

**REPORT OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF
THE ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

**Robert Thomas, Chair
Commission Conference Room, Suite 1301, 1401 Arch Street
4 June 1998**

Present

Robert Thomas, Chair
Tony Atkin
J. William Cornell
Daniel McCoubrey

Richard Tyler, Historic Preservation Officer
R. Scott Jacob, Executive Secretary

Also

Carl K. Zucker, Esq.
Martin S. Dorph, Temple University
William Dunn, A.G. Lichtenstein and Associates
M. Patricia Clifford, Temple University
Valaida S. Walker, Temple University
Marvin J. Gerstein, Temple University
Jay Falkenstein, Temple University
Thomas Anderson, Temple University
Jack Noonan
Susan Feenan, George Yu Architects
George Schmidheiser, Temple University
George Yu, George Yu Architects
Joanne Phelps, Temple University
Harriet K. Goodheart
Lenore Millhollen, Center City Residents Association
Patricia Aden, Preservation Alliance

Robert Thomas, Chair, recognized a quorum and called the meeting to order at 3:00 P.M.

University Avenue Bridge

Pennsylvania Department of Transportation

Michael Cuddy, Applicant

DATE: 1925-1929

PROPOSAL: Non-functional pin plates

This proposal entails installing non-functional pin plates on this bridge. At a previous meeting the Committee recommended the applicant include the non-functional pin plates to evoke the appearance of the historic configuration. At the May meeting the Commission requested submission of detailed drawings before approval.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval.

Temple University 1940-1948, Thomas Hall

Temple University, Owner

George Schmidheiser, Applicant

DATE: 1886

PROPOSAL: New residence hall at Park Mall and Norris Street

The Committee held this special meeting to review drawings and elevations of the new residence hall proposed by Temple University if permitted by the Commission to demolish Thomas Hall. George Yu, architect for the project, showed the Committee elevations of each of the Park Mall, Norris Street and Broad Street facades. He explained that the new design will incorporate portions of the existing fence and the ornate gate. He described the various design elements that he included to complement the neighboring historic rowhouses. These include brick and masonry color, an expression of rowhouses created by subdividing the facades vertical with inserts of different colored brick and what will appear as stepped gables over each section; scale and a continuation of the openness and flow of Park Mall will also contribute to their compatibility. Mr. Atkin expressed concern that the new building would not demonstrate the vitality and multi-dimensional quality of Thomas Hall. He objected to the flat appearance of the Norris Street and Broad Street facades, and their shortage of windows or doors. Mr. Yu explained that the location of the stair towers at the ends of the building prevents the installation of more windows. Mr. Thomas recommended creating a four-foot-wide planter along the Broad Street facade that would wrap around to the western half of the Norris Street facade.

Committee members thought this will soften the lines of the building. Representatives of Temple University agreed to comply with this request, but noted that the narrowness of the Norris Street sidewalk would necessitate having a narrower planter there. Mr. Atkin recommended that Temple University make a study of its historic buildings and categorize them into different levels of relative value. He explained that this would facilitate consideration of the University's historic resources in its master planning processes. He further noted that the University of Pennsylvania has done this. Patricia Aden of the Preservation Alliance expressed opposition to valuing one building over another, and asked that Temple University and the Historical Commission avoid doing this with regard to the demolition of Thomas Hall.

Three of the four Committee members present voted to recommend approval of the proposed residence hall design because it respects the historic district in scale and materials. Mr. Atkin objected to the design and voted to recommend rejecting the proposal as submitted.

Respectfully submitted,
R. Scott Jacob, Executive Secretary