

REPORT OF THE ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Robert Thomas, Chair
Commission Conference Room, One Parkway, 13th Fl., 1515 Arch St.
28 July 1998

Present

Robert Thomas, Chair
Tony Atkin
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

James Platt, Burt Hill Kosar and Rittelman, Architects
Paul Goddard
Allen Roth, Joseph B. Callaghan, Inc.
Frederick Baumert, Keast and Hood Co.
Frederick Slifer, Salvation Army
Allison Kelsey, Preservation Alliance
William Becker, Loews Hotel
Arthur Jones, Bower Lewis Thrower Architects
Clare Yellin
Robert Powers
Raymond Rola
James Quesenberry
Mark Ueland, Ueland Junker McCauley Neilson (UJMN)
George Gehrung, UJMN
Jon Merz
Judith Eden, Center City Residents Association
Harold Aponte, Capital Programs Office
Andrew Segovis, Capital Program Office
Abbie Kinzler
Lee Cooperman
Gregory Harvey

Mr. Thomas, Chair, recognized a quorum and called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

23-29 North Juniper Street, City Hall Annex

Annex Center Limited Partnership, Owner

James Platt, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1927

PROPOSAL: Loading dock gate, mechanical floor, HVAC, signs, window glazing

This proposal provides details of modifications to convert the former City Hall Annex building into a Marriott Hotel. The architects propose the creation of a mechanical room floor within the u-shaped light court. Existing penthouses on the roof will largely hide new condensing units at that level. A signage package shows halo-lit metal signs installed in the recessed stone plaques on each side of the building, and a kiosk sign in the new front traffic island. The applicant wishes to glaze several registers of windows with black spandrel glass. The roll-down gates on the loading dock will have a projecting housing because of height requirements for trucks using the dock. Mr. Thomas recommended the applicant paint the security grate housing and the proposed new door the color of the existing stone at that location.

Ms. Pentz observed that the new door cuts on Commerce Street, previously approved by the Commission, impinge upon the windows above them in the current proposed elevation. The Committee asked that the applicant modify the doors to center in the window openings, with flush panels completing the in-fill of any window section.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the proposal, and asked that the applicant modify the proposed Commerce Street doors to center in the window openings, with flush panels completing the in-fill of any window section.

127 North Van Pelt Street

Paul Goddard, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1860

PROPOSAL: Rear addition visible from street

The owner proposes building a second- and third-floor addition on top of a rear one-story piece of his house. The building will cover a portion visible to the public with stucco at the second floor. A glass and metal greenhouse will form the top floor. Committee members objected to the condition of the drawings submitted for this proposal and requested the applicant to submit clearer and more detailed drawings to the staff prior to the Commission meeting. Paul Goddard, owner of the property, stated that he already had an architect draw up plans, but not in time for the Committee to review.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval, conditioned upon the submission of clearer and more detailed plans, with staff to review and approve details

123 South Broad Street

First Union Bank, Owner

Allen Roth, Applicant

DATE: 1930

PROPOSAL: Cut out old stone plaque, install a new one

First Union, the new occupants of the bank, proposes to change the large stone plaque over the main entrance, which now bears the words "Fidelity Bank" to "First Union." A former owner replaced the plaque at one time as evidenced by the original plans and the lighter color of the stone. The applicant submitted three different font options for the lettering. Committee members chose to recommend approval of the font that most resembles the existing, pointed so as to minimize the number of visible joints.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the proposal, using the font that most resembles the existing and staff to review and approve details.

320 South Broad Street, University of the Arts

University of the Arts, Owner

Nick Gianopulos, Applicant

DATE: 1875 - fence

PROPOSAL: Rebuild north perimeter wall

Ms. Pentz recused herself owing to her firm's association with the project.

