

**THE MINUTES OF THE 648TH STATED MEETING OF THE
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

**FRIDAY, 12 AUGUST 2016
ROOM 18-029, 1515 ARCH STREET
BOB THOMAS, CHAIR**

PRESENT

Robert Thomas, AIA, chair
Emily Cooperman, Ph.D.
Michael Fink, Department of Licenses & Inspections
Anuj Gupta, Esq.
Melissa Long, Office of Housing & Community Development
John Mattioni, Esq.
Dan McCoubrey, AIA, LEED AP BD+C
Thomas McDade, Department of Public Property
Sara Merriman, Commerce Department
Rachel Royer, LEED AP BD+C
R. David Schaaf, RA, Philadelphia City Planning Commission
Betty Turner, M.A.

Jonathan Farnham, Executive Director
Randal Baron, Historic Preservation Planner III
Kim Broadbent, Historic Preservation Planner II
Laura DiPasquale, Historic Preservation Planner II
Meredith Keller, Historic Preservation Planner I

ALSO PRESENT

Michael Sklaroff, Esq., Ballard Spahr
John C. Manton
Kevin McMahon, Powers & Company
J.M. Duffin
Carl Primavera, Esq., Klehr Harrison
Brett Peanasky, Klehr Harrison
Michael Phillips, Obermayer Rebmann
Arielle Harris, Philadelphia City Planning Commission
Paul Steinke, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia
Benjamin Weinraub
Jill Betters
Stephanie Haller
Stephen Diller, Landmark Arch.
Joe Volpe
Jose Hernandez, JKR Partners
James McKenna, JKR Partners
Sean McMullon
Patrick Grossi, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia
Aaron Wunsch, University of Pennsylvania
Kathy Dowdell
Amy Lambert, University of Pennsylvania
Rustin Ohler, Harman Deutsch

Kiki Bolender, Bolender Architect
William O'Brien, Esq.

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Thomas called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Commissioners Cooperman, Fink, Gupta, Long, Mattioni, McCoubrey, McDade, Merriman, Royer, Schaaf and Turner joined him.

MINUTES OF THE 647TH STATED MEETING OF THE PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

MOTION: Ms. Turner moved to adopt the minutes of the 647th Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission, held 8 July 2016. Mr. Mattioni seconded the motion.

John C. Manton interrupted the vote to express his concern over the minutes of the 8 July 2016 meeting pertaining to his nomination of 176 Conarroe Street. Mr. Manton stated that the staff claimed the nomination failed to prove that the building was constructed in 1849. He contended that he had responded previously that the atlas on which the date was based contained an error. Historian Jefferson Moak, he claimed, confirmed the errors of the 1863 Smedley atlas. Mr. Manton stated that he had noted the error at the Historical Commission's 8 July 2016 meeting, and complained that his remarks were not recorded in the minutes. The 1849 construction date, Mr. Manton continued, was supported on page 52 of the nomination by facsimiles of newspaper clippings from 1849 related to the church's dedication.

WITHDRAWAL OF MOTION: Ms. Turner and Mr. Mattioni withdrew their motion to adopt the minutes of the 647th Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission, held 8 July 2016.

ACTION: Ms. Turner moved to direct the staff to review the audio recording of the meeting and make any corrections related to the expressed concerns and to adopt the minutes of the 647th Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission, held 8 July 2016, as potentially corrected by the staff. Ms. Merriman seconded the motion, which passed by a vote of 11 to 0. Mr. Mattioni abstained.

CONTINUANCE REQUESTS FOR NOMINATION REVIEWS

4056 CHESTNUT ST

Nominator: Aaron Wunsch, Elizabeth Stegner, Oscar Beisert

Owner: Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania; 40th St Live Assoc. LP

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 4056 Chestnut Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, D, G, and J.

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 4056 Chestnut Street as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the "restrained interpretation of the Italianate" twin satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, D, G and J. The nomination argues that the twins, constructed between 1869-72 as part of the Thomas H. Powers development consisting of 4046-60 Chestnut Street, are a group of houses that have significant value as part of the development of the twin housing type and the formation

of West Philadelphia as a suburb for white-collar commuters. The nomination further contends that the twin is part of and related to a distinctive area, owing to its listing on the National Register of Historic Places as a contributing resource within the West Philadelphia Streetcar Suburb Historic District.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Farnham presented the continuance request to the Historical Commission. He reported that the attorney representing the property owner requested the continuance because he was unable to attend the meeting.

