

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

**Robert Thomas, Chair
Commission Conference Room
Suite 1301, 1401 Arch Street
28 April 1998**

Present

**Robert Thomas, Chair
J. William Cornell
Herbert Levy
Daniel McCoubrey
Suzanne Pentz**

**Richard Tyler, Historic Preservation Officer
Randal Baron, Assistant Historic Preservation Officer
R. Scott Jacob, Executive Secretary to the Commission**

Also

**Stephen Starr
John Tucker, Bower Lewis and Thrower Architects
Michael J. Cuddy, A. G. Lichtenstein and Associates
Burkart Stelzer
John Fernandez
Philip Scott, John Milner and Associates
Eric Rohe, Bower Lewis and Thrower Architects
David Teage
Suzanne Petruzell
Warren Bradway
Marc Coleman
Theresa Stuhlman, Fairmount Park Commission
Martin L. Toll
Gloria B. Toll
Herbert Scherrer
Michael Bush
Thomas Ryan, Friends of the Wissahickon
Edward Stainton, Friends of the Wissahickon
Frank Heilman, A. L. Heilman
Margaret MacLaren Ulrich, Center City Residents Association
Edward Palmer, Niles Bolton Associates
Gary Alessi, Apple South
Vern Lei, T. C. Lei and Associates
Paul Calvert, The Office of Charles King
Steven Pavlis
Ursula Hobson
Frank Conlin
Todd Lowell**

**Mr. Thomas recognized a quorum and called the meeting to
order at 12:00 p.m.**

124 South 18th Street

Leroy Kean, Owner

Sue Golden, Applicant

DATE: 1898

PROPOSAL: Security grates

This proposal calls for the installation of a metal security mesh screen to the exterior of the storefront windows on Sansom Street. Mr. McCoubrey noted that the slim frames around the exterior of the storefront windows would make installation of the grates difficult. Mr. Thomas recommended the applicant place the security grates inside the window. He explained that interior grates often deter vandalism more than exterior, owing to the difficulty of getting through metal security grates after the commotion caused by breaking the glass. Mr. Tyler stated that the applicant rejected the idea of interior grates because she painted the glass black to hide the merchandise within, and thieves would break the windows without knowing they had another obstacle. Committee members discussed options of removing the black paint and installing a translucent film or curtain between the glass and the grates, so that potential thieves could see the security bars, but not the merchandise.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend denial of the original proposal, and approval of installing security grates inside the storefront windows, with the option of placing a translucent film between them or a curtain behind the bars.

600 Spring Garden Street

Seymore Rubin, Owner

Stephen Starr, Applicant

DATE: 1872

PROPOSAL: Awning with posts

This proposal calls for legalizing an awning installed without a permit. Committee members informed the applicant that the new awning does not fit the design or scale of the building, and showed him historic photographs picturing two previous and more appropriate marquee-type awnings. Stephen Starr, the applicant, agreed with the Committee that an awning in the character of one of the older ones should replace the current and inappropriate awning. Although Mr. Starr consented to remove the awning, he requests permission to leave it up for a brief period until the nightclub occupying the building establishes itself.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend denial of legalizing the new awning.

1401 East Bristol Street, Carl Mackley Houses

Canus Corporation, Owner

John Tucker, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1934

PROPOSAL: ADA ramp

This proposal entails adding a handicap accessible ramp to the side of an existing stone stair. John Tucker, architect for the project, explained that the ramp would greatly reduce the travel distance to the garage for persons in wheelchairs. Mr. Levy recommended covering the exposed wall of the ramp with stone to tie it in with the existing stone wall the ramp wraps around. Mr. Tyler pointed out the need to use another type of stone to differentiate between old and new. Mr. McCoubrey asked the applicant to redesign the stair rail so it does not attach to any historic fabric of the adjacent building.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the ramp, using stone facing on the new ramp wall that complements the existing stone wall, and a stair rail that stands free of the adjacent building.

1115-1145 Market Street, Reading Terminal Headhouse

Reading Terminal Headhouse Association, L.P., Owner

Eric Gianelle, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1895

PROPOSAL: Garage door storefront on Filbert Street

This proposal calls for installing two roll-down garage doors and a pedestrian door into existing open bays on Filbert Street. The garage door will contain aluminum panels and match a neighboring existing door. The wood details and trim will match existing on Filbert Street, with translucent panels in the garage doors. Committee members recommended that staff review and approve the color scheme.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval, with staff to review and approve details and colors.

