

**THE MINUTES OF THE 457TH STATED MEETING OF THE
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION
13 SEPTEMBER 2000**

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

Present

Wayne S. Spilove, Chair
David Brownlee, Ph.D.
Maxine Griffith, Executive Director, City Planning Commission
Ernest Leonardo, Director of Policy and Strategic Planning, City Planning Commission
David Perri, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Licenses and Inspections
Michael Sklaroff, Esq.
Robert Thomas
Dennis Ward III
Scott Wilds, Assistant Director, Office of Housing and Community Development
Caroline Wischmann
Stephanie G. Wolf, Ph.D.

Randal Baron, Assistant Historic Preservation Officer
Julianne Brennan, Preservation Planner
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

Melanie Piltch
Marguerite Rodgers
Grace Schuler, 1030 Irving Street
Ronald Patterson, Esq., Klehr, Harrison, Harvey, Branzburg and Ellers
Judith Eden, Center City Residents' Association
Lenora Millhollen, Center City Residents' Association
Deena Parham, City Planning Commission
Spence Kass, Kass and Associates
Sam Olshin, Atkin, Olshin, Lawson-Bell and Associates
Patricia Freeland
Antonio Fountain, 2002 Spring Garden Street
Maria Fountain, 2002 Spring Garden Street
Miquel Delgado
Donald Kushon, 2033 Appletree Street
Sara Jane Elk, Eastern State Penitentiary
Ronald Pierce, Spring Garden
Miquel Santiago, 1601 Mount Vernon Street
Robert Powers, Powers and Company
Susan Vance
Darin Greely, Spring Garden Civic Association
Ken Evans, Spring Garden

Alan Barstow, Spring Garden
Stephan J. White, Spring Garden
Barbara M. Wolf, Spring Garden

Wayne S. Spilove, Chair recognized the presence of a quorum and called the 457th Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission to order at 9:20 A.M.

Minutes of the 456th Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Brownlee and duly seconded, the Commission unanimously approved the minutes of the 456th Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission held on 9 August 2000, with the notation that Mr. Brownlee was not present for the two University of Pennsylvania's proposals.

THE REPORT of the Architectural Committee, 29 August 2000

2215 Walnut Street

Herman Miller, Spectrum, Owner
Ronald Patterson, Esq., Applicant
DATE: c. 1870; Altered 1899-1902
PROPOSAL: Legalize window replacement

The Architectural Committee recommended legalization of all existing sash subject to the replacement of the three front second floor windows which are to be restored with two-over-two curved wood sash and frames with staff to review details.

The applicant seeks to cure a violation for the replacement of windows on both facades of this corner property. The lawyer for the owner stated that the owner entered into a contract for the window replacement before the Commission provided notice indicating that the property was under consideration for designation as part of the Rittenhouse-Fitler Historic District. He concluded that this warrants legalization, but suggested further consultation to reach a settlement of this matter. The issue is complicated by the fact that once the Commission sent its notice letter to the owner, the windows required a permit. The notice occurred before the installation of the windows. For this reason, the staff recommended a compromise. The applicant accepted the compromise.

Mr. Wilds asked if the fourth floor addition predates designation. Mr. Brownlee responded that it did, but that it has been altered since the designation.

Mr. Wilds made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Mr. Sklaroff seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

2107 Fairmount Avenue, Eastern State Penitentiary

City of Philadelphia, Owner
Sally Jane Elk, Applicant
DATE: 1825; Altered 1889
PROPOSAL: Exterior lighting

The Architectural Committee recommended approval.

The applicant proposes to light the walls of Eastern State Penitentiary to highlight the architecture of the building, setting most of the fixtures into the ground or behind window openings. The staff recommended approval.

Mr. Wilds made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Mr. Sklaroff seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

221 Fitzwater Street

Zilan Munas-Bass, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1830-1899

PROPOSAL: Rear alteration

The Architectural Committee recommended tabling the proposal pending a site visit after the removal of the siding to determine the historic fabric and original window configuration.

The applicant proposes to install large windows in the frame structure at the rear of a Fitzwater Street row house. This frame structure has visibility from a mid-block courtyard of houses. The staff recommended denial because the frame addition shows in the mid-19th century Hexamer & Locher atlas and has visibility. Although the structure has itself been previously altered and re-sided, the applicant can remove the shingles and expose the evidence of the original openings and clapboard. The owner can then restore the original design.

