

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

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

Present

Robert Thomas, Chair
Rudolph D'Alessandro
Herbert Levy, FAIA
Suzanne Pentz

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

Also

Steve McCann, 360 Networks (USA) Inc.
Cynthia Tedeschi, Esq., 401 North Broad Street
Barbara Dertouzos, 401 North Broad Street
David Dickson, Colliers Lanard and Axilbund
Allan V. Rubin, Esq.
Robert T. Graves, Bower Lewis Thrower Architects
Lenore Millhollen, Center City Residents' Association/Preservation Alliance
Michael Koep, Keating Development Company
David Keating IV, Keating Development Company
Ronald Patterson, Klehr Harrison Harvey Branzburg and Ellers, 2226 Green Street
Alson Alston, Owner, 2226 Green Street
Stephanie Alston Nero, 2226 Green Street
Piero Grimaldi, Grimaldi Architecture
Robert Powers, Powers and Company
David Kistner, URS Corporation
L.Y. Suba
Cathy Wolfe, Drexel University
Tim Kenney
B. Mitchell Kotler, Toll Brothers, Incorporated
Chris Herrin, Toll Brothers, Incorporated
Elliot Rothschild, Cassway Albert Ltd
Cathy Apothaker, 315 South Philip Street
Eli Gabay, Esq., 1207 Chestnut Street
Chris MacNeal, PVCA Architects
Scott Ryder, PVCA, Art Consultant/Planner
Oskar J. Udel, Liberty Museum
Kenneth Andraya
Tom Howley
Sam Olshin, Atkin Olshin Lawson-Bell Associates, Architects
Sabrina Soong, Soong Associates, Incorporated
Geno Sena, Owner, 238 Stamper Street
Kiki Bolender, Schade and Bolender Architects
Ronald Patterson, Esq., Klehr Harrison Harvey Branzburg and Ellers, 1706 Delancey Street

Patricia J. Carroll
Shirley Vernon, 1704 Delancey Street
Philip Johnson
Jefferson Clark
Virginia and Harvey Kimmel
Wesley Wei, Wesley Wei Architects
Lorna Katz Lawson, Society Hill Civic Association
Tei Chow Lei, T.C. Lei and Associates
Daniel H. Kim
Sumy A. Lee
Kien Phung

Herbert Levy, Vice-chair, called the meeting to order at 12:50 p.m.

401 North Broad Street, SE corner of Noble Street

Gerald S. Kaufman Corporation, Owner
Michael Hansen, Applicant
DATE: 1927-31
PROPOSAL: Rooftop HVAC and ground floor generator

This proposal involves legalizing the installation of a generator at the track level and mechanical cooling units on the building rooftop. The Committee voted last month to recommend approval of the HVAC and denial of the generators. The building management has hired a lawyer who asked for a continuance and now wishes to hear the comments of the Committee in person. The applicant wishes to demonstrate that the generator falls outside the boundaries of the designation. The staff recommended approval of the rooftop units per Standard 9. The Commission should decide the issue of jurisdiction. If the Commission finds that it has jurisdiction, the staff split on the question of denial or approval of the generator placed on the ground.

The Commission staff received new information concerning the ownership of the adjacent parcel and the building itself. The Nomination to the Philadelphia Register contains conflicting information about the properties' boundary. The Committee believed that the Commission should make the final determination of jurisdiction. Committee members thought that allowing outside equipment sets a precedent. Mr. Tyler stated that given the location and the building's mixed and historic uses, that this equipment is compatible with it.

The Committee members decided to make a recommendation based on the assumption of jurisdiction. They thought the equipment and fencing should stay below the top of the fence on Noble Street.

The Architectural Committee recommended the delegation to staff of approval of future installation so long as they also remain lower than the top of the Noble Street historic iron fence.

203 South Sartain Street

Virginia Rynning, Owner/Applicant
DATE: 1817-19
PROPOSAL: Cut new window in visible side wall

This application calls for cutting a new window in the north elevation of this brick rowhouse. Plans show the 54" by 30" window cut into the first floor of the stucco-faced north elevation, 14'9" away from the primary façade. The applicant proposes a wood, double-hung window as well as a flower box. Owing to the vacant adjacent lot, full visibility of the north elevation exists. The staff recommended approval.

The Architectural Committee recommended approval with staff to review and approve window details.