141 League Street

John Fernandez, Owner

Burkhart Stelzer, Architect/Applicant

DATE: c. 1850; c. 1920

PROPOSAL: Install new windows, roof deck and stair; infill garage door

This proposal involves a building that had started out as a institutional building, probably a school which had been converted to an industrial building in the early twentieth century. The new owner wishes to use the building for offices and a private residence. The changes include new modern metal windows, a roof deck and filling in a loading dock with recessed bricks. Committee members expressed concern over the use of glass block for some of the window replacements, and recommended installing more traditional window treatments. Mr. Baron explained that some companies offer new windows that look like industrial steel windows, but accommodate modern needs. Mr. Levy suggested using multi-panel windows with intermediate muntins to retain the existing appearance. The architect and the owner

agreed to look into other window options and return to the Commission at a later date. Committee members did not object to the roof deck, additional stair or door infill.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the roof deck and the door infill with recessed bricks, but to deny approval of the proposed windows.

University Avenue Bridge

City of Philadelphia, Owner

Michael Cuddy, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1925-1929

PROPOSAL: Remove and reinstall stonework to replace machinery; install traffic gates; restore lights

This proposal involves removing and resetting stonework of several different portions of the bridge to install updated mechanical equipment. The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation also plans to fit new horizontal traffic gates as well as repair the historic lanterns. Michael Cuddy, architect for the project, explained that the removal of the old lead paint will occur with the utmost attention to toxic concerns. He also stated new, hidden transformers will replace the existing, non-historic ones on the overlooks. The restored lanterns will contain plastic panes. Mr. Cornell recommended the applicant install false hangers that resemble historic design elements over the new splice plates. Mr. Cuddy agreed to comply with Mr. Cornell's recommendation. He also said that Penn Dot will retain the existing historic railings where they exist.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval, with some expression of the historic pin plates over the new splice plates, and with staff to review and approve details.

1319 Lombard Street

Herbert Scherrer, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1850

PROPOSAL: Legalize six vinyl windows

The applicant seeks legalization of the six vinyl windows he installed without a permit. Mr. Scherrer, owner of the building, listed several concerns about the historic status of the building and his violation. He maintains that he was not informed of the building's historically designated status because it did not exist on the deed. He also believes that he had been unfairly targeted by the violation. Committee members explained to Mr. Scherrer that by following procedures and applying for a permit from the Department of Licenses and Inspections, individuals learn whether or not they need approval from the Historical Commission. Also Mr. Baron explained that others on the same block received violations and indeed many others who installed these same vinyl windows have violations pending before the Commission.

Mr. Thomas explained that Mr. Scherrer could come to the Historical Commission hearing to discuss his procedural objections with the Commission. He said that the Architectural Committee addressed only the pure design issues and based their findings on *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic properties*. Based on those standards he said that the Committee cannot recommend approval of these sash because they do not match the historic sash in their material or design. Committee members explained that the Commission does approve certain storm windows based on the Standards because this allows for the retention of the historic fabric of the old windows.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend denial.

7127 Germantown Avenue

M. Bonstein and P. Pinola, Owners

DATE: c. 1790; altered c. 1860 and c. 1890

PROPOSAL: Porch infill

This proposal involves legalizing the infill of a visible side porch. Several years ago the firm occupying this house infilled the rear side porch to provide more office space without a permit. To legalize that work, the Committee and Commission approved a compromise to install large windows between the height of the old porch rail and the fascia of the porch roof. The staff approved a drawing and a permit to that effect. The contractor completed the work in manner that does not conform with the compromise, in that the windows do not reach the roof fascia of the porch. Committee members agreed that this work affects only non-historic material on a secondary facade.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval.

1017 Pine Street

Gloria Toll, Owner/Applicant

DATE: 1841

PROPOSAL: Legalize vinyl windows and aluminum covering on cornice

The applicant installed vinyl windows with snap-in muntins, and constructed a new cornice and covered it with aluminum. Gloria Toll, owner of the building, stated that her insurance company told her to repair the cornice, and she replaced the windows for reasons of pedestrian safety. She also maintained that she had no knowledge of her building's designated status when she had the work done. She asked that the Commission grant her time to make the replacements. Mr. Baron told her to approach the Commission with a specific timetable.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend denial of legalizing the vinyl windows and aluminum covering on the cornice.

Valley Green Inn

Fairmount Park Commission, Owner

Thomas Ryan/Friends of the Wissahickon, Applicant

DATE: 19th Century

PROPOSAL: Reconstruct stable

This proposal involves reconstructing a livery stable that once existed on the site. Thomas Ryan, the applicant, explained that the reconstructed warming shed will not have enclosed sides, but will otherwise copy the original.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval.

237-247 South 18th Street, Barclay Hotel

Philip Seneschal, Owner

Alan Heilman, Applicant

DATE: 1928

PROPOSAL: Install iron balcony and french doors

This proposal entails cutting down windows into french doors and building a new metal balcony on the north-facing wall of the Barclay Hotel. Although the proposed location on a secondary facade mitigates its visibility, the public does have a clear view of this wall when looking at the Curtis School of Music. Committee members commented on the building's orderly rows and columns of windows and balconies, and recognized that this proposal would disrupt that visual continuity. Mr. Baron pointed out that it also entails the removal of historic fabric. Mr. Levy explained to the applicant that approving this balcony would create a precedent for balconies on this and other buildings.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend denial.

