

REPORT OF THE ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Robert Thomas, Chair

Commission Conference Room, One Parkway, 13th Fl., 1515 Arch St.
30 June 1998

Present

Robert Thomas, Chair
Penelope Batcheler
J. William Cornell
Herbert Levy

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

Also

Rand K. Rosenbaum, Rosenbaum Design Group
Christian A. Busch, C. A. Busch Consulting
Edward lane, Datafac Architects
Henry J. Kozlow
Frank Auddino
James Dart
Theresa Stuhlman, Fairmount Park Commission
Martha Wolf, Historic Bartram's Garden
Margaret MacLaren Ulrich, Center City Residents Association
Pejmar Makarechi
Gavin Donaghy
Samuel Olshin, Atkin, Olshin, Lawson-Bell and Associates
William DeCarra

Mr. Thomas, Chair, recognized a quorum and called the meeting to order at 1:45 p.m.

925 Chestnut Street, Federal Reserve Building

Jefferson Hospital, Rothman Institute, Owner
Christian Busch, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1925

PROPOSAL: Alterations to the new elevator tower, new ground-floor fenestration treatment, garden in ramp court

This application involves revisions to a previously approved proposal for an elevator tower addition and ground-floor treatment in the ramp court. Modifications to the elevator plan include cladding the top floor in metal panels rather than marble and curving the west wall. Alterations at the ramp court include a slightly modified window and door treatment and a landscaped garden area.

Christian Busch, architect for the project, showed the Committee samples of the four proposed metals for the cladding. The Committee did not object to the samples, but recommended that the staff review and approve the details of the work. Mr. Busch explained that he designed a curved window wall in the ramp court to connect it with the elevations to either side. Mr. Baron expressed concerns over incorporating a curve into this very angular building. Committee members agreed with Mr. Busch that a new addition to a secondary facade merits a new design element such as this slight curve.

The proposal calls for an alteration to a previously approved window and drive-thru scheme. The applicant wishes to use bronze anodized aluminum spandrel panels instead of the original plan to use stone. Committee members did not object to these changes. Mr. Busch explained that the Institute wants to install a row of trees or shrubbery around the perimeter of the ramp court to keep pedestrians from congregating and smoking there. The proposal also includes three new halo-type illuminated signs on three sides of the new elevator tower, and two brushed aluminum, backlit sign panels in the ramp court.

The committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the metal cladding on the top of the new elevator tower, the curved window wall, the proposed signage, landscaping and bronze anodized aluminum door and spandrel panels.

701 Market Street

The Brickstone Companies, Owner

Jay Tuller, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1901 - storefront

PROPOSAL: Alter doors to shopfront, black out windows

This application involves altering the northwest corner bay of the Lits Department Store building from a four-door entrance to a shop window. Several adjacent shop windows will receive an opaque black film to black out windows. Rand Rosenbaum, representing the applicant, explained that the proposal no longer calls for the removal of the wood frames at the corner entrance. Committee members recommended the applicant retain the wood doors as well, and simply remove the door handles to alleviate any confusion for pedestrian traffic. Mr. Rosenbaum seemed amenable to the recommendation. Ms. Batcheler asked for photographic documentation of the handles for the Commission's file.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the opaque film over the windows and of removing the handles from the northwest corner entrance to create a new shopfront.

401 North Broad Street

Nathan Jacobs, Owner

Edward Lane, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1930

PROPOSAL: New windows, fencing and louvers

This proposal involves installing new louvers in windows facing North Broad Street and removing other louvers and fixing new windows in their place. The tenant seeks to place large new cooling units on the north side of the building, underneath a ramp screened by fencing and aluminum panels. Edward lane, architect for the project, explained that different mechanical needs necessitate the use of both corrugated and chain link fences. Committee members requested a black vinyl coating on the chain link fences.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval, with black vinyl coating on the chain link fences, with staff to review and approve details.

1219 Locust Street

Henry Kozlow, Owner/Applicant

DATE: 1892

PROPOSAL: Cut a garage door in rear facade

This proposal calls for cutting a garage door into the rear facade of this building. The garage will face St. James Street, adjacent to several rowhouses. Ms. Batcheler recommended the applicant chose a darker color for the garage door.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval, with staff to approve the color of the door.

