

**THE MINUTES OF THE 452ND STATED MEETING OF THE
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION
12 APRIL 2000**

**Commission Conference Room 18th Floor, 1515 Arch Street
Wayne S. Spilove, Chair**

Present _____

Wayne S. Spilove, Chair
David Brownlee, Ph.D.
Joseph James, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Public Property
Barbara Kaplan, Executive Director, City Planning Commission
Michael Sklaroff, Esq.
Robert Thomas
Dennis Ward III
Scott Wilds, Assistant Director, Office of Housing and Community Development
Caroline Wischmann
Shelly Merhige, Office of City Council President
Stephanie G. Wolf, Ph.D.
Carol Lawrence
Clorise Wynn, Acting Deputy Director, Department of Commerce

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

Mark Zecca, Esq., Senior Attorney, City of Philadelphia Law Department

Also

Timothy M. Sheahan, Ewing Cole Cherry Brott, Architects
Barbara Dertouzos, 401 North Broad Street
Jennifer Parker, Voith & Mactavish Architects
Nicholas Dubrowolski, Germantown Friends School
Mary DeNadai, John Milner Architects
Christopher Carey, 505 Addison
Peter Miller, Towers & Miller Architects
William Betzner, Girard College
Dave Lamontagne, Granary Associates
Lenore Millhollen, Center City Residents Association/Preservation Alliance
Cynthia Tedeschi, Callowhill Management
Richard Koelle, Vitetta Group
Myles P. Kelly
Peter Johnson, Andropogon Associates LTD.
George Guzzie, VLBJR Architects
Robert Powers, Powers & Company
Jonathan Broh, J.K. Roller Architects
Charles Capoldi, B Five Studio Architects

Wayne S. Spilove, Chair, recognized the presence of a quorum and called the 452nd Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission to order at 9:10 A.M.

MINUTES of the 451st Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission.

Mr. Sklaroff expressed his dismay over the comment made by one member concerning another member's conduct, in a matter not under the Commission's jurisdiction.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Wilds and duly seconded, the Commission unanimously approved the minutes of the 451st Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission held 8 March 2000, Wayne Spilove, Chair.

Mr. Spilove welcomed Clorise Wynn, Assistant Deputy Director of Commerce to the Commission.

REPORT OF THE ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE, Robert Thomas, Chair

OLD BUSINESS

109 Kenilworth Street

Robert Celata, Owner

Peter Miller, Architect

DATE: 1789

PROPOSAL: Rear dormer addition

This proposal was tabled pending a site visit by members of the Committee and staff to ascertain whether the dormer formed a part of the original fabric of this house.

The proposal revisits the altering of an original rear gabled dormer to create a wider shed dormer. The new dormer would be slightly visible from Front Street looking west and from the rear of properties fronting Bainbridge Street. Pursuant to the Committee's and Commission's recommendation, Mr. Baron, Penny Batcheler and Peter Miller, architect for the project, visited the site to examine the dormer. Mr. Baron gave a brief synopsis of their findings. The original plaster wall is visible at the attic level. The sash has been replaced, and siding put on the outside dormer. Owing to the original plaster's being intact, it appears highly unlikely that the historic structural elements have been replaced or removed. Mr. Brownlee stated that the Ordinance does not direct the Commission to consider visibility in allowing changes. However, the Commission has a responsibility to exercise its judgment, owing to the rarity, overriding character, and integrity of this building.

Ms. Wynn commented on the importance of people remaining in the city, and believed that the proposal will not result in any modification to the building's historic fabric. Mr. Wilds, however, stated that the proposal is structural, and so will result in the removal of the building's historic fabric.

Mr. Sklaroff noted the importance of preserving the historic roof shape. The top of this building preserves the look of the 18th century, and altering the roof contour would change the 18th century look of the building and streetscape significantly.

Mr. Tyler noted that the Commission has approved additions to 19th century houses with as much or more visibility, noting houses in Washington Square West. Ms. Wischmann questioned previous precedents relating to these buildings. The Commission members placed importance on the rarity of this period of house.

Mr. Sklaroff made a motion to reject the Committee's Recommendation for approval. Mr. Wilds seconded the motion which carried with 10 votes. Ms. Wolf opposed the motion.

