building 15, Tacony and Bridge Street. This application calls for cutting a doorway and constructing a fire stairway at the ground floor level of Building 15 of the Frankford Arsenal. All sides of this building are highly visible.

The Committee voted to recommend an approval of this project. David Hollenberg abstained.

26-30 S. 21st Street, Jack Thalheimer, Architect. This proposal was brought before the Committee to be reviewed in concept. It calls for building a twenty story glass and steel tower on the location of three historically designated rowhouses designed by the important Philadelphia architect Addison Hutton. In this design the houses would be substantially demolished and the tower would sit approximately eight feet behind the remaining facades of the rowhouses. As the tower rises, however, it cantelers forward toward the front of the lot so that the higher levels hang directly over the front wall of the rowhouses. The stoops and doorways of the rowhouses would be removed to provide direct ground level access to the building.

The Committee unanimously rejected this proposal stating that this approach does not constitute preservation. Richard Tyler posed the question whether or not there was some amount of set back for this tower which could preserve enough of the scale and massing of the house. The Committee members expressed the unanimous opinion that a tower placed anywhere on this site would make the buildings look like appendages of the larger building, thereby destroying the scale and character of the rowhouses.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Heaney
Clerk Steno I

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