1600 Arch Street, SW corner of 16th Street

SAS-1600 Arch Street, LP, Owner

Robert B. Graves, Applicant

DATE: 1925

PROPOSAL: Steel window replacement and restoration, lengthen 16th floor windows

This application calls for the replacement and restoration of the more ornate metal windows on the upper floors of the building. In addition, the applicant proposes cutting the stone sills and lengthening the large arched windows on the 16th floor to provide a better view from a lower vantage point inside the building. The architect proposes working with the staff on the window details as they become available. The staff recommended approval of the window restoration per Standard 6 but denial of the cutting of the window sills per Standard 9.

Most of this proposal involves restoration; however, the lengthening of the 16th floor windows will mean loss of original fabric. Previously lengthened openings will be restored with limestone, and other openings in the non-visible areas restored with stucco. Mr. Thomas suggested a process of grinding original stone to get a latex mix that resembles stone.

Robert Powers stated that the Park Service has already approved lengthening of the windows.

Mr. Thomas stated that, although the Standards would deny the lengthening of the windows, the Committee recognizes that the livability of the space is an important issue which the present 52" sills would seriously compromise.

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

2226 Green Street

Alson Alston, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1866

PROPOSAL: Revised development of multi-family dwelling

The applicant returned to the Committee with a revised plan for developing a multi-unit residence on the side yard of 2224 Green Street. This plan reduces the depth of the new building and pulls it farther away from the west property line at the rear of the property. The staff recommended approval per Standards 9 and 10.

The Committee and Commission have seen multiple drawings of this proposal; the most recent show an eight-foot setback from the mansard of the neighboring house. The rear of the house now aligns with properties to the east.

Ronald Patterson, Esq., counsel for the applicant, expressed his objection to the inaccuracies in the letter sent by the Spring Garden Civic Association.

Allan Rubin, Spring Garden Civic Association, expressed concern about the proximity of the new construction to the bay at 2224 Green Street and the Association's opposition to the proposal. He explained that many of their concerns involve zoning, which they will take up in the proper forum.

The Architectural Committee recommended approval.

2300-2348 Grays Ferry Avenue, Biddle Hall at Naval Square

Toll Brothers, Owner

Elliott J. Rothschild, Applicant

DATE: 1827-44

PROPOSAL: Conversion to apartments, HVAC, and cut windows into doors

This proposal involves the rehabilitation of Biddle Hall into rental residential units. The exterior alterations in this proposal include cutting windows into doors to reach the porch, providing porch dividers and placement of HVAC units in a concrete trough on the ground behind a berm in front of the structure. Other work involves restoration of stucco walls and metal roofing. The applicant seeks the Committee's support in appealing the requirement to make alterations to the decorative metal porch railings before the Board of Building Standards.

The staff recommended approval of the cutting of windows into the doors provided they be modified to look more like the windows on both the east and west elevations and the porch dividers be lower and more like the existing porch railings per Standard 9. The Commission can verify for the Board of Building Standards that the building has historical significance and listing; however, the Commission does not endorse variances from the life-safety code.

Mitchell Kotler, Chris Herrin and Elliot Rothschild attended the meeting to answer questions and explain the project.

The Committee thought the doors to the porches on both facades should mimic the windows, incorporating three panes across and a solid base below the height of the window sill. It recommended the possible use of metal to get a thinner frame. It also said that the doors should have a symmetrical placement in the façade.

Mr. Rothschild argued for the allowance of solid wood doors in the rear, owing to the attachment of a new rear building which would minimize visibility of the doors. The Committee thought that the west façade currently has visibility and should receive equal consideration.

The placement of the air conditioning units was discussed. The Committee questioned the design of the area containing the air conditioning units. It thought the drawings insufficient to make a determination. The Committee recommended deferring the issue of placement of the units pending receipt of complete drawings.

The Committee believed the detailing of the railing an important issue. It held that the dividers between the units should be the height of a code compliant railing and mimic the materials of the existing rail. The dividers as shown on the drawings are too high and in a proposed material not compatible with the existing railings.

Mr. Rothschild stated that the rail that exists is climbable and does not meet code but asked if the Committee and Commission could support a variance in this matter. Mr. Tyler responded that the Committee and Commission do not support variances from the life-safety code. A letter stating that the building is listed as historic could be supplied.

The Architectural Committee recommended the following:

1. *Approval of cutting windows into doors, subject to a revised design with three panes across and a solid base, and symmetrical placement;*
2. *Approval of a low metal railing between the porch units, and*

3. *Application for the placement of the air conditioning units considered incomplete.
With the staff to review all details.*

315 South Philip Street

Catherine Apothaker, Owner/Applicant

DATE: 1972

PROPOSAL: Install bollards and replace sidewalk in-kind

This application calls for the repair or replacement of the brick sidewalk in kind as well as the placement of six 3'6" tall steel bollards on the sidewalk in front of the property. The staff recommended approval of the bollards per Standard 10.