The builders of the new performing arts center propose to rebuild the University of the Arts' north perimeter wall in preparation for the construction of the center. This brick wall contains a pattern of sawtooth designs and panels. The applicant proposes to rebuild it in cinder block, with a face of salvaged brick that matches the remaining historic portions of the wall; however, they would like to wait to complete the brick facing of the wall until completion of construction planned on the north side of the site. The wall requires reconstruction owing to its poor condition. Committee members requested the applicant complete all aspects of the reconstruction at the same time, and install temporary bollards or a protective wood fence to protect the wall until completion of the other construction on the site. The Committee did not want the University to leave the new fence standing without the brick face in case the construction of the new center becomes delayed.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the proposal, but specified that the applicant should complete all aspects of the reconstruction at the same time, and install temporary bollards or a protective wood fence to protect the wall until completion of the other construction on the site.

12 South 12th Street, PSFS Building

12th Street Hotel Association, L.P., Owner

Arthur Jones, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1930

PROPOSAL: Addition, alterations

This proposal shows a more detailed, revised design for the addition to the PSFS building to create the new Loews Hotel. The design differs slightly from that approved in concept before in that glass has replaced many masonry panels and stainless steel panels will now cover the south wall of the addition. The return between the addition and the existing building will remain black brick as in the conceptual proposal. Committee members did not object to the proposed new addition.

Changes to the historic structure include altering a door configuration on the Market Street facade. Changes to the old Lerner's storefront include removing the old "Lerner's" sign, reinstalling curved glass at the corner, cutting a new door on 12th Street and narrowing a door on Market Street. The new application also includes new windows at the 24th floor to match existing sight lines and dimensions, and switching glazed and louvered windows on a mechanical floor. The new proposal supercedes the old, conceptual proposal, which entailed replacing all the windows.

The Commission already approved the installation of a large canopy with "Loews" signage over the main entrance on Market Street. The historic arrangement of the doors at this entrance featured a symmetrical configuration consisting of a central pair of swinging doors, flanked by two revolving doors. The new proposal creates an asymmetrical configuration in which a central revolving door is flanked by a single-leaf, handicap-accessible entrance to its left, and a pair of swinging doors to the right. Committee members asked the applicant to consider a design that would maintain the historic symmetry. Arthur Jones, architect for the project, explained why they could not achieve that given the new use and owing to new building code regulations. Mr. Thomas explained how the architect could achieve symmetry by using a pair of doors operated by a button to create wheelchair accessibility. The architect did not favor the that proposal. Committee members agreed to recommend approval of the new door arrangement, as well as the other alterations to the historic building.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the proposal, with staff to review and approve details.

5520 Arch Street, Samuel Yellin Studio

Clare Yellin, Owner

F.W. Slifer/Salvation Army, applicant

DATE: 1915

PROPOSAL: Demolition of building

This proposal calls for the demolition of the Yellin iron works building. Clare Yellin, owner of the building, finds that since relocating her shop to West Chester she has had trouble even giving the building away. Estimates for rehabilitation run approximately a million dollars without including the cost of toxic waste removal. Ms. Yellin intends to give the building and property to the Salvation Army for use as a children's playground.

Ms. Yellin stated that she can no longer continue the family business while paying for the maintenance of the Arch Street studio. Mr. Thomas recommended sending the issue to the Financial Hardship Committee of the Historical Commission. Mr. Atkin asked that the applicant look into preserving at least the front wall of the building as a memorial to Samuel Yellin. Mr.

Slifer, representing the Salvation Army, explained that the organization's limited funds cannot support the preservation of any retained portion of the building while trying to finance programs for underprivileged children.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend sending the issue to the Financial Hardship Committee.

329 South Street

331 South Street Association, L.P., Prospective Owner

Elan Zaken, Applicant

DATE: c. 1860; c.1910 - storefront

PROPOSAL: Remove historic storefront; build modern storefront and rear addition

This proposal calls for demolishing the first two floors of the front facade including a highly unusual double-recessed storefront. The potential new owner proposes a large glass, two-story storefront flush to the building line. On the rear he hopes to build a three-story addition and parking spaces for two cars. Committee members did not oppose the proposed rear addition, but strongly objected to the proposed alterations to the storefront, which would remove significant historic features.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the proposed rear addition, but recommended denial of the proposed storefront alterations.