Queen Village is unique and consists of many houses with frame additions. The site visit by staff revealed that original clapboard exists underneath the wood siding as well as physical evidence of a first floor opening approximately sixty-eight inches in width. The second floor opening previously contained a window longer than the present one.

The issue of the proximity to the neighboring house was raised because this would affect the type of material to be used. The staff recommended that the first floor door have a pair of French doors with the second floor window restored to its historic dimensions.

Ms. Munas, the owner, stated that the neighboring house's exterior is stucco and stated that her choice for the exterior finish is also stucco; however, some Commission members stated that the neighboring buildings have masonry walls.

After much discussion, the Commission determined that the proposed window and door treatment could move forward. The Commission rejected a stucco finish at this time; however, the Committee and Commission can again review the exterior finish upon the submission of additional information and photographs.

Mr. Brownlee made a motion to approve the first floor sixty-eight inch opening with two French doors and the restoration of the second floor window to its historic dimensions. However, the review of the exterior finish may come back to Committee. Mr. Wilds seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

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

1030 Irving Street

Grace Schuyler, Owner

Dominic Aspite, Applicant

DATE: c. 1818

PROPOSAL: Additional floor

The Architectural Committee recommended denial of the proposal as submitted but approval of a revised submission, with the dormer expanded to the east.

This application calls for the removal of an historic dormer and its replacement with a full width dormer. The building, which predates 1818, consists of two back-to-back row houses combined into one. The rear of the building has visibility from 11th Street and a now closed side street. The staff recommended denial, as the work violates Standards 2, 5, 9 and 10.

At the Committee meeting, the applicant proposed a compromise that would involve keeping the dormer and expanding to the east. However, the applicant subsequently sent a letter to the staff, stating that owing to the need for more space, she would like to expand to both the east and the west.

The Commission found that the existing dormer has significance. Therefore it opposed its removal.

Mr. Sklaroff made a motion to reject the Committee's recommendation and the proposal. Mr. Wilds seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

3260 South Street, University Museum

University of Pennsylvania, Owner

Sam Olshin, Architect

DATE: 1893-1899

PROPOSAL: Alteration to modern link building

The Architectural Committee recommended approval.

The applicant wishes to cut new windows into an existing addition to the University Museum. The building contains square windows that represent a signature element of their time period. The architect proposes to install longer windows to make a transition to the new addition under construction at the museum, and fill an open area with new windows and a concrete recessed panel. The staff recommended approval.

Mr. Ward made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Mr. Wilds second the motion which carried with 7 votes. Mr. Sklaroff abstained and Mr. Brownlee recused himself.

Ms. Wolf passed the gavel back to Mr. Spilove.

2033 Appletree Street

Donald Kushon, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1850

PROPOSAL: Roof deck and stair house

The Architectural Committee recommended approval.

The applicant seeks to add a deck and stair house to his roof. A raised firewall between his house and the neighboring church will hide most of the structure. The staff recommended approval.

Mr. Wilds made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Mr. Ward seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

421 Vine Street

John Midwood, Owner

Sam Olshin, Architect

DATE: c. 1795

PROPOSAL: Construct oversize rear dormer

The Architectural Committee recommended denial of the proposal as submitted but approval of a revised submission showing a dormer two-thirds the size of the original submission with two matching windows.

The applicant proposes to install an oversized visible dormer on the rear slope of this corner row house. The staff recommended denial per Standard 2.

Mr. Olshin, architect, was present to answer questions and explain the proposal. He stated that he did research and looked at the historic precedent for the area. The neighboring house and the houses on Lawrence Street all have shed dormers. He argued that no masonry would be altered and that the roofline could be returned to the original line.

Mr. Wilds believed that since this intact property showed no evidence of a dormer on the roof, it should remain the same with no loss to the historic character of the building. Mr. Tyler also stated that corner houses commonly do not have dormers.

Mr. Wilds made a motion to reject the Committee's recommendation and deny the proposal. Mr. Brownlee seconded the motion which carried with 10 votes. Mr. Thomas abstained.

243 Race Street

Elliot Diamond, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1850

PROPOSAL: Cut window in visible party wall.

The Architectural Committee recommended approval.

The applicant seeks to legalize a casement window installed on the party wall of this structure. The staff recommended approval per Standards 9 and 10.

Mr. Sklaroff made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Mr. Ward seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

1635 Spruce Street

Farid Ahmed Gilani, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1850

PROPOSAL: Legalize exterior grates

The Architectural Committee recommended denial.

