

REPORT OF THE ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Arlene Matzkin, Chair
Commission Conference Room
Suite 1301, 1401 Arch Street
24 September 1996

Present

Arlene Matzkin, Chairperson
Penelope Batcheler
J. William Cornell
Herbert Levy
Suzanne Pentz

Randal Baron, Assistant Historic Preservation Officer
Laura Spina, Historic Preservation Specialist

Also

Anthony Weber
Adam Ritter, Le Bus
Amy Freitag, Fairmount Park Commission
Philip Cohen, Five Spot
Penny Lancaster
Mimi Dubiel, Historic Landmarks for Living
Bill Link, Historic Landmarks for Living
Eric Shanoski
John Dahl
James Ruckman, Gardner/Fox
Carl Gunter
Larry Snyder, Fairmount Park Historic Preservation Trust
Bob Kauffmann, Stephen Kennerly Architects
Vincent McCall
Renato Russo
W. Ramos, Jr.
Tina Breslow
Robert Thomas, Campbell Thomas & Co.

Ms. Matzkin called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

135 South 18th Street

Rittenhouse Management Corporation, Owner
Adam Ritter, Applicant
DATE: 1913
PROPOSAL: Awning, new door

The present awning on the storefront is a plastic barrel vault style which is the common form of awning on the building. All of the stores on both the 18th Street and Walnut Street facades have this type of awning. The proposal calls for a new shed style awning. While the Committee usually does not approve the barrel vault style, it believed that consistency of awning types on the building's facade was important. The owner did not

object to having a barrel vault awning, acknowledging that it would be cheaper. The proposal also involved changing the front door.

The Committee voted to recommend approval of a barrel vault awning and approval of the door.

3 Bank Street and 230 Market Street

Paul Rimmer, Owner, 3 Bank Street

J & M Neubauer, Owner, 230 Market Street

Michael Lipton, Applicant

DATE: c. 1830 for each building

PROPOSAL: Lighting and conduit; also, clean brick, paint masonry and replace glazing 3 Bank Street

The owner of the nightclub on Bank Street, Philip Cohen, explained that he wants to illuminate Bank Street from Market Street to his establishment to make the street secure and inviting. The Committee noted the need for lighting, but wanted to see specific lighting fixtures before giving a recommendation. The proposal involves installing a conduit on the exterior of 230 Market and across the front facades of the Bank Street buildings. The Committee decided that an exterior conduit should be the last option. Mr. Cohen stated that he does not own 230 Market, but has received permission to install an exterior conduit. He did not know if he would be allowed to install an interior one. If an exterior conduit is used, it must be Mineral Insulated Cable, which is very thin and flexible, and installed above the stone lintel on the Bank Street properties. The Committee asked the applicant to return with information on the feasibility of running the conduit on the interior and on the lighting fixtures. The stone columns on the first floor are painted a bright yellow. The owner wants to paint them a stone color that will match the unpainted stone lintel.

The Committee voted to recommend approval to the paint the first floor columns to match the color of the lintel. The Committee asked the applicant to explore the option of running the conduit on the interior of the buildings at the second story and provide information on its feasibility. If this is not possible the Committee will recommend approval of an exterior MI conduit that will run on top of the lintel at 3 Bank Street with the smallest light boxes possible. The Committee also asked the applicant to return with specific lighting fixtures for review.

#4 Boathouse Row

United States Rowing Association, Owner

Anthony Weber, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1870; 1912 - 2nd story addition

PROPOSAL: Facade alterations

Mr. Weber explained that the Committee and Commission had already approved the removal of the aluminum siding. The owner

wants to raise money to restore the facade before the siding is removed. However, the exterior stairs that lead from the second floor to the roof of the ground floor are in danger of collapse. This proposal is for installation of a new, staircase from the second floor to the roof of the ground floor, a new staircase from the roof of the ground floor to the ground, and a railing around the roof of the ground floor. These will only be temporary until the restoration of the balconies and staircases that were originally on the building. Also, the proposal includes restoration of the piers between the garage bays. Several years ago the owner installed inappropriate garage doors without Commission approval. The Committee stated that the white garage doors should be painted brown to match the trim of the building. It was noted that when the restoration of the facade takes place the trim will be dark green and the doors can be repainted at that time to match. The Committee agreed that the new stairs are necessary and expressed hope that the facade is restored soon.

The Committee voted to recommend approval on the condition that the garage doors are painted brown.

6014 Chew Street

Penny Lancaster, Owner/Applicant

DATE: 1886

PROPOSAL: Masonry fence alteration

Ms. Lancaster's father came to discuss the proposal. A portion of the schist fence around the property was demolished to allow a driveway. Mr. Lancaster explained that a pier existed in the fence and the opening was located next it.

The Committee voted to recommend approval on the condition that a pier is built on the east side of the driveway entrance to match the pier on the west.