ACTION: Ms. Merriman moved to continue the review of the nomination for 4056 Chestnut Street to the Historical Commission's meeting on 9 September 2016. Ms. Turner seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

81-95 FAIRMOUNT AVENUE

Nominator: Staff of the Philadelphia City Planning Commission

Owner: VMDT Partnership

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 81-95 Fairmount Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, D, and J.

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the rowhouses at 81-95 Fairmount Avenue as historic and list them on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that 81-95 Fairmount Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, D and J. The nomination argues that the rowhouses are a rare surviving example of a once common building type of the early Philadelphia waterfront between Front Street and the Delaware River, and the row retains original early Federal-style characteristics despite a significant but sensitive Colonial Revival renovation in the early 1920s. The nomination further contends that 81-95 Fairmount Avenue exemplifies the cultural, social and historical heritage of the Northern Liberties community, having served as the Beach Street Mission, representing the first facility of the Guild House organization.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Farnham presented the continuance request to the Historical Commission. He reported that the attorney representing the property owner requested the continuance because the expert witness was unable to attend this meeting, owing to illness.

ACTION: Ms. Merriman moved to continue the review of the nomination for 81-95 Fairmount Avenue to the Historical Commission's meeting on 9 September 2016. Ms. Royer seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION, 15 JUNE 2016

Emily Cooperman, Chair

176 CONARROE ST, ST. MARY'S

Nominator: John Manton

Owner: St. Mary of Assumption Archdiocese of Philadelphia

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 176 Conarroe Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, D, and J, but not Criterion C.

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 176 Conarroe Street as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that St. Mary of the Assumption Roman Catholic Church and rectory satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, D, and J. The nomination argues that the 1849 church and rectory represent the immigration and settlement of German Catholics in Philadelphia. It further contends that the architectural vocabulary of the church is a stylistic adaptation of an old German religious form, though constructed of local materials. The nomination intends to designate the rectory, which spans three parcels, and the church and burial ground, which share one larger parcel. Some clarification over the church's date of construction is needed.

The parish has been closed for several years and the Archdiocese began the process of transferring the property to a private owner about one year ago, prior to the nomination's submission. For the past year, the prospective owner has developed plans to sensitively reuse both the church and rectory and maintain the properties' green spaces. The project is part of a larger development program that includes the reuse of the school immediately across Conarroe Street and the development of residences at the property adjacent to the church, where a parking lot currently exists.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Thomas recused, owing to his firm's involvement with the project. Ms. Keller presented the nomination to the Commission. John C. Manton represented the nomination. Attorney Michael Phillips represented the property owner.

Mr. Phillips stated that the archdiocese and parish neither oppose nor support the nomination. However, he added that the owner currently has four court orders to disinter the bodies of the priests who are buried at the property and to reinter them at a nearby property. Mr. Phillips requested that any designation not affect the court order. Mr. Manton responded that his only concern is that the public is aware that there was a burial ground associated with the church and rectory, but that he does not object to the removal of the human remains from the site.

Ms. Merriman asked whether any Commissioners had comments on the request to modify the nomination. Ms. Cooperman inquired whether it was possible for the Commission to designate a property that did not include an entire tax parcel. Mr. Farnham stated that it is possible to designate a portion of a tax parcel, but added that it was his understanding that no objection to including the burial ground in the designation had been made. An objection by the property owner would only be made, he continued, if the removal of the remains currently on the grounds would be impeded by designation. Mr. Farnham added that the nomination could move forward as written with the understanding that those remains would be disinterred in the near future. Ms. Cooperman inquired whether such wording would need to be included in the motion. Ms. Merriman replied that she believed it would not be necessary, and Mr. Mattioni agreed, adding that the Commission's decision would be subject to the court order.

Ms. Merriman opened the floor to public comment, of which there was none.

ACTION: Mr. Schaaf moved to find that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 176 Conarroe Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, D, and J, and to designate the property as historic, listing it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Ms. Cooperman seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

1325 BEACH ST, PECO DELAWARE STATION

Nominator: Stephanie Haller and Jill Betters

Owner: Delaware Station LLC

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 1325 Beach Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, D, E, H and J, but not Criterion B.