2-8 West Girard Avenue

First Union Bank, Owner

Dominic Aspite, Applicant

DATE: 1877

PROPOSAL: Illuminated and non-illuminated signage

This proposal entails changing the plastic faces on existing signs, several of which are illuminated. Mr. Baron explained that the lack of Historical Commission approval for the existing signs creates a problem regarding approval of the new faces. Committee members objected to the amount of signage. The applicant stated that the signage proposal has received zoning approval. The Committee decided to table the proposal until the applicant could send a design professional to discuss the signage and possible modifications with the Committee.

The Committee voted to recommend tabling the issue awaiting further information.

1100 South Front Street

Frank Audinno, Owner

Dominic Aspite, Applicant

DATE: c. 1840

PROPOSAL: Illuminated signage on roof of building

This proposal calls for a large, illuminated, plastic-faced sign over the roof of this rowhouse to advertize the restaurant occupying the building to highway traffic on I-95. The applicant seeks to demolish part of the chimney in order to create a ledge to set the sign. Mr. Baron asked the applicant whether he considered installing a wood sign lit with spotlights. Mr. Audinno stated that he already had the sign constructed. Mr. Cornell objected to the proposal, and commented on the possibility of setting a dangerous precedent by approving a plastic box roof sign like this, and expressed concern that others along I-95 will want this sort of signage. Mr. Levy requested the applicant submit clear drawings that reflect the Committee's recommendations to set the sign to the side of the chimney without demolishing any portion of it.

Three of the four Committee members present voted to recommend approval of mounting the proposed sign on the roof without demolishing any part of the chimney, and attaching it to the rear of the chimney, no more than four feet above the building. They noted that a billboard exists about a block south on Front Street. Mr. Cornell dissented.

1210 Lombard Street, St. Peter Claver School

Holy Ghost Fathers, Owner

Sister Mary Paula Cancienne, Applicant

DATE: 1906 - 1908

PROPOSAL: Apply door moldings

This proposal entails installing a molding around the jamb of the former front door that the owner removed and filled in with cinder blocks before historic designation. To reduce costs, the applicant proposes a simple square molding rather than the rounded molding found on the remaining portion of the doorframe.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval, with staff to review and approve the choice of a stock trim and color.

Bartram's Garden, 54th Street and Lindbergh Blvd.

John Bartram Association, Owner

James Dart, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 18th Century

PROPOSAL: New building

Mr. Thomas recused himself from the discussion and vote owing to his professional association with the applicant.

This proposal calls for constructing a building to hold public lavatories and educational program offices on the site of a former structure. The new building would resemble a small hay barn. James Dart, architect for the project, stated that three or four generations of structures formerly occupied the proposed building site. He added that some evidence demonstrates that one of the structures was of frame-on-stone construction, which the proposed addition emulates in a contemporary fashion. Committee members did not object to the design, scale or materials of the new addition.

Three of the four Committee members present voted to recommend approval. Mr. Thomas recused himself.

2213 Locust Street

Pejman Makarechi, Owner/Applicant

DATE: 1872

PROPOSAL: Iron grates, flower boxes and fence

This proposal calls for reconstructing the stolen basement grates and building a new fence to keep garbage from collecting in the basement stairway. The owner also proposes iron window boxes. Committee members objected to the ornate appearance of the proposed flower boxes and gated fence, but approved of the basement window grate replacement. The Committee recommended the applicant install a simplified, pipe-style rail that complements the existing main rail, and with a handrail that angles down to follow the stairs. The Committee asked the applicant to abandon the window box proposal in the interest of retaining uniformity on this block.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the reconstructed basement grate and a simple pipe-style rail that complements the existing main rail, and with a handrail that angles down to follow the stairs, with staff to review and approve details.