235 South Camac Street

Philadelphia Sketch Club, Owner

Robert Grooms, Applicant

DATE: c. 1825

PROPOSAL: Repair dormers & skylight; new roof, downspouts & gutters

Mr. Baron described the proposal for a restoration of the dormers, skylights and a new roof. The roof, historically, has had both cedar shingles and standing seam metal. This proposal is for cedar shingles. The owner wants to replace the horizontal-pivot dormer windows with historically accurate three-over-six double-hung windows evidenced by historic photographs of the building.

The Committee voted to recommend approval with staff to approve dormer details.

785 South Front Street

Rosa Marino, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1795; c. 1860 alterations

PROPOSAL: Facade restoration, new roof

This building is an 18th century house altered in the mid-19th century. The owners offered two proposals, one with colonial style windows and one with Victorian period windows. The Committee decided that the two-over-two Victorian period windows would be more appropriate for all of the windows since other elements, such as the cornice, are from that period. The proposal, however, is for flat-top windows and transom while the lintels are arched. The Committee decided that the owner should investigate the windows and install true-arched windows if it proves that arch-head openings exist under the aluminum paning. The Committee voted to recommend approval of the solid paneled shutters on the first and second floors since documentation to determine what shutter type was on the building does not survive. The Committee voted to recommend approval of the awning or hopper type basement windows.

The Committee voted to recommend approval with two stipulations. First, the owner is to investigate the windows and the door transom. If any of the windows were true-arched the replacement windows must be true-arched. Second, all windows should be two-over-two. The Committee voted to recommend approval of awning and hopper windows for the basement.

1701 Addison Street

Robert Larsen, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1850

PROPOSAL: Facade restoration

Proposal: removal of Permastone and cleaning and repointing the original brick facade.

The Committee voted to recommend approval, with staff to approve pointing and cleaning.

319-327 South Broad Street, Chambers Wylie Memorial Church

Vincent Bruno, Contractor

DATE: 1900

PROPOSAL: Cleaning, pointing

Proposal: cleaning the masonry and repointing mortar joints.

The Committee voted to recommend approval with staff to approve pointing and cleaning samples.

108 South Front Street

Historic Landmarks for Living, Owner

Bill Link, Applicant

DATE: c. 1830

PROPOSAL: Basement door

Mimi Dubiel, representing the owner, explained that the basement entrance originally had a wood door that extended from the lintel of the opening down to the steps as well as a wood bulkhead door. Now the only door is at the bottom of the steps and people use the landing area as a toilet. The proposal is for a metal door to be placed at the lintel of the opening to stop trespassers. The Committee stated that some of the steps would still be open. Ms. Dubiel said that only three steps would be exposed and people would not be able to hide in such a shallow space. A bulkhead door would not be practical because trash removal is done through this door.

The Committee voted to recommend approval.

1035-1037 Spruce Street, Roberts-Quay House

Historic Landmarks for Living, Owner

Bill Link, Applicant

DATE: c. 1860

PROPOSAL: Brownstone repair, replacement windows

Ms. Dubiel, representing the owner, stated that the brownstone was covered with the Thorocoat and Thoroseal before they purchased the building in 1978; however Historic Landmarks for Living has recoated it since that time. Mr. Link testified that the cracks and deterioration of the coating is from age. The roof, cornice and walls were checked for water infiltration and there is no water damage. The Committee acknowledged that the coating of the brownstone is irreversible and voted to approve the proposed repairs.

Mr. Baron described the evolution of the storm windows. In the early 1980s the owner covered the wood, true-arched windows with aluminum, square-edged storm windows before the present ordinance of the Commission. Several years ago, after the new ordinance, the present owner replaced some of the windows again with aluminum storm windows, without the Commission's approval. These windows are also square-edged and have introduced a new horizontal muntin. The Committee decided that the new windows are unacceptable. Ms. Dubiel stated that they will change the windows when the building is sold as condominiums, but did not say when that would happen.

The Committee voted to recommend approval of the brownstone repair, denial of the new storm windows. The Committee noted that the new storm windows should be changed to true-arched storm windows that divide at the meeting rail of the building's windows and are painted to match the frames.

1107 Spruce Street

John Dahl and Eric Shanoski, Owners/Applicants

DATE: 1889

PROPOSAL: New roof

Proposal: replace the tar paper roof of the dormer with an asphalt shingle roof that will resemble slate.

The Committee voted to recommend approval.

Ridgeland Mansion

City of Philadelphia, Owner

James Ruckman, Architect

DATE: 1800

PROPOSAL: Porch glazing alteration

The Committee and Commission approved the glazing of the porch with wood stiles and framing. Mr. Ruckman explained that the stiles would be six to eight inches to accommodate the weight and stress of the glass. This proposal calls for using metal stiles instead. This would reduce the size to about two inches. The color would be the same color as the stucco. The Committee stated that this was an improvement and the glazing would still be removable.

The Committee voted to recommend approval.

1921-1923 Panama Street

Carl Gunter, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1950

PROPOSAL: Storm doors

This building has three sets of double-leaf French doors that open inward. There is no balcony, just a railing. The proposal is for six wood storm/screen doors attached to the exterior of the existing doors.