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 1325 Beach Street as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the former power station satisfies Criteria for Designation A, B, D, E, H and J. The nomination argues that the property, constructed in two phases between 1917 and 1924, is significant as an expansive reinforced concrete power station, designed in the Classical Revival style by Philadelphia civic architect John T. Windrim. The nomination further argues that the building stands as an established landmark on the Delaware River waterfront, and exemplifies the economic and historical heritage of the community.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Broadbent presented the nomination to the Commission. Carl Primavera represented the property owner. Kevin McMahon represented Powers & Company and the National Register nomination. Nominators Jill Betters and Stephanie Haller represented the nomination.

Mr. Primavera stated that the National Park Service placed the PECO station on the National Register just two days prior to this meeting. A revised boundary was used, which includes the historic building and contributing structures, but excludes the northern half of the parcel which is undeveloped land. He asked that the Commission adopt the same revised National Register boundary as well. Mr. McMahon explained that the revised boundary conforms to the original parcel pre-1950. After that, the open space to the north was consolidated with the parcel, but nothing of historic significance is located on the northern half of the parcel. Mr. Primavera distributed a revised boundary map, and stated that an email from the nominators shows that they do not object to the revised boundary. Mr. McCoubrey asked if the dimensions are based on an actual survey. Mr. McMahon responded that they are not, but the dimensions are all correct, and a 1942 land use map shows the same boundary. He noted that the National Park Service does not require a verbal metes and bounds, provided there is a map. Mr. Primavera commented that a map can be provided to the Commission staff at a later date, once survey work is undertaken, if it is considered to be important.

Ms. Cooperman asked about the precedent for designating less than a parcel. Mr. Farnham responded that the City regulates properties by tax parcel and tax parcel address, so the easiest way to designate and then regulate is by tax parcel. There have been several instances in which the Commission has elected to regulate a portion of a tax parcel and, in those cases, maps have been drawn to show where the Commission would and would not regulate. The staff would

indicate to the department of Licenses & Inspections that the entire tax parcel is subject to the review of the Commission, but then, when applications are actually submitted, the staff would determine whether the proposed work fell within or outside of the boundary. He provided the example of the former Pennsylvania Hospital for Nervous & Mental Diseases, which was an entire city block, and the property owner generally agreed with the designation but knew there would need to be some additional development to make the project viable as it transitioned from non-profit to for-profit use, so the Commission designated only the historic section of the property. Mr. Primavera mentioned the University of Pennsylvania Museum. Mr. Farnham responded that it reminds him that the staff routinely confronts this situation with large institutions such as the University of Pennsylvania, where entire city blocks have been consolidated into single tax parcels. The staff works with the University of Pennsylvania to identify the pieces of land within those parcels that are and are not under the Commission's jurisdiction. Mr. Thomas commented that this case is even clearer because the land in question was added subsequent to the construction of the historic building. Mr. Farnham noted that the structures that stand on the piece of land to be excluded from the Commission's jurisdiction were classified as non-contributing structures within the original nomination, even prior to the boundary revision.

Jill Betters stated on behalf of herself and Stephanie Haller that they are pleased to move forward with the revised boundary, which is a nice compromise to make the parcel economically viable.

Mr. Thomas asked for public comment. There was none.

ACTION: Ms. Merriman moved to find that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 1325 Beach Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, D, E, H and J, and to designate the property as historic with the revised metes and bounds presented during the meeting, listing it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Mr. Gupta seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

THE REPORT OF THE ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE, 26 JULY 2016

Amy Stein, Acting Chair

CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. Thomas introduced the consent agenda, which included applications for 17 Summit Street, 236 S. 21st Street, and 1501-05 Fairmount Avenue. Mr. Thomas asked if any Commissioners had comments on the Consent Agenda. Ms. Cooperman removed 17 Summit Street from the consent agenda. Mr. Thomas asked if anyone in the audience had comments on the Consent Agenda. None were offered.

ACTION: Ms. Turner moved to adopt the recommendations of the Architectural Committee for the applications for 236 S. 21st Street and 1501-05 Fairmount Avenue. Mr. Mattioni seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

AGENDA

ADDRESS: 236 S 21ST ST, UNIT A, B, C, AND D

Proposal: Renovate front façade, replace storefront and windows

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Revocable Living Trust for Rebecca Epstein Sokolow and Joon Choe

Applicant: Vincent Mancini, Landmark Architectural Design

History: 1870

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Rittenhouse Fidler Residential Historic District, Contributing, 2/8/1995

Staff Contact: Meredith Keller, meredith.keller@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval, provided no brick veneer is applied to the front façade; the existing second-story lintels and sills, if extant, and the historic window sizes are retained; historic brick is used in areas requiring infill; paint and stucco may be removed; wood or Azek is used instead of PVC at the 21st Street elevation; and the proposed windows be a wood composite, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standards 2 and 9.