The Architectural Committee recommended approval.

3-5 Strawberry Street

Milo Investment, Owner

Marc Cohen, Applicant

DATE: c. 1830

PROPOSAL: Legalize stucco on rear wall

This application calls for the legalization of stucco on the rear, east façade, second, third and fourth floors of the 19th century commercial building. The applicant's first permit for stucco specifically limited the work to the first floor, which the applicants chose to ignore. The staff recommended approval because a new structure now restricts visibility to that wall.

The Architectural Committee recommended approval.

208 North 35th Street, International House, Drexel University

Drexel University, Owner

Cathy Wolfe, Applicant

DATE: c. 1830

PROPOSAL: Legalize work and exterior rehabilitation

This application calls for partial correction and legalization of alterations made to the exterior of this Drexel University residential structure without permits. Plans show alternative proposals both of which include general restoration made to the east, west and north facades including new shingles, repainting trim, new doors, scraping, patching and repairing cornices, and quoins. In addition, the applicant proposes a combination of new true divided light wood windows and the retention and painting of illegally installed vinyl windows. The two plans differ in that Alternate 2, calls for reinstalling many of the wood windows in the front and side elevations in place of restoration work on the cupola. All work, except on the rear ell, has visibility.

The staff recommended approval of exterior restoration per Standard 6. Denial of vinyl window legalization per Standard 6, except for those areas on the rear ell, invisible from the street. The Committee should not legalize the removal of the stain glass windows from the side bay. Drexel should replace any windows removed from the cupola for new ductwork with new wood windows.

Cathy Wolfe and Tim Kenney attended the meeting to explain the proposal and answer questions.

The Committee believed alternative 2 appropriate; however, it thought the stain glass windows a distinct feature of the property and should also be replaced. Several area residents who attended the meeting also agreed about the stain glass's replacement. Some Committee members recommended that the applicant take measures to protect the cupola until such time as repairs can be made.

The Architectural Committee recommended approval of the following:

1. *Replace front and side windows in wood;*
 2. *Doors replaced with historic doors;*
 3. *Stain glass windows replaced in the bay, and*
 4. *Restoration of the shingled bays and the stucco.*
- With staff to review all details, including details of the stain glass.*

321 Chestnut Street, National Liberty Museum

Irvin Borowsky, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1905

PROPOSAL: Install video screen on front façade

This application calls for the alteration of a window on the museum's primary façade to accommodate the installation of a plasma video screen and two speakers. Plans show the removal of an existing grille on the bottom one-fourth of the window as well as removal of an existing mullion and glass. The applicant proposes the placement of a 48" by 27" video screen behind replacement glass. In addition, plans call for the installation of two, 1'2" speakers flanking the screen mounted to the exterior of the existing window frame. The staff recommended denial of the application per Standards 9 and 10.

Sandra Kelly, Oskar Udel and Irvin Borowsky attended the meeting to explain the proposal. Mr. Udel stated that the plasma screen will be behind the glass, the mullion would be removed, the window altered with clear glass around the screen and the speakers in line with the outer surface of the grill. Ms. Kelly said that the applicant has approval for the removal of the metal in its entirety and questioned if the screen could be placed behind the window. She also offered a suggestion of removing the iron grill and placing paintings in the window behind the glass.

Ms. Pentz stated that this proposal takes away from the façade of the building. Mr. Thomas said that the real issue is the symmetry of the building and the removal of divided light windows and therefore the applicant should research the original window and try to work with the original design. The Committee did not have a problem with the removal of the complete grill or placement of the screen behind the existing windows.

The National Park Service has a concern about this proposal.

The applicant also inquired into the possibility of putting a painted scene on the rear wall of the building; however, the Committee explained that this would face Franklin Court and require approval from the National Park Service and Art Commission as well as the Historical Commission.

The Architectural Committee recommended denial.

232-54 Philip Place, 233-55 South 3rd Street
281-93 Locust Street, 284-92 St. James Place
Society Hill Townhouses Common Area

James Cooke, President Washington Square Townhouse Council, Owner

DATE: 1962

PROPOSAL: Courtyard paving and renovation

This application calls for renovations to the common area enclosed by the Society Hill Townhouses designed by I. M. Pei in 1962. The plans show re-paving with salvaged or matching brick, enlarged pits for four existing trees, asphalt resurfacing, repainting parking lines and new light poles. The applicant further proposes construction of a more substantial raised planter bed, with salvaged or matching brick and cast stone, to protect the Lachaise sculpture located in the center of the courtyard. Plans provide for the removal of existing trees around the planter and the installation of new plantings and bollards around the center island. The staff recommended approval per Standard 9.