The applicant installed exterior roll-down metal grates and received a violation. He now seeks to legalize his work. The staff recommended denial. The applicant should install the grates inside the windows.

Lenora Millhollen spoke on behalf of the Center City Residents Association and neighbors in the district in opposition to the intrusiveness of the exterior grates.

The Commission expressed concerns about maintaining standards for the district, considering equities and its responsibility to the building.

Ms. Wolf made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Mr. Leonardo seconded the motion which carried with 9 votes. Mr. Sklaroff abstained.

1635 Spruce Street

Farid Ahmed Gilani, Owner

Marylin Lozada, Contractor

DATE: c. 1850

PROPOSAL: Install awnings

The Architectural Committee recommended approval with the following revisions:

- 1. Two separate canvas awnings over the existing windows;*
- 2. A lip of ten to twelve inches;*
- 3. A projection of at least three and a half feet;*
- 4. No side or bottom on the awnings, and*
- 5. Color red and yellow but toned down.*

With staff to review all details.

The applicant seeks to install awnings over the windows of this store. She shows several variants of awnings, including plastic awnings that wrap around the corner of the building. The staff recommended approval of a non-illuminated canvas type awning with at least a three foot extension and a smaller lip. The color should be compatible with the building.

Ms. Wolf made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Mr. Leonardo seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

225 South 18th Street, Rittenhouse Regency

Rittenhouse Regency Affiliates, Owner

Melanie Piltch, Marguerite Rodgers, Applicants

DATE: 1929

PROPOSAL: Signage and awning spears

The Architectural Committee recommended approval.

The applicant seeks to install decorative signage and spears to support the new awnings at the “Bleu” restaurant. The staff recommended approval.

Mr. Brownlee made a motion to accept the Committee’s recommendation. Mr. Leonardo seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

2012 Spruce Street

Oscar Soldano, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1860

PROPOSAL: Remove rear bay and construct deck

The Architectural Committee recommended approval.

The owner proposes to remove a bay tucked in the inside rear courtyard of his house facing a service alley. He wants to remove the bay and add two skylights to bring light to an extremely dark area of his house. He will also rebuild a reduced version of an existing rear deck. The staff recommended approval because the work faces a service alley.

Mr. Sklaroff questioned the date of the bay which is early twentieth century. Mr. Baron stated that the back is not visible from the side.

Mr. Wilds made a motion to accept the Committee’s recommendation. Ms. Wolf seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

2008-2010 Delancey Street

Rosenbach Museum, Owner

John Farrell, Contractor

DATE: c. 1890

PROPOSAL: Rooftop addition and louvers

The Architectural Committee recommended approval with the louvers in the basement windows painted black subject to the installation of restored grates with the staff to review details.

The applicant proposes to build a rooftop addition with stucco finish that will have minimal visibility from the rear service alley and no visibility from the public way on Delancey Street. The basement windows will receive louvers and reconstructed metal grates. The staff recommended approval; however, the louvers should sit within the window frame and receive a black finish.

Mr. Leonardo made a motion to accept the Committee’s recommendation. Mr. Ward seconded the motion which carried with 9 votes. Mr. Sklaroff abstained.

1720 Delancey Street

Allen Model, Owner

Spence Kass, Architect

DATE: c. 1870

PROPOSAL: Stucco damaged marble base

The Architectural Committee recommended denial of the proposal as submitted but approval of the repair above the line of the watertable and treating the watertable with a marble dust and resin blend with the staff to review details.

In renovating the building, the applicant found that the marble under the modern applied stone had suffered substantial damage. He seeks to restore the historic parging and cover the damaged marble with stucco formed into a base. Prices show the cost of marble replacement approximately four thousand dollars more than stucco.

The staff recommended denial and thought that the owner should maintain the damaged marble in its present condition until he has sufficient funds to replace it in kind.

Mr. Wilds questioned the original brick restoration. Mr. Baron stated that a mid-nineteenth century insurance survey describes the building as roughcast and the proposal would bring down the roughcast to the watertable. Mr. Thomas stated the applicant has inquired into the Committee's recommendation and contacted various companies that use the recommended process.

Mr. Brownlee made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Ms. Wolf seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

1901 Spring Garden Street

Spring Garden Limited Partnership, Owner

Stephen Ehrenhalt, Applicant

DATE: c. 1875

PROPOSAL: Fire connection and ramp

The Architectural Committee recommended approval of the railing and ramp's placement to the side and the fire connection through the sidewalk with the exposed foundation parged a color similar to the existing building.