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to renovate the previously altered façade of 236 S. 21st Street to create distinct commercial and residential spaces. The property is listed as contributing in the Rittenhouse-Fidler Historical District. At the first story of the front façade, work includes introducing a new residential entrance with cast-stone stairs at the north end, as well as installing a pent roof and storefront at the south end. The pent roof would be loosely based on the historic storefront windows. Four historic second-story windows would be reopened to their original width and to nearly their original height. These windows would have a two-over-two pane configuration with new cast stone lintels and sills. At the non-original third story, the three dormers would be reconstructed, and a new asphalt shingle roof would be installed. Owing to the extent of past and newly proposed alterations, the application also proposes to apply a brick veneer over the first- and second-story masonry.

ACTION: See Consent Agenda.

ADDRESS: 24-28 S FRONT ST

Proposal: Construct residential building

Review Requested: Review and Comment

Owner: Pelican Investment Group, LLC

Applicant: Jose Hernandez, JKRP Architects

History: Parking lot

Individual Designation: 10/7/1976, rescinded 5/13/2005

District Designation: Old City Historic District, Non-contributing, 12/12/2003

Staff Contact: Laura DiPasquale, laura.dipasquale@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE COMMENT: The Architectural Committee commented that the proposed construction is generally compatible with the Old City Historic District in height and scale, but recommended regularizing the glass and metal panel fenestration patterns along Front Street, and continuing the masonry base across the driveway portal.

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to construct a five-story, nine-unit building on a currently vacant lot at the corner of Front Street and Black Horse Alley that extends west to Letitia Street. The Historical Commission's jurisdiction is limited to review and comment only. The proposed

Front Street elevation would feature a cast stone base and a large driveway portal to the garages of the townhomes behind. The upper floors of the Front Street elevation would be clad in brick and metal panels with vertical windows. The span over the driveway portal would be clad in grey and black metal panels with Juliette balconies and large sections of black metal panels topped with high, horizontal windows. The Letitia Street elevation would mirror the Front Street elevation. The Black Horse Alley elevation would feature nine townhouse-like units clad in cast stone, brick, and metal panels, with metal bay windows extending across the second and third floors. The rears of the townhouses, which would be accessed through the entrance portal on Front Street, would feature ground-floor garage doors. The ground floor would be clad in brick, and the upper floors in metal panels.

Since the time of the Architectural Committee review, the application was revised to reflect the recommendations of the Committee by regularizing the fenestration pattern and continuing the masonry base across the driveway portal.

DISCUSSION: Ms. DiPasquale presented the application to the Historical Commission. Architect Jose Hernandez and designer Jim McKenna represented the application.

Mr. Farnham noted that 24-28 S. Front Street is an application without objection, and it is a Review and Comment application. He stated that the staff left the application off the Consent Agenda because the goal of such applications is to provide an opportunity for Commission and public comment, but that he did not want the Commission members to think there had been any issues with the application. Mr. Farnham suggested that perhaps in the future, the Commission could have a discussion about whether Review and Comment applications should or should not be included on the Consent Agenda.

Mr. Hernandez stated that this project was an opportunity to meld the historic fabric of the neighborhood with a modern design. He noted that they took cues from the new construction building to the north that features a lot of light and glass in a frame system, and the brick and limestone of a traditional historic building along Front Street.

Mr. Thomas opened the floor to public comment, of which there was none.

Mr. Thomas opined that the revised design would be an excellent contribution to Old City. Mr. McCoubrey agreed, noting that the revisions reflect the comments of the Architectural Committee.

ACTION: Mr. McCoubrey moved to comment that the revised application as presented to the Historical Commission at its meeting on 12 August 2016 complies with the Architectural Committee's comments and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. Ms. Merriman seconded the motion, with passed unanimously.

ADDRESS: 17 SUMMIT ST

Proposal: Construct rear addition

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Blake Development Corp

Applicant: Samuel Blake, Blake Development Corp

History: 1861

Individual Designation: 8/2/1973

District Designation: None

Staff Contact: Kim Broadbent, kim.broadbent@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval, with the suggestion but not requirement that the applicant remove one set of stairs from the side of the new addition, and center the new door below the upper windows on the rear façade, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standards 9 and 10.