401 North Broad Street

Nathan Jacobs, Owner

Robert McCauley, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1928

PROPOSAL: Transformer and fence

This proposal involves the installation of a generator and a fence in the areaway at the base of the building along Noble Street. Committee members expressed concern that with the growing number of tenants in this building seeking approval of exterior alterations, the different proposals should follow a building-wide standard. Mark Ueland, an architect for the project, stated that his firm asked their client to consider having the fence coated in black vinyl to match another, earlier proposal on this facade of the building. Committee members agreed that the owner of the building should orchestrate a building-wide standard for all future proposals. This applicant seemed amenable to this.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the proposal, conditional upon it fitting within the regulations of a building-wide standard for all future proposals on this building, which the owner should have designed and submitted for Committee and Commission approval, with staff to review and approve details for this project.

710 Pine Street

James Quesenberry, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1820

PROPOSAL: Rear addition

This proposal calls for demolition of the rear one-story portion of the house and construction of a rear stuccoed addition. The public has little view of the rear from a public right-of-way.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the proposal.

249 South Van Pelt Street

Jon Merz, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1860

PROPOSAL: Loft door

This proposal entails an alternate design of the former hayloft door on the front of this former carriage house which the applicant seeks to glaze. The applicant submitted several design alternatives that differ from that approved previously by the Committee and Commission. Committee members asked the applicant to alter slightly the design alternative which incorporate the fanlight portion into the doors themselves, to include one more muntin into the rounded top panes. The Committee thought the design had a distinctly "deco" appearance without the extra muntin. The applicant agreed to redesign "alternative one" to the Committee's specifications.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of design alternative one, modified to include one more muntin into the rounded top panes, with staff to review and approve details.

City Hall

City of Philadelphia, Department of Public Property, Owner

Harold Aponte/Capital Programs Office, Applicant

DATE: 1872-1901

PROPOSAL: Railings

This proposal entails installing handrails at the west side entrance of the northwest corner and the east side entrance of the of northeast corner of City Hall. The applicant submitted two schemes for Committee review. The first places railings along the sides of the recessed entrances, and the second scheme places the railing down the center. Committee members preferred the first option, and recommended the applicant angle the railing at the corners of the recessed entrances, and round off the ends.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of placing railings along the sides of the recessed entrances, angling the railing at the corners, and rounding off the ends.

330 South 19th Street, a.k.a. 1900 Panama Street

Joseph and Marcie Coppola, Owners

Robert Boothroyd, Jr., Applicant

DATE: c. 1860; stuccoed - c. 1930

PROPOSAL: Overhanging deck

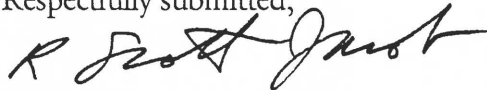
This proposal calls for approval to build a cantilevered deck and catwalk on the two-story ell of the house, which fronts on Panama Street. The owner wishes to cantilever the catwalk and deck three feet over the sidewalk to accommodate the use of a side window as a means of access to the deck. Committee members strongly objected to the proposal, as it would significantly alter the historic appearance of the facade..

Gregory Harvey, a neighbor of 330 South 19th Street, spoke on behalf of several concerned members of the community. He stated that the owner of this property discarded the historic shutters, and executed other facade alterations without approval from the Historical Commission. Mr. Harvey also presented a letter from Andrew and Abbie Kinzler delineating the grievances shared by several members of the neighborhood over this proposal. Mr. Thomas thanked the community members for their concern, and assured them that the Committee joins them in their objections.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend denial of the proposal.

Community members also expressed their concern about the scaffolding that has surrounded the building at 328 South 19th Street for many years. They asked the Historical Commission to have a violation issued for its removal.

Respectfully submitted,



R. Scott Jacob

Executive Secretary