825 Walnut Street, Walnut Street Theater, NE corner at 9th Street

Walnut Street Theater Company, Owner

Jonathan Broh, J.K. Roller Architect

DATE: 1808-1809

PROPOSAL: Signage

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Denial

This proposal involves new signage consisting of non-illuminated, aluminum letters for the Walnut Street Theater.

The applicant asked for a one month continuance.

Mr. Wilds made a motion to grant the continuance not to exceed one month. Ms. Merhige seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

50 South 2nd Street

Paul Rimmer, Owner

Robert Pisani, Applicant

DATE: C. 1830; 1980

PROPOSAL: Legalize signage and awning

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval to legalize the storefront, owing to its being significantly altered before designation.

The applicant, on behalf of the owner, seeks to remedy a violation issued to the property for new storefront alterations. Photographs from 1977 reveal that the building has since been significantly altered. The storefront and windows are not the original ones. Mr. Tyler noted that in Old City, most buildings were designated in the late 1960s and re-designated in the 1970s to conform to the technical requirements of the Ordinance at that time.

Mr. Wilds recommended that excerpts from the previous minutes be attached in order to reacquaint the Commission with details of the revisited proposal.

The Committee recommended to approve the legalization since the work was done more than ten years ago.

Ms. Merhige made a motion to accept the Committee's Recommendation for approval. Mr. Sklaroff seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

REPORT of the Architectural Committee, 28 March 2000, Robert Thomas, Chair.

1900-98 Ridge Avenue, a.k.a. 3101 South College Avenue, Girard College

Girard College, Owner

Robert O'Connor, Applicant

DATE: 1833-1847

PROPOSAL: Widen gate

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval of stone removal, demolition of gatehouse and installation of a chain-link gate for a period not to exceed 24 months.

The proposal involves the following:

1. During the construction of a new elementary school complex, widen the existing north gate to 32 feet and clean cut the pier;
2. Demolish gatehouse of c. 1920;
3. Erect a temporary chain link gate for a period not to exceed 24 months, and
4. New wood gate with design to come The Historical Commission for approval.
5. The old wood gate must remain on the premises.

Contrary to the original submission for this project, the 1870s, fire-damaged building will not be demolished. The proposal will create a service entrance to allow larger vehicles easier access. The proposed 15 feet stone removal will occur as a clean cut from pier to pier.

Richard Koelle, the architect for the project, gave a presentation to explain the proposal. A chain-link gate will be erected for the duration of the construction project not to exceed 24 months; and a wood gate, as prescribed in Steven Girard's will, will then be erected in the enlarged opening. There was much discussion as to whether this meets the *Standards*. Mr. Tyler noted the importance of accessibility and the *Standards* on accessibility, and stated that the proposal does indeed meet the *Standards*.

Mr. Wilds noted a correction to the report: reference to the demolition of the gatehouse should have been included in the italicized recommendation of the Architectural Committee.

Mr. Brownlee recommended that the original 19th century wood gate be preserved and stored on the premises as a condition of the Commission's approval.

Mr. Sklaroff made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation for approval, as corrected, and the original gate to be stored on the premises. Mr. Thomas seconded the motion which carried with 9 votes. Ms. Wolf abstained and Ms. Wynn recused herself.

3700 Spruce Street, University of Pennsylvania Quadrangle

University of Pennsylvania, Owner

Richard Russell, Applicant

DATE: c. 1895

PROPOSAL: Landscape, trash disposal and doorways

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval with staff to review details.

This proposal calls for renovations to the Quadrangle and involves three types of work: landscaping and raising of the grade for drainage; three trash disposal areas, and the installation of new courtyard doors based on historic designs. The University is in the process of restructuring its dormitory system. The Quadrangle will have three college houses, each with its own doors in the courtyard. Mr. Wilds asked that the minutes reflect that there were 30 different types of historic doors, and that only three original doors remain. Three large areaways will be created for trash handling nodes. In addition, some areaways will be changed and some removed to accommodate mechanical louvers of anodized bronze. The balustrade will be restored on the monumental stairs with a black metal safety rail.

The new paving will help alleviate drainage problems. Its design will be similar to the existing one and will include bluestone thresholds at entrances with raised granite curbs. The various college houses will have the following:

1. College house A will have a bluestone court with a small step-down amphitheater. The large elm tree will be retained;
2. College house B will have crisscrossed paths for circulation and an oval ellipse in lower B;
3. College house C will have paths with flush lawns.