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to construct a rear addition with garage and roof deck on this building, which recently sustained damage from a fire. The existing rear addition would remain, and the new addition would align in height with the existing addition. It appears that the rear wall of the main house, where the addition is proposed, has already been altered from its original condition. The addition would be partially visible from Bethlehem Pike, which runs behind the property, and would be clad in stone veneer. A new door opening would be cut into the rear of the main house to allow for access to a roof deck, which would sit on the new portion of the rear addition.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Broadbent presented the application to the Historical Commission. Attorney William O'Brien represented the application.

Mr. O'Brien reiterated that the building was significantly damaged by fire, and suffered from deferred maintenance. He explained that the staff approved the reconstruction of the front porch, which was removed owing to deterioration. The duplication of the architectural elements was reviewed and approved by the staff, and reconstruction is underway. Today's application is solely for the rear addition. He explained that the architect revisited the placement of the new rear door following the Committee meeting, but the interior configuration simply does not allow for the new door opening to be relocated. He commented that the view of the rear is obscured. Mr. Thomas agreed, commenting that he walked through the building after the fire. He opined that there is some asymmetry in the building, and the door's location will tell the viewer something about the structure.

Ms. Cooperman stated that she has two concerns. Her first concern is about how the porch was treated, which was removed without prior permission from the Commission, in violation of the existing permits. Her second concern is the roof repair, and the asphalt shingles that have been installed instead of a standing seam metal roof, which was the historic condition. She stated that, as far as she understands, there is no permit issued for the roofing material. She stated that it is a matter of concern in the way the developer is treating the building. She stated that she understands that there was deterioration, but it does not justify destruction. She reiterated that she is very concerned about the way the building is being treated. Mr. Thomas asked if there are two issues to consider, one being the rear addition application, and the second being the treatment of the building. Ms. Cooperman agreed. Mr. Thomas responded that, if the addition is approved, there are still regulatory issues regarding the rest of the building, and the addition approval would not affect those other issues. Ms. Cooperman expressed her understanding that these are separate matters, but stated that this is the forum at which this

project is coming before the Commission, and she felt it was an appropriate time to voice a more general concern about the way the overall project is proceeding. Mr. Thomas noted that the fire damage to the building was considerable. Mr. O'Brien explained that three permits have been issued so far, with the rear addition being the fourth permit application. The first three permits were for emergency roof repair to get the roof sealed, windows, and the reconstruction of the front porch. He commented that the building has undergone at least six major renovations since its construction. Ms. Cooperman responded that she understands that the porch suffered from condition problems, but it was a mid nineteenth-century porch, and its destruction was not part of any permit prior to its removal. Mr. O'Brien responded that the porch suffered from severe deterioration. Ms. Cooperman observed that the porch's condition is a separate matter. Mr. O'Brien responded that a permit has been issued for its reconstruction, so it is really not an issue any longer. He opined that the builder has been "suitably chastised" for the porch removal. Ms. Cooperman stated that she hopes the builder will learn a lesson, that he cannot treat a designated building this way. Mr. O'Brien responded that he hopes that the builder continues to work hard in this community to preserve historic structures like this one. Ms. Cooperman agreed, but stated that it needs to be done in a way that is appropriate. Mr. O'Brien stated that he is unaware of what work has taken place regarding roofing materials.

Mr. Farnham summarized that the porch was removed without a permit, and the staff immediately went out to photograph the site, and contacted the developer. The staff has since approved plans to reconstruct the porch to its historic condition. Regarding the roofing, the staff was recently informed that roofing material was installed without a permit, and the staff has asked the Department of Licenses & Inspections to inspect, and will continue to follow up to ensure that appropriate roofing is installed. Mr. McCoubrey noted that the rear addition drawings call out an existing shingle roof. Mr. Mattioni responded that it is just a description of an existing condition, and is not an approval of the shingles.

Mr. Thomas asked for public comment. There was none.

ACTION: Mr. Mattioni moved to approve the revised application as presented to the Historical Commission at its meeting on 12 August 2016, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standards 9 and 10. Ms. Turner seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Sean McMullan, the applicant for the 317 Spruce Street application, which was next on the agenda, asked the Historical Commission to move his application to the end of the agenda because his architect, Kiki Bolender, was running late and had not yet arrived at the meeting. Mr. Thomas agreed to rearrange the agenda as requested.