This proposal involves a ramp to create an accessible unit within this apartment complex, and a Fire Department connection and bell as part of sprinkling the building.

Mr. Baron stated that the plans show a sidewalk level door restoration that was not approved by the staff or the Committee. Therefore its approval needs a submission for review.

Mr. Sklaroff made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation, which includes a new door within the existing window opening at the bottom of the ramp with the staff to review details. Mr. Ward seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

THE REPORT of the Committee on Historic Designation, 22 August 2000

Spring Garden Historic District

Mr. Brownlee stated that the City Planning Commission has not yet completed its review of the proposed district. Until its completion, the Historical Commission cannot vote on the designation of the pending Spring Garden District. He summarized the proposed boundaries with a slide

presentation by Ms. Spina depicting these boundaries and showing a colored map denoting the contributing and non-contributing buildings, and those properties already individually designated.

At the meeting of 22 August 2000 in the pending Spring Garden District neighborhood, many questions emerged concerning the Committee's recommended boundaries, the public's interest in the consideration of the North side of Fairmount Avenue, what consideration should be given to its several vacant lots, and the extension of the district to include four houses on the West side of Fifteenth Street.

Mr. Tyler responded that the buildings abutting Pennsylvania Avenue do not reflect the historic character of the district as set forth in the nomination's statement of significance and urged their exclusion. Mr. Baron stated that Fairmount Park may form a boundary as defined in the criteria of the Ordinance, owing to Pennsylvania Avenue's having defined the boundary between Fairmount Park and Spring Garden before the introduction of the Benjamin Franklin Parkway.

Members noted the architectural and historical consistency of the building on the north side of Fairmount Avenue and those in the proposed district. They noted that the inclusion of these properties would necessitate to their owners and a further delay in the consideration of this district.

Robert Powers, the consultant who drafted the nomination, studied the railroad system that follows Pennsylvania Avenue and its historic significance. He and Spring Garden residents stressed the importance of Pennsylvania Avenue's inclusion in the boundaries. Allen Rubin, a Spring Garden resident, expressed the importance of the inclusion of Judson Street and Pennsylvania Avenue.

Ms. Wolf recommended voting on each corner of the boundary separately.

Mr. Wilds made a motion to include Pennsylvania Avenue as the Southwest corner boundary. Mr. Leonardo seconded the motion which carried with 10 votes. Mr. Sklaroff abstained.

Ms. Wolf made a motion to exclude non-contributing buildings on the southside of the twenty-three hundred block of Fairmount Avenue. Mr. Wilds seconded the motion which carried with 10 votes. Mr. Sklaroff abstained.

Mr. Wilds made a motion to retain the Northside boundary line, Fairmount Avenue between Eighteenth Street and Corinthian Avenue. Mr. Leonardo seconded the motion which carried with 10 votes. Mr. Sklaroff abstained.

Mr. Wilds made a motion to retain Fairmount Avenue east of Eighteenth Street with the exception of the addition of the four properties on North Fifteenth Street. Mr. Ward seconded the motion which carried with 10 votes. Mr. Sklaroff abstained.

Ms. Spina distributed to the Commission a letter received in opposition from the Archdiocese. It was further noted that another letter of opposition to the pending designation has been received by the Philadelphia Historical Commission's staff.

Following the discussion of the proposed Spring Garden Historic District, Mr. Spilove raised the question of the Commission's jurisdiction over the Manayunk Main Street National Register Historic District. He brought this matter to the Commission owing to the staff's denial of a permit application.

At the request of the Department of Commerce, City Council adopted an ordinance in 1983 to encourage the commercial revitalization of Main Street. Since its passage, the staff has thought that the ordinance authorizes the staff to approve permits without referral to the Architectural Committee and the Commission and that an aggrieved applicant may appeal to the Board of License and Inspection Review. Mr. Tyler recalls this interpretation as the intention of the Department of Commerce when it drafted the Ordinance.

Mr. Zecca sought to clarify the issue by referring to the Philadelphia Code and the passage of the present historic preservation ordinance in 1984. The status of the Commission's jurisdiction in the Manayunk ordinance, however, remained unclear to some members. The Commission asked that the matter be referred to the Department of Commerce and the Law Department for further comment and that the Department of Commerce be included in any future discussions on this question.

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

Mr. Tyler asked if members of the Commission had any questions about the report. There were none.

The meeting adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane M. Hughes
Executive Secretary