1900 Pine Street

Allan Baumholtz, Owner/Applicant

DATE: 1860

PROPOSAL: Roll down grate installed in a pent eave

This proposal calls for the legalization of a full-width, open-mesh, roll down security grate. This grate replaces a smaller version that did not successfully protect the store from a burglary. Mr. Baron read a letter from Mr. Baumholtz into the record regarding the necessity of installing the grate. The Historical Commission staff received reports that the installation of the new grates necessitated the removal of a portion of the original storefront cornice, which the pent eave covers. Mr. Levy suggested the Committee include a stipulation in its recommendation for the restoration of the original cornice should this applicant or a future owner remove the pent. Committee members agreed and asked for photographic documentation of the cornice for the Commission files.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the security grate, with a stipulation for the restoration of the original cornice should this applicant or a future owner remove the pent, and photographic and descriptive documentation of the cornice for the Commission files.

2103 Delancey Street

Stanford Erickson, Owner

Carl Massara, Architect/Applicant

DATE: c. 1865

PROPOSAL: Replace rear deck

This proposal calls for redesigning and rebuilding a rear deck and railing on a street faced by several houses.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval.

412 Lombard Street

Kersher Israel Congregation, Owner

Samuel Olshin, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1958

PROPOSAL: Restore stuccoed facade and rehabilitate fence

This proposal entails restoring the stuccoed facade and rehabilitating the iron fence of this synagogue. The fence would include restored iron posts but with simplified balusters based on budget considerations. The owner intends to retain the one piece of existing original rail on site. Ms. Batcheler expressed concern that the proposed scoring pattern on the stucco does not

match the historic photographs. Samuel Olshin, architect for the project, agreed to redesign the scored demarcation lines to match the 1933 photograph from the Commission file.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval.

1901-1905 Walnut Street, Rittenhouse Plaza

Rittenhouse Plaza, Inc., Owner

Dominic Aspite, Applicant

DATE: 1926

PROPOSAL: New windows

Mr. Thomas recused himself from voting in order to present the application to the Committee.

This proposal involves installing approximately fifteen hundred new aluminum windows and capping the existing frames throughout the building. The capping on the frames closely matches the existing frames but shrinks the glass width of the new windows by two inches. The proposal shows a reduction in the depth of the putty slope to about 1/8 of an inch, which will make the windows seem quite shallow. The window manufacturer can rectify this, but doing so will either greatly increase the cost or sacrifice the tilt-in cleaning feature.

Mr. Baron pointed out that with similar applications, such as the Barclay Hotel, the Commission approved overall window replacements with closer attention to the historic putty slope and mullion and frame width on the lower-floor window replacements. Mr. Thomas agreed to have the second-floor windows redesigned to match the historic windows more closely, in either wood or aluminum.

The three remaining Committee members voted to recommend approval of the proposed window replacements, with the second-floor windows redesigned to match the historic windows more closely, in either wood or aluminum.

1831 Addison Street

William and Kathleen DeCara, Owners/Applicants

DATE: c. 1840

PROPOSAL: Install vinyl shutters

This proposal calls for legalizing the bolting of vinyl shutters onto the brick facade. Staff objected to the new shutters because of material, design and method of attachment, and noted that the Commission has consistently asked for wood shutters with hardware and correct panel and louver patterns. Mr. Levy noted that the shutters have panels on all floors rather

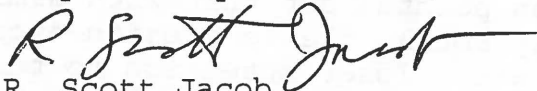
than louvers on the upper floors. Mr. Cornell commented on the high costs of wood shutters as opposed to vinyl, and recommended allowing the applicant to keep the vinyl shutters for that reason. Mr. Baron showed the Committee a shutter price sheet listing a pair of appropriate shutters at about \$200.00. He explained that on simple homes like this one, shutters constitute a significant amount of the decoration. Mr. Levy suggested the applicant consider replacing the first-floor shutters with wood, with the correct slide bar configuration. Mr. Thomas stated that as the house did not have shutters at the time of designation, these do not constitute a replacement.

Mr. Cornell recommended approval of the new vinyl shutters owing to the financial hardship wood shutters would create.

Mr. Levy recommended tabling the issue until the applicant can submit a cost estimate of replacing the first-floor shutters with wood, with the correct slide bar configuration.

Mr. Thomas recommended approving the new shutters because they do not constitute a replacement and the owner already installed them. He stipulated that any future shutter replacements should follow the correct historic model.

Respectfully submitted,



R. Scott Jacob
Executive Secretary