ADDRESS: 1501-05 FAIRMOUNT AVE

Proposal: Construct addition

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Mark J. Kreider

Applicant: Rotciver Lebron, Harman Deutsch

History: 1930; Overseas Motor Works; Samuel Brian Baylinson, architect

Individual Designation: 2/13/2015

District Designation: None

Staff Contact: Randal Baron, randal.baron@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standard 9.

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to construct an addition on and adjacent to a one-story Art Deco commercial structure. The addition would be three stories in height on the historic building and four stories adjacent to the historic building, on what is now a surface parking lot. The addition would be set back 29'-4" from the Fairmount Avenue façade and 16' from the 15th Street façade. The addition would be clad in light gray aluminum composite panels at the three street facades and corrugated metal panels at the west façade. The one-story Art Deco building would be rehabilitated with storefronts based on historic photographs.

The Historical Commission reviewed a similar application at its 10 June 2016 meeting. At that time, the Commission voted to deny the application, but with the suggestion that the applicant submit a revised application that reflects the Commission's comments. The Commission suggested that the addition be set back farther from the Fairmount Street façade and/or allow for more breathing space for the tower of the historic building. The first application proposed a 13'-7" setback of the addition from Fairmount Avenue. Several Commission members suggested changing the materials to render the addition more differentiated from, but also compatible with, the historic building. The Commission generally commented that the addition would overwhelm the historic building, destroy spatial relationships, and that it was not compatible with the historic property in size, scale, proportion, and massing. The staff suggests that the revised design is improved in terms of setback, but still does not meet the Standards in terms of massing.

ACTION: See Consent Agenda.

OLD BUSINESS

ADDRESS: 2013 LOCUST ST

Proposal: Construct roof deck and elevator shaft

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Benjamin Weinraub

Applicant: Benjamin Weinraub

History: 1887

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Rittenhouse Fidler Residential Historic District, Significant, 2/8/1995

Staff Contact: Randal Baron, randal.baron@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial, pursuant to Standards 2, 5, 9, and 10.

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to construct a roof deck and elevator shaft on this circa 1890 residential property located within the Rittenhouse-Fidler Historic District. The roof deck with glass railing would be located on a rear mansard roof, and would be accessed via a new spiral staircase at the rear, which would result in the modification of a rear dormer into a door to access the new staircase. Six-foot high panels are proposed for the south side of the deck to provide shade and reduce noise from an existing HVAC unit. An existing rear chimney would be reduced in height. The elevator shaft would be located on the South Woodstock Street side of the building, and would result in the removal or covering over of four windows in addition to a portion of the rear mansard roof. The elevator shaft would be clad in metal to match an existing rear addition.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Baron presented the application to the Historical Commission. Property owner Benjamin Weintraub represented the application.

Mr. Baron stated that the applicant, who is the property owner, would distribute a revised architectural plan, which had not yet been submitted when the Commissioners' meeting materials packets were issued. Mr. Weinraub distributed revised plans.

Mr. Thomas stated for the record that property owner in this matter contacted him regarding the project outside the auspices of a public meeting. Mr. Thomas reported that he did not interact with the owner, but directed him to the staff because the project was pending before the Commission.

Mr. Thomas asked Mr. Weinraub to explain the revisions to the plans that he just distributed to the Commissioners. Mr. Weinraub explained that the plan had been modified to avoid damaging the chimney by moving the bridge over the top of a dormer. He noted that the top floor of the elevator shaft had been modified to mimic the appearance of the mansard. He reported that locating the elevator in this location avoids modifying the footprint of the building. He said the elevator shaft would setback 4 inches from the edge of the building and would be only slightly visible from Locust Street. He explained that the elevator would allow him and his wife to age in place as suggested by the "Rowhouse Handbook." He said that his parents have Parkinson's Disease and will need an elevator to visit the house. He explained that the deck design has been modified; the handrail has been set back and it will metal pickets now, rather than glass. He said that the Commission has approved other, more visible additions in this block. Mr. McCoubrey asked for clarification about the slope of the new mansard, which was provided.

Mr. Thomas asked for public comment, of which there was none.

