

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

**Robert Thomas, Chair
Commission Offices, One Parkway, 13th Floor, 1515 Arch Street
24 April 2001**

Present

Robert Thomas, Chair
Herbert Levy, FAIA
Daniel McCoubrey
Suzanne Pentz

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

Also

John Migioia, 2515 South 21st Street
Peter Phillips, Kelly Maiello Architects
Karl Blyler, Albert Einstein Healthcare Network
Elyce Teitelman, Albert Einstein Healthcare Network
Michael Hauptman, Brawer and Hauptman Architects
Brett Powell, Brawer and Hauptman Architects
Katherine Kober, Office of Housing and Community Development
Michael K. Brannan, 2145 Mt. Vernon Street
Robert Powers, Powers and Company/Spring Garden Civic Association
Bill Lewandowski, Irwin and Leighton
Martha Leigh Wolf, Historic Bartram's Garden
James Dart, Historic Bartram's Garden
Maurice Torjman, 1500-02 Mt. Vernon Street
Albert Taus, Albert Taus and Associates, Architects

Herbert Levy, Vice-Chair, called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m.

1801 Diamond Street, Church of the Advocate

Church of the Advocate, Owner
Dominic Aspite, Applicant
DATE: 1891-97
PROPOSAL: Handicapped ramp

This proposal involves adding a ramp on the Gratz Street side of the church and its rectory. The new ramp will require the demolition or encasing of the existing steps. The staff recommended approval; however, encasing the steps is the preferred option.

Dominic Aspite and Peter Phillips attended the meeting and Mr. Phillips presented photographs of the existing stairs and stated that an encasement would require that the ramp extend further down Gratz Street.

The Committee recommended the removal of a couple of top steps for the encasement, thus allowing for access to the Parish house and the Sanctuary. The applicant stated that the facing would be granite stone salvaged from earlier work on the chapel.

The Architectural Committee recommended approval with the staff to review details. Ms. Pentz abstained from the vote.

5501 Old York Road, Frank Synagogue

Albert Einstein Medical Center, Owner

Michael Hauptman, Architect

DATE: 1901

PROPOSAL: Handicapped ramp, façade cleaning and replace porch floor

The proposal involves replacing an existing wood ramp in stone and metal along the front of the building as well as replacing the tile on the exterior vestibule floor in kind. The staff recommended approval.

The proposed new ramp will be in the same location. In looking at other options it was determined that no other side openings exist that could accommodate the ramp without great damage to the historic fabric. In addition, the landing at the top is very narrow and has columns which restrict wheelchair accessibility and the issue of raising the grade was explored.

Karl Blyler, Elyce Teitelman, Brett Powell and Michael Hauptman attended the meeting to answer questions and explain the project. Mr. Hauptman stated that this is a major pathway and raising the grade would create an obstruction and adversely effect the front of the building. Therefore the applicant proposes to widen the ramp filling it in with granite that matches the existing step with a reveal to carry the line of the step. The ramp will be no more that 15 ½ inches above grade and because of the low height and a curb will have a simple stainless steel hand rail.

Committee members thought the hand rail should be least intrusive and recommended a matt finish or a brushed stainless steel.

The Architectural Committee recommended approval of the ramp with the staff to review materials and samples.

The applicant proposes a low pressure cleaning with mild detergent for the stone's cleaning.

The Architectural Committee recommended approval with the staff to review details.

The existing porch is set on wooden joists and the applicant proposes to replace the entire structure and put in new floor tiles. The proposed tiles are a broken joint pattern which replicates the original pattern and very close in size. The Committee cautioned against the use of shiny tiles, which are slippery when wet.

The Architectural Committee recommended approval with the staff to review details and shop drawings.

2145 Mt. Vernon Street

Michael Brannan, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1859

PROPOSAL: Legalize façade window/door alterations

The proposal involves legalization of work completed without a permit. The owner filled in shop windows with wood siding and small vinyl sliding windows and installed a new smaller door. The staff recommended denial and thought the applicant should reopen the shop windows and use internal shutters to create a more residential window scale. The historic door design should be reused.

Mr. Brannan, the owner, stated the storefront window is a security issue. In addition, he said that upon the purchase of the property, no one informed him of its historical status and he questioned who is responsible for relaying this information to perspective buyers.

Mr. Thomas stated that this building's storefront is different from the rest of the block, and these alterations change the character and proportions of the building. Mr. Levy explored the possibility of painting the window and leaving the T-111 but installing glazing on the outside.

Robert Powers, Spring Garden Civic Association, reiterated the Association's opposition to the altered storefront which it believes is an important aspect of the historic district's character. He also stated that the Civic Association has notified realtors of the historical district status.

The Architectural Committee recommended denial of the legalization and asked the applicant to confer with staff for guidance.

2515 South 21st Street

John Migioia, Owner/Applicant

DATE: 1914

PROPOSAL: New porch windows and door

The proposal calls for removing jalousie windows from a glazed porch and installing wood 1/1 sash. The staff recommended approval of glazing, subject to the use of large pane glass casements.

The staff recommended that the applicant install windows without meeting rails and the applicant concurred. The Committee had concern about the width of the casement and thought an even division would be less intrusive. The Committee also thought a door which picks up the horizontal pattern with wood panels at the bottom and glazing at the top more appropriate.