Sam Olshin attended the meeting to explain the proposal and answer questions and said that, in addition, floodlights would be added to highlight the sculpture.

Lorna Katz-Lawson attended the meeting and raised the issue of the statue's condition and the existing sidewalk's condition.

The Architectural Committee recommended approval with staff to review samples and details.

520-30 Walnut Street, SE corner of 6th Street

Lincoln Property Company, Owner

Fred Berger, Applicant

DATE: 1914; altered 1930-31

PROPOSAL: Signage and sign posts

This application calls for new signage for a bank located in the Penn Mutual Building at the corner of Walnut and 6th Streets. The proposal involves three bronze plaques measuring 42" by 66" with one plaque located on the 6th Street elevation and two flanking the Walnut Street entrance. The owner has presented photographs of comparably sized bronze signage across the street. In addition, plans show two 10' tall aluminum posts with 2' by 3' hanging, non-illuminated pylon signs; one placed on the sidewalk in front of the Walnut Street entrance and one on the 6th Street elevation sidewalk. The staff recommended denial of the pole signs per Standard 9 and 10 but approval of somewhat smaller bronze plaques.

Kenneth Andraya and Tom Howley attended the meeting.

The Committee thought the bronze plaques appropriate; however, the sidewalk signage inappropriate for the district and the public right away. Mr. Levy believes that in positioning the wall sign it should be framed with equal areas of exposed stone. This can be accomplished, decreasing the sign size by approximately one and a half feet. Therefore, the Committee recommended that a scale drawing of the plaque's installation be presented to the Commission.

Mr. Tyler presented a letter from the Park Service stating its opposition to the sidewalk signage. Mr. Baron questioned the installation and its damage to the stone. The Committee then recommended coring the fastener area retaining a granite plug for use in the future restoration of the stone.

The Architectural Committee recommended approval of the bronze plaques with the proportions and dimensions to be reviewed by staff but denial of the sidewalk signs.

238 Stamper Street

Geno Sena, Owner

Sabrina Soong, Applicant

DATE: 1785-94; altered c. 1970

PROPOSAL: Rear addition and new dormers

This proposal calls for combining two 18th century town houses into a single structure. The plans show the removal of the wall and chimney between the houses. A large addition will be attached to the visible rear façade. An as yet undetailed structure in the attic will support a chimney above the roofline. The applicant also proposes two front dormers on this gambrel roof. The staff recommended approval of the addition but denial of the dormers per Standard 9 and 10.

Sabrina Soong and Geno Sena attended the meeting to explain and answer questions about the proposal. Mr. Sena stated that the reason for the dormers is to get light into the room and believes that windows existed previously. However, the Committee urged further research to determine what previously existed. Some Committee members also questioned the removal of the party wall and its effect on the front wall and the chimney's removal's effect on the building's structure. It, therefore, recommended that an engineer's report be reviewed before the issuance of a building permit.

The Architectural Committee recommended approval of the addition subject to the review of an engineer's report prior to permit approval. It recommended denial of the dormers pending further investigation to determine what existed previously.

2028 Chancellor Street

Jan Rubin, Owner

Kiki Bolender, Architect

DATE: c. 1895

PROPOSAL: Cut garage in rear façade

This application calls for cutting a new garage door on the St. James Street elevation of this two-story brick structure. Plans show the new garage opening would replace original brick and a bricked up window, and reroute a downspout. Additional work shown on the plans will be addressed on a different permit application. The staff recommended approval of the garage door per Standard 9 and recommended a wood garage door with staff to review details.

Kiki Bolender, architect, attended the meeting and presented revised drawings owing to the Streets Department's denial because of the turning radius. Her new plans call for a wider door which necessitates moving an historic door opening.

Photographs indicate a carriage opening in the front façade, and the Committee believed that reopening the front carriage entrance would improve the façade and restore an historic feature. However, the applicant thought the placement of the garage on the front would entail more interior alterations. The Committee recommended that the applicant look carefully at the brickwork to determine any evidence of a pre-existing opening on either the front or the rear, since this would mean a restoration. The cutting in the rear would mean loss of historic fabric and the moving of the door. The Committee asked that the applicant look at alternatives and that Mr. Baron make a site visit for a determination. Ultimately the Committee did not object to cutting a garage at the rear if the restoration schemes prove infeasible.