Mary DeNadai, architect for the project, gave a presentation and explained the many phases of the proposal. She noted that there were 30 types of historic doors in the building; but only three original doors remain. The adoption of a common historic door design for the entrances to each of the three College Houses will serve to reinforce the discrete identity of each of these Houses. The year 2000 will be engraved on the reproduced doors in order to indicate that they are not the original doors.

Mr. Wilds emphasized the importance of having the minutes reflect that there are no longer 30 types of historic doors, and that only three historic doors remain.

Mr. Baron noted that the stair rail will be replaced, some areaways changed, and vents installed as part of the proposal.

Ms. Merhige made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation for approval with staff to review details. Mr. Ward seconded the motion which carried with 8 votes. Mr. Brownlee, Mr. Sklaroff and Ms. Wolf recused themselves.

12 South 12th Street, Loews Hotel at PSFS

Loews Hotel, Owner

Robert Powers, Applicant

DATE: 1930-32

PROPOSAL: Signage

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval

This proposal involves signage for the restaurant, garage and hotel entrances along both 12th and Market Streets. Some items in this proposal have been approved, with others approved in concept only.

1. Replace glass in existing backlit sign box next to the Market street entrance;
2. Open channel letters and white neon on the previously approved canopy;
3. New restaurant signage with stainless steel letters with red neon illumination;
4. 12 South 12th Street sign to remain;
5. 12th Street plaque with black granite surface to remain;
6. A new interpretive plaque at the 12th Street entrance;
7. Alteration of wrap-around sign from Philadelphia Saving Fund Society to Loews Philadelphia Hotel and holes to be patched, and
8. Parking sign with stainless steel letters.

Robert Powers gave a presentation for this proposal.

Mr. Wilds, along with other Commission members, expressed their dismay over the work's being done prior to approval from both the Historical Commission and the Art Commission.

Mr. Ward made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation for approval. Mr. Brownlee seconded the motion which carried with 9 votes. Mr. Sklaroff and Ms. Wolf abstained.

Mr. Spilove, chair, passed the gavel to Ms. Wolf, vice-chair.

44 West Coulter Street, Germantown Friends School

Germantown Friends School, Owner

Nicholas Dubrowolski, Applicant

DATE: c. 1870

PROPOSAL: Rehabilitation/demolition rear bay

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval with staff to review details.

This proposal involves renovations to this house for faculty housing. The applicant proposes to remove a late 19th century bay addition at the rear of the house and replace it with windows and stonework.

Jennifer Parker, architect for the project explained the proposal:

1. Remove rear second floor bay whose structural integrity had been seriously compromised by the demolition of the first floor bay;
2. Replace bay with three windows to eliminate as much patching as possible;
3. Restore slate mansard, and
4. Restore dormer and cornice.

Ms. Parker noted that the first floor bay had been removed by the prior owner. This removal has caused the second floor bay, which is not integral to the building structure, to become unsafe. The window in mansard will replicate the existing dormer.

The Commission recommended wood framing since the historic fabric has already been removed and matching the stone will be difficult.

Mr. Brownlee noted three possibilities

1. Preserve the existing bay;
2. Restore dormer and restore 2nd floor window to its original form;
3. Infill wood windows.

Mr. Brownlee asked for an amendment to the recommendation: that the 2nd story windows be distinguishable from the others.

Ms. Merhige made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation for approval with staff to review details of the windows with the amendment that the 2nd floor windows be one-over-one instead of two-over-two. Mr. Ward seconded the motion which carried with 10 votes. Ms. Wolf abstained.

Ms. Wolf, vice-chair, returned the gavel to Mr. Spilove.

1512 Spruce Street, The Drake

Forest City Residential, Owner

George Guzzie, Applicant

DATE: 1928

PROPOSAL: Renovate marquee

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval with letters mounted directly on canopy.

This proposal involves modifying an existing marquee at the front entrance by removing a cloth skirt and installing metal letters on the sides. The proposal has various parts:

1. Removal of the canvas
2. Letters mounted on the marquee;
3. Metal ceiling with down lights; and
4. Re-roofing of the marquee.

The marquee is not original to the building. The canvas will be removed and the underlining structure will not change.

