

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL HARDSHIP
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

**Wayne Spilove, Chair
Commission Conference Room
One Parkway, 1515 Arch Street, 13th Floor**

14 January 2000

Present

Wayne Spilove, Chair
Barbara Kaplan, Executive Director, City Planning Commission
Robert Thomas
Scott Wilds, Assistant Director, Office of Housing and Community Development
David Brownlee, Ph.D.

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

Also

Stuart Mogell, Canepino Inc.
Giampaolo Duva, Canepino Inc.
Gershon Ben-Or, Mirmor Inc
K. Cannon, First Am.

Wayne Spilove, Chair, recognized the presence of a quorum and called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

216 Market Street

Mirmor Corp., Owner
Sabrina Soong, Architect / Applicant
DATE: c. 1860
PROPOSAL: Legalize demolition of historic storefront; construct new storefront

Mr. Spilove explained that this proposal calls for the demolition of the historic recessed center entrance storefront and its replacement with an off-center entrance storefront.

Mr. Tyler offered the administrative background of the permit application. The chronology includes:

12 October 1999: Application for interior work as approved by staff with notation, "No change to exterior. No signage of windows on this permit."

26 October 1999: The Architectural Committee recommended the approval the removal of existing recessed storefront, and its replacement with an off center entrance and cornice. This application made no reference to ground floor windows on Strawberry

Alley. The Committee recommended the approval “on the basis of the poor integrity of the existing storefront and because the center entrance and the narrow dimensions of the showcases will not accommodate the proposed new use.”

10 November 1999: The Commission unanimously rejected the proposal.

29 November 1999: fax letter received from Philly Real Estate, requesting a hardship a review.

2 December 1999: Mr. Baron responded by telephone and provided to the owner and the tenant / applicant highlighted copies of the Ordinances and the Rules and Regulations for guidance in the submission of a hardship application.

16 December 1999: Mr. Tyler wrote to owner to inform him that no hardship information had been received.

20 December 1999: Philly Real Estate sent a letter on which in effect, placed the burden of application on the tenant.

Meanwhile, work began without a permit, including the removal and the replacement of the ground floor windows on Strawberry Alley. Mr. Tyler visited the site and confirmed this action. Licenses and Inspections issued an oral stop work order to no avail and subsequently posted a stop work order.

Mr. Duva, the tenant stated that in the process of taking down the front sign board and security gates, which was cemented to the ground, the shopfront fell out.

Mr. Wilds noted that the security gates and sign board were exterior work and there was no permit for this work. Owing to the poor condition of the building, a barrier was put up for safety. The Owner expressed his concerns; he has spent a lot of money to purchase the building which is in poor condition. He removed a tenant that paid a low rent and has had a problem renting the building since. He has allowed Messers, Duva and Mogell to occupy the ground floor for one year rent free, in exchange for their renovation of the space.

The owner had no documentation of attempts to rent or sell the building. The tenants had no floor plans showing the proposed work or the existing condition.

The Committee members thought that they could not determine whether a hardship exists without proper documentation. The Committee members decided to call a recess to the meeting, until such time as the applicant provides the proper documentation as stipulated in the Ordinances and Rules and Regulations.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane M. Hughes, Executive Secretary