The Architectural Committee recommended that in the interest of performing a restoration, the applicant carefully examine the building's brickwork to determine evidence of any pre-existing openings in either

the front or rear. The Committee also recommended that Mr. Baron conduct a site visit and discuss alternatives with the architect since cutting a garage on the rear elevation would mean loss of historic fabric and the moving of a door. Ultimately, the Committee did not object to cutting a garage in the rear, owing to the secondary nature of the façade, providing that a restoration scheme proves infeasible.

1706 Delancey Street

Jeffrey Yablonovitz, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1850

PROPOSAL: Legalize revised roofdecks and stairtower

This application calls for the legalization of a rear porch, a deck on the rowhouse's top floor, and a circular metal access stair between the decks. The applicant has modified the design for the roof deck following the Commission's rejection of the existing deck at the 13 December 2000 meeting. In the revised plans, the applicant will pull the deck railing away four feet from the east wall and an additional five feet from the north façade. Photographs show visibility of the decks from all sides of the building. Mr. Baron's site visit determined that even with the additional setbacks, the roof deck will have visibility from Delancey and 17th Streets.

The staff recommended denial of the roof deck and stair tower per Standards 9 and 10 but approval of the rear 3rd floor deck per Standards 9 and 10.

In December, the Committee recommended pulling back the railing to lessen the visibility; however, the Commission rejected the Committee's recommendation and denied the proposal. Committee members determined that they mistook the location of the deck in the photograph. The property in question is a four-story house, and the rooftop deck raises its height to five stories. Mr. Baron made a site visit and determined that, even if the railing is pulled back, visibility from several directions still exists. The plans show a deck on the second, fourth and fifth floor.

Ronald Patterson, counsel, and Jeffrey Yablonovitz, the owner, attended the meeting. The applicant submitted revised drawings which pull back the railing from Delancey Street and the eastern party wall line. He believes that the railings are only visible from 17th Street. He also claimed ignorance about the absence of a building permit.

Shirley Vernon, 1704 Delancey Street, believes the property is overbuilt and opposes the legalization of the decks.

Patricia Carroll, the neighbor directly behind this property, says that decks take away her light and air.

Lenore Millhollen, Center City Residents' Association, questioned whether the decks would be allowed if a permit had been applied for in advance.

The Committee further believed that the size, scale and massing are overpowering and inappropriate. It explained that normally decks are approved on the rear ell of properties, generally lower than the main roof of the house. This deck sits above the height of the main roof and extends outward enlarging the house footprint.

In response to Mr. Patterson's questioning the Committee's previous stance on the fourth floor deck, the Committee stated that it had misunderstood the building and had the wrong height as the drawings did not provide the normal height information about the addition and its structure.

The Architectural Committee recommended denial of the 4th and 5th floor decks as well as the stairway between both per Standard 9.

237 South 18th Street, NE corner of Rittenhouse Square Street

The Barclay

Harvey Kimmel, Owner

Wesley Wei, Applicant

DATE: 1928

PROPOSAL: Window alteration on visible courtyard façade

This application calls for the alteration of windows on the 16th floor of this high-rise condominium building. Plans show the removal of the original 25-light, two leaf metal casement window and its replacement with paired, one over one wood windows. Visibility of the window exists from Locust Street. The staff recommended denial per Standard 6.

Philip Johnson, Jefferson Clark, Virginia and Harvey Kimmel and Wesley Wei attended the meeting.

The Committee stated that other applications for replacement of the original window design in this building have been rejected. The historic windows should be restored taking the building as a whole and the design of this register of windows should be consistent throughout.

Mr. Kimmel stated that there have been exceptions, citing the floor above with a balcony.

Mr. Johnson also cited situations of modified windows, some replaced with ductwork, air conditioning units, etc.

The Committee said that architecturally it could not recommend approval.

The Architectural Committee recommended denial.

206-08 Market Street

Hyo Kim, Owner

Tei Chow Lei, Architect

DATE: c. 1835

PROPOSAL: Storefront restoration

This application involves restoring the storefronts of these commercial buildings and installing a restaurant. The work includes removing a recessed 1940s storefront and reinstalling the stone columns and double leaf doors of the early 19th century storefront as described in an insurance survey dated 1849 for the buildings. The staff recommended approval based on the restoration Standards. The look of the original has good documentation and the owner has already restored the upper floors of the building to the early 19th century appearance.

Summy Lee, Daniel Kim, Kien Phung and Tei Chow Lei attended the meeting to explain the proposal. The applicant stated that he intends to install recessed down lighting in the soffit of the restored doorways.

The restoration of this building is consistent from top to bottom and based on good documentation.

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

The meeting adjourned at 5:50 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane M. Hughes
Executive Secretary