The Committee voted to recommend approval.

132 South 18th Street

Aglio Restaurant, Owner

Myrna Mendoza, Architect/Applicant

DATE: c. 1850; c. 1926 - facade alterations

PROPOSAL: Facade alterations

The proposal calls for installing a restaurant in 132 South 18th Street and the yard of the Fell-Van Rensselaer mansion. The proposal has several parts: new doors on the side facade for access to the courtyard, awnings that stretch from the opening in the masonry fence to the building and along the side of the building, and a wrought iron railing on the masonry fence with an arched gateway decorated with a garlic motif. The changes

proposed for the front of the building include a new first-floor storefront and a new bay window, to replace the existing, on the second floor.

The Committee decided to recommend in favor of all of the changes except replacing the existing bay window. The bay can be painted to match the color of the new first floor windows but should be retained and restored as historic fabric. The Committee also encouraged the restoration of the original third floor windows which would complement the new first floor windows. Bob Kauffmann, a representative of the architect, stated that he will discuss changing those windows with the owner. The Committee also stated that the wrought iron fence should only have one post installed in the stone fence to reduce the number of holes in the stone.

The Committee voted to recommend approval of all alterations except the number of posts in the masonry fence and the new bay window on the second floor. The original bay window must remain.

2042 Rittenhouse Square Street

Jennifer Breslow, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1890; c. 1955 - facade alteration

PROPOSAL: Paint masonry

Proposal: paint the bricks Bainbridge green, the door Ardmore Red, and the trim Pebbledust khaki.

The Committee voted to recommend approval.

Guardhouse - Rittenhouse Square

Hal Dean, Architect/Applicant

PROPOSAL: Replacement

Robert Thomas, a colleague of Mr. Dean, presented the proposal. Several years ago, the Friends of Rittenhouse Square decided to restore an old guardhouse owned by the Fairmount Park Commission and install it in Rittenhouse Square. The Victorian era guardhouse was situated at Eakins Oval and then moved several times. Since the original proposal, the guardhouse has deteriorated beyond repair. The architect has contacted several companies which make solariums and similar structures and they are able to reconstruct the original Victorian guardhouse. Since the structure will be new, some changes will be made from the original: only two of the windows will be operable instead of all eight and the originally designed granite base, which is not financially feasible, will be cast stone.

The Committee has several questions. First, the Committee understood that the organization had originally wanted to restore an existing guardhouse, but now it was installing a brand new structure that was based on a Victorian structure that never

existed in the Beaux Arts designed square. The Committee did not want people to mistake it as an old structure. It was suggested that a plaque, with the date and perhaps the name of the organization, might help the public understand that it is a new structure.

Second, the plan calls for the building to be moved from the present symmetrical placement to a site that is off the axis of the main walkways. The change of placement will create an imbalance in the center of the square created by the two diagonal walkways. Ms. Batcheler and the Committee urged the architect to develop an Historic Landscape Report or at least research what was on that site before plans are finalized. Mr. Thomas agreed but stressed that time is a factor because the cables for the guardhouse are to be installed when the walkways are under construction for the fountain repairs.

Overall the Committee supported the proposal, but decided that questions of final design and placement should be answered before they recommend final approval.

The Committee voted to recommend approval of the concept of a new guardhouse but suggested that the history of the site and the final design need to be reviewed before recommending final approval.

2229 Spruce Street

Anthony Mezzarocca, Owner

Renato Russo, Applicant

DATE: c. 1880; c. 1950 - 1st floor alterations

PROPOSAL: Facade alterations

The three owners and the architect for the project presented the proposal. A previous owner of the building installed modern windows and stucco on the first floor. The proposal involves: moving the front door to the 23rd Street facade with a handicap access ramp and a bubble awning; installing Palladian windows on the front facade and a Palladian and a glass block window on the side facade; erecting a cyclone fence around the trash area on Manning Street.

The Committee explained to the architect that the Palladian windows are not compatible with the second and third floors of the building which are original. The windows should be larger and rectangular. There is no historic basis for arched windows on this building. The architect will meet with the staff to design windows that would be compatible with the design of the building and satisfy the needs of the restaurant. The Committee also stated that the glass block window is not appropriate, but a glazed window would be fine.

The building no longer has a cornice between the stucco and the brick at the top of the first floor. The Committee recommended that the building should have a cornice to demarcate

the top of the storefront area.

The Committee voted to recommend approval of the application with several changes. First, the awnings should be a shed type. Second, the rear fence should be wood. Third, the windows should be changed to be compatible with the second and third floors in size and style possibly retaining the present openings but with new infill windows. Fourth, a cornice could be installed at the top of the stucco to create a line between the first and second floors. Fifth, the doors are to have single panes of glass. Sixth, the roof plan should show the exhaust ducts installed to minimize visibility from the street.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura M. Spina

Laura M. Spina
Historic Preservation Specialist