Mr. Ward made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation for approval with letters mounted directly on the canopy. Mr. Sklaroff seconded the motion which carried with 10 votes. Ms. Wolf abstained.

264 South Van Pelt Street

Caroline Macmoran, Owner

Charles Capoldi, Architect

DATE: 1880

PROPOSAL: 4th story addition with roof deck

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval of addition and denial of the deck as submitted.

The proposal involves adding a fourth floor addition set back 10 feet from the existing cornice line with a deck in front of it on this street of carriage houses. The addition will have visibility because this substantially modified building rises higher than the adjoining properties. The Committee thought the addition acceptable because of the set back and because it does not alter the proportion or appearance of the front facade. The visibility of the deck from the front of property, however, is an issue. The historic precedent and current practice for decks is in the rear. In this instance, the presence of a glass roofed conservatory at the rear effectively precludes the construction of a deck at the conventional location.

Mr. Capoldi, architect for the project, noted that the deck was not an integral part of the proposal. The applicant thought that a deck would be a nice addition after having already planned a fourth-floor addition.

The CCRA has a policy of no front decks, and front decks are also a zoning issue. With the exception of newer buildings, there has not up until now been approvals for a front decks in the district. There was much discussion about possible alternatives to the deck. The Commission agreed to allow the addition with a set back of 10 feet, as well as the front deck with a thin profile metal railing set back so as to not allow visibility from directly across the street.

Mr. Tyler recommended that the motion be defeated. Given the number of flat roof houses in existing districts and pending districts, he thought that approving the proposal would set a precedent for bringing decks out to the cornice line.

Mr. Sklaroff made a motion to reject the Committee's recommendation and to approve both the addition and the roof deck. The deck must have a thin profile metal railing and be set back to minimize visibility from across the street with staff to review details. Mr. Wilds seconded the motion which carried with 9 votes. Ms. Wolf and Mr. Brownlee abstained.

505 Addison Court

Christopher Carey, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1965

PROPOSAL: Rooftop addition

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval

This proposal revisits the roof top addition discussed in greater detail last month. Mr. Carey has followed the Committee's advice not to exceed the height of the side parapet walls. The revised proposal incorporates a slanted roof enclosure following the lines of the wall as recommended by Committee and Commission.

Mr. Ward made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation for approval. Mr. Wilds seconded the motion which carried with 10 votes. Ms. Wolf abstained.

2345 St Albans Place

Raymond Johnson, Owner/Applicant

DATE: 1868

PROPOSAL: Legalize renovations: windows, door, cornice and mansard

The Committee recommended tabling the proposal for a time not to exceed 6 months. Correction to the minutes: Mr. Johnson did not previously attend the Committee meeting.

Mr. Brownlee made a motion to table the proposal for a period not to exceed 6 months. Ms. Merhige seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

2106 Shunk Street

Reginald DeCarlo, Owner/Applicant

DATE: 1914

PROPOSAL: Re-roof in substitute material

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval of repairing the existing slate on north slopes and replacing the slate on the south slopes with asphalt shingles that match slate in color and shape.

The proposal involves replacement of a slate roof in bad condition with asphalt shingles. Mr. DeCarlo, the owner, explained his urgent need for replacement, owing to water penetration into his house. He proposed to replace the existing slate with asphalt shingles.

After looking at photographs, the Committee noted that the flashing and fasteners may have failed, but the slate appeared in good condition. The Committee asked the applicant to consider the possibility of repairing the slate roof reusing the existing slate which did not seem in poor condition. This would prove less costly for the owner and would last longer.

Mr. Wilds recommended a discussion of slate roofs in the districts.

Ms. Merhige stated that a policy for dealing with slate roofs should be implemented in light of the many districts coming up for approval.

Mr. Brownlee made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation for approval of re-roofing the north facing slopes in slate and the south facing slopes in slate like asphalt shingles. Mr. Ward seconded the motion which carried with 9 votes. Ms. Wolf and Mr. Wilds abstained.

3142 Market Street, Centennial National Bank

Drexel University, Owner

John Cluver, Voith & Mactavish Architects, Applicant

DATE: 1876

PROPOSAL: Sign

Last month The Architectural Committee Recommended: Approval of removing the loose brownstone, smoothing out the surface of the sound material and documenting the remaining letters, including a rubbing of the most intact letter to record the letter size and style. The Committee voted to recommend denial of the proposal to apply Jahn Cathedral Stone to the sound surface and carve a new sign, "Paul Peck Center", into the surface.