1921 Walnut Street

T. C. Lei, Owner/Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1897

PROPOSAL: Awnings

The applicant wishes to install a new awning to cover air conditioning units previously installed in the transom of the storefront. Committee members expressed concern over the method of installing the interior security grate and the awning over existing air conditioning units. Vern Lei, representing the applicant, agreed with the Committee that the submitted drawings and the proposal itself require more work, and offered to withdraw the application until next month.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend denial.

1509 Walnut Street

Apple South, Inc., Owner
Gordon Karns, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1902

PROPOSAL: Remove steps; rebuild door for ADA; awning; signage

This proposal involves removing the front steps to provide an accessibility ramp. The applicant found the historic decorative transom in the basement, and proposes to reinstall it above the door, and to construct a lengthened door to accommodate the additional space created by removing the steps. The plan also calls for the installation of decorative iron railings on each side of the entrance. Mr. McCoubrey recommended redesigning the railings so they do not match the historic door details so closely. Other Committee members recommended eliminating the rails completely, so as not to disrupt sidewalk traffic. The architect agreed to leave out the rails. Committee members expressed no objections to the other aspects of the proposal. Mr. McCoubrey noted that the computer-generated photograph of the proposed facade contains two more light fixtures than exist. The applicant assured the Committee that those new fixtures no longer form part of the proposal. A glass sign will hang inside the window.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of removing the front steps to provide an accessibility ramp, reinstalling a decorative transom above the door, constructing a lengthened door, and installing a sign, but to deny approval of the rails.

1729 Walnut Street

Talbot's, Owner
Paul Calvert, Architect/Applicant

DATE: c. 1980s

PROPOSAL: New awning; signage; banner

This proposal includes new awnings, signs and a banner for the Talbot's store. Talbot's occupies one quarter of the building and Border's Books has the rest. The existing scheme unifies both stores' awnings in scale and shape, though not in color. The shape of the proposed awnings does not match the existing. Committee members agreed that the proposed awnings and hanging signage would introduce a new design that interrupts the unity of the facade. They expressed no objections to the flat wall signage and banner.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the flat wall signage and banner, and to recommend denial of the proposed awnings and hanging signage.

1734 Pine Street

Oscar Soldano, Owner/Applicant

DATE: 1845

PROPOSAL: Seal door, install new french door and deck at rear

This proposal involves work to the rear of the building facing a service alley. The public can see some portions of the building's rear from 18th Street. The work includes closing up a doorway with brick, creating new french doors and a railing and deck. Committee members did not object to the proposal.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval.

1600 Spruce Street

Ursula Hobson, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1855

PROPOSAL: Cut down window

This proposal involves cutting down one window on the 16th Street facade eight inches to make it symmetrical with a new window on the same facade the applicant received permission to create at last month's Commission meeting. Because the applicant intends to use the windows to display merchandise, she also wants to lower the window for greater visibility. Committee members expressed concern over the loss of historic fabric required to cut down the window. Mr. McCoubrey recommended the applicant raise the bottom height of the other non-historic window before she constructs it. Ursula Hobson, the owner, explained that she does not want to introduce another brick color into that facade.

Four of the five Committee members present voted to recommend denial. Mr. Levy voted to recommend approval.

251 South 21st Street

Mark Fink, Owner

Steven Pavlis, Applicant

DATE: c. 1880

PROPOSAL: Reface sign

This proposal involves installing a new plastic face on an existing sign box. Mr. Thomas argued that this new sign face does not constitute a substantial change. Committee members agreed that had the applicant replaced the entire sign apparatus *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards* would apply.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval.

320 Race Street

Jeffrey Casnoff, Owner

Frank Conlin, Applicant

DATE: c. 1895

PROPOSAL: Roof deck; penthouse; alter door and storefront

This proposal calls for converting this empty warehouse building to apartments. The applicant plans to install an elevator with a rooftop penthouse and roof deck. The proposal also includes alterations to a door and a previously altered

storefront. Mr. Levy asked that the applicant pull the elevator penthouse over a few feet to line it up with one of the brick piers on the face of the building. Other Committee members disagreed with that suggestion and expressed no other objections to the proposal.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval.

1900 Mount Vernon Street

Todd Lowell, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1855

PROPOSAL: HVAC units and vents, soil stacks

The applicant wishes to install HVAC units and vents. He would prefer to cut the vents through the brick and disguise them as star bolts. He also provided an alternative plan to run the units to the roof. Committee members did not object to the rooftop vent scheme.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of installing HVAC units and vents and soil stacks on the roof but to deny the through the wall scheme.

Respectfully submitted,



R. Scott Jacob