The Girard Estate Civic Association sent a letter in support of the proposal.

The Architectural Committee recommended approval of the windows per submitted drawings and a door with wood panels at the bottom and glazing at the top with the staff to review details.

1622 Chestnut Street, Art Institute of Philadelphia

Art Institute of Philadelphia, Owner

William Lewandowski, Applicant

DATE: 1931

PROPOSAL: Exterior painting

The applicants propose repainting the exterior of the historic WCAU building blue. The applicant's

preferred color, the existing grey blue does not match the deeper blue original crushed glass façade color. In addition they wish to repaint the steel windows powder blue. The staff recommended denial, and thought the building should be painted its original colors.

William Lewandowski, the applicant, attended the meeting and presented paint samples. He also conveyed the intent of using the same colors as approved ten years ago.

Randy Cotton, Preservation Alliance, met with the applicant and approved either using the original color or the previously approved colors.

The Architectural Committee recommended approval of the colors approved tens years prior.

54th and Lindbergh Boulevard, Bartram's Garden

Historic Bartram's Garden, Owner

James Dart, Architect

PROPOSAL: Demolition of modern house; constructing two buildings on site

The proposal involves demolition of a 20th century building on the grounds of Bartram's Garden and construction of two larger buildings. The staff recommended approval only if the architect demonstrates the recent date of the existing building and its lack of significance, as well as the compatibility of the layout and materials of the proposed buildings with the site.

James Dart and Martha Wolf attended the meeting. The applicant said that the building to be demolished has very little significance owing to its being wood framed and a cinderblock construction. In addition the parcel of land was not part of the original historical designation and the Fairmount Park Commission condemned the building after purchasing the parcel of land in 1998. Ms. Wolf also stressed the need to move the administrative offices from the main house. The new building will also serve as a community room for the public. Mr. Dart, the architect, presented renderings and a scaled model of the proposed new structures. Committee members questioned the exterior oak boards, and Mr. Dart responded the boards would remain unpainted and sit 1½ inches off the main wall.

The Committee concurred about the significance of the proposed building to be demolished; however it requested documentation with photographs of the cinderblock and documentation with a deed to show the recent purchase of the parcel by the Fairmount Park Commission. Some members noted the need for more space in the new bathrooms to accommodate the ADA requirements.

The Architectural Committee recommended approval subject to receipt of documentation with a copy of the deed for the parcel and clear photographs showing the cinderblock.

1500-1502 Mt. Vernon Street

Albert Taus and Maurice Torjman, Owners

Albert Taus, Architect

DATE: c. 1859, c.1905, c.1930

PROPOSAL: Façade rehabilitation

This proposal involves rehabilitating this empty building to apartments. The plans call for installing windows in the rear stair-tower openings, stucco over existing modern brick storefront infill and a fence at the corner storefront door. The applicant also seeks to close a taproom door and stucco that area as well.

These properties have undergone many alterations through the years with the addition of glass block over the storefront and with openings blocked up prior to designation giving way to bricks of various colors. The proposal entails reinstalling the doors on 15th Street of a two-leaf design, replacement of 2/2 upper floor windows, and the open corner doorway will receive a simple black railing with vertical pickets at the corner.

The architect presented revised drawings showing the retention of existing openings with glazing.

Robert Powers spoke on behalf of the Spring Garden Civic Association, and reiterated the agreement between the owner and the Civic Association as part of the zoning process. Ideally the Association would like to see more than just a repair but a restoration.

Albert Taus stated that the storefront presents a hardship for the first floor apartment and the removal of the brick and the recreation of the storefront implies commercial usage. He said that the existing openings will be retained and no new materials introduced.

The Committee had concern about the infilling of the exhaust fan area owing to the matching of the brick. It recommended transoms above the storefront windows and retaining the existing tap room door which could be sealed from the inside. Mr. Baron suggested cutting a larger window in 1502 Mt. Vernon Street of the same size as the window in 1500 Mt. Vernon Street and reusing the salvaged brick to repair other areas. The applicant was receptive to this suggestion.

The Architectural Committee recommended denial of the proposal as submitted but approved an alternative design, in which the window at 1502 becomes the same size as the masonry opening of 1500, removal of the existing door, using the salvaged brick to complete the masonry opening and the pair of windows will have a transom with a single light below with the staff to review details. They also approved the new windows above the first floor, the 15th Street doors, and the metal railing at the corner.

1606 Chestnut Street

Howard Winig, Owner

Albert Taus, Architect

DATE: 1890

PROPOSAL: Storefront alterations

The proposal involves removing the existing modern storefront and constructing a new storefront based upon the historic architect's rendering. The architect seeks to remove the granite step in order to create handicap accessibility. The staff recommended approval with the modification of a wood paneled and glazed side light.

The applicant submitted revised drawings showing a recess and large glass with a wood storefront system that reflects the historic design. He also proposes adding a second door shifted to the left which leaves a side panel that the applicant proposes to stucco. The signage would be metal letters with a halo effect.

The Committee thought this panel should be glass on the outside instead with a wood panel at the bottom instead of proposed stucco. The Committee concurred that the revised proposal constitutes a restoration and could be approved at staff level.

The Architectural Committee recommended approval by the staff based on a restoration.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane M. Hughes
Executive Secretary