The new proposal calls for installing individual bronze letters in the original sign band.

Mr. Brownlee made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation for approval as submitted with shop drawing details to be reviewed by staff. Mr. Wilds seconded the motion which carried with 10 votes. Ms. Wolf abstained.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Commission had an executive session to consult with counsel about pending litigation before the Board of License and Inspection Review concerning 1914-1916 Rittenhouse Square Street.

Mr. Brownlee made a motion to delegate to the Chair the issuance of a statement of reasons for the Commission's proposal for 1914-1916 Rittenhouse Square Street. Mr. Wilds seconded the motion which carried with 9 votes. Ms. Wolf and Ms. Kaplan opposed the motion.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Certified Local Government Comment on National Register of Historic Places: Bell Telephone Building, 1827-1834 Arch Street.

Mr. Tyler reviewed Criteria A and C for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. He stated that the Bell Telephone Building met Criterion A for its place in the history of the Bell Telephone Company of Pennsylvania and of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, with emphasis on the expanded use of the telephone for personal and business purposes and the growth of the long distance system. The importance of the work of Eugene A. Stopper, the use of reinforced concrete in a tall building, and the transition from traditional commercial design in Philadelphia to Art Deco Modernism satisfy Criterion C of the National Register.

Mr. Tyler recommended that the Commission find this building meets these Criteria and urge its listing on the National Register.

Ms. Merhige made a motion to recommend listing the building on the National Register. Ms. Wolf seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

2. Committee on Historic Designation: Appointment

The members of the Committee on Historic Designation and the staff recommend the appointment of Bruce Lavery to fill the vacancy on this committee created by the resignation of Sandra Tatman.

Ms. Merhige made a motion to appoint Mr. Lavery to the Designation Committee. Mr. James seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

3. Proposed Spring Garden Municipal Historic District: letters of notification

Mr. Tyler advised the Commission that staff proposes to comply next month with the notice requirements prescribed by the ordinance for the proposed Spring Garden historic district. The letters of notice and the posters will be in English and in Spanish.

Mr. Wilds questioned the order of the Commission's consideration of the several proposed historic districts and expressed his concern for neighborhoods in West Philadelphia. Mr.

Tyler responded that the completion of the requisite documentation determines this order. We do not have in hand such documentation for the West Philadelphia neighborhoods. It appears that uncertainty remains in West Philadelphia as to the extent of a district or even of which district. Ms. Spina added that questions of boundaries remain unresolved and that the available inventory has serious flaws. She also noted that Old City has begun to raise funds to retain a consultant to prepare a nomination for that community.

Mr. Spilove informed the Commission that Mr. Sklaroff urged that the Commission not send out the notices for Spring Garden until the Mayor has commented on this proposal. Following some discussion, the Commission agreed that the staff should proceed with the notification process. Mr. Tyler noted that in the past the staff has consulted about proposed districts with the appropriate district council person(s) and that this had been done for Spring Garden.

4. New Market

Mr. Tyler informed the Commission that a developer proposes to build a hotel at New Market in the Society Hill Historic District. The building that now occupies the site dates from 1974 and appears on the inventory for this district as non-contributing. Under the Commission's Rules and Regulations, staff may approve permits for non-contributing buildings, including for demolition, without referral to the Architectural Committee or the Commission. Absent an objection from the Commission, Mr. Tyler plans to exercise this discretionary authority in the present case. The hotel will have ten stories on Front Street and will drop to four on its east-west axis toward Second Street. The drawings for the new hotel will come before the Commission. The Society Hill Civic Association supports this development. In addition, some archeological remains may survive under the pad of New Market. This will be addressed as a part of the § 106 review required owing to a HUD 108 loan for this project.

No Commission member objected to the staff's approving the demolition permit application for New Market without referral to the Committee and Commission.

THE REPORT on the Activities of the Historical Commission Staff, March 2000.

Mr. Tyler asked if members of the Commission had any questions about the report.

Mr. Brownlee made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Wischmann seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 11:45 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane M. Hughes
Executive Secretary