Mr. Thomas stated that the applicant did not submit a full set of interior drawings, but rather some thumbnail sketches, making it difficult to understand the reasons behind some aspects of the proposal to alter the exterior. He suggested that perhaps the spiral stair to the deck could be moved inside into a kitchen area, providing access to the deck through a skylight. He opined the proposed bridge over the dormer would obscure that feature. Mr. McCoubrey stated that the Architectural Committee objected to the placement of the elevator shaft. He suggested moving it into the rear bay. Mr. Weinraub said that that would require moving bathrooms for all the units of the building. Mr. McCoubrey observed that the Commission's purview does not include the interior; the owner needs to be willing to accept some interior compromises to achieve both an elevator and a deck. Mr. Thomas suggested creating real drawings to show the interior implications of the different proposals. He urged the applicant to work with the staff on revisions and then resubmit the application.

ACTION: Ms. Cooperman moved to adopt the recommendation of the Architectural Committee and deny the application, pursuant to Standards 2, 5, 9, and 10. Mr. McCoubrey seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

ADDRESS: 317 SPRUCE ST

Proposal: Demolish rear dormer and roof; construct addition

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Margaret Petri

Applicant: Sean McMullan

History: 1815; storefront added in early 20th century; storefront removed 1958

Individual Designation: 4/30/1957

District Designation: Society Hill Historic District, Contributing, 3/10/1999

Staff Contact: Randal Baron, randal.baron@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial of the application pursuant to Standards 2, 5, 9 and 10.

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to demolish the majority of the rear slope and dormer of this house and construct an addition. This addition would demolish character-defining elements of this important, early, individually-designated house. Owing to its location at a corner, most aspects of the house including the rear dormer and roof are highly visible from the public right-of-way. Research into the rehabilitation of this house in the 1970s suggests that the front dormer was rebuilt at that time, but the rear dormer was existing and not rebuilt as part of that scope of work.

The Historical Commission reviewed a similar application at its 10 June 2016 meeting. At that time, the Commission voted to deny the application, pursuant to Standards 2, 5, 9, and 10. One Commissioner suggested redesigning the addition with a gambrel roof that would intersect the rear slope of the main building, with new dormers in the addition. It appears that this application is in response to that suggestion.

DISCUSSION: The Historical Commission returned to this matter, which had been listed on the earlier on the agenda, but had been delayed at the request of the applicant. Mr. Baron presented the application to the Historical Commission. Architect Kiki Bolender and owner Sean McMullan represented the application.

Ms. Bolender stated that she accepted the claim that the plan, which is only depicted in one sketch type drawing, is in its early stages of design. She suggested that the application could be considered an in-concept application rather than an application for final approval. Mr. Farnham advised that an applicant may request downgrading an application from a request for final approval to in-concept approval. He noted that an in-concept approval does not qualify one for a building permit; such an application would require a second submission for final approval before a building permit could issue. An in-concept approval is solely advisory. Mr. Thomas stated that an in-concept approval would provide the confidence needed to proceed with construction drawings. Ms. Bolender described her current application as “back-of-napkin drawings.” She requested and the Commission members agreed to consider the application as an in-concept application.

Ms. Bolender explained that the current proposal reflects the advice of Commissioner Schaaf, which was offered during the previous review. She described the new design and concluded that she and her client are very happy with the result.

Ms. Bolender strenuously objected to the way in which Mr. Baron had captured the Architectural Committee’s review of the project in the minutes. She asserted that he was guilty of “editorializing”; the minute did not accurately reflect the discussion that had taken place at the Committee meeting.

Ms. Bolender explained that Mr. Baron had proposed a scheme to add to the historic house that differed significantly from the scheme proposed by Mr. Schaaf. She held up a photograph that Mr. Baron had marked up, showing the massing of the proposed scheme. It showed the rear dormer and roof slope remaining in place, a connector running along the party wall connecting the existing top floor to the new addition, and a box-like addition popping up behind the rear slope of the rear roof. Ms. Bolender explained that her client, the property owner who is also a contractor, could build the addition proposed by Mr. Baron, but Ms. Bolender insisted that the design was fraught with significant problems. It might make sense from a preservation perspective, but it makes no sense from any other perspective. The Commissioners agreed that Mr. Baron’s suggestion was poorly conceived. Ms. Bolender contended that an addition on the roof is preferable to one on the rear, as Mr. Baron had suggested; an addition on the rear would negatively impact the walkway. Ms. Bolender concluded that Mr. Schaaf’s proposal, which she implemented, is a much better design and should be approved.

Mr. Thomas asked Ms. Bolender to walk the Commissioners through the new design, which she did. Mr. Thomas asked Ms. Bolender to confirm that the rear dormer would be removed in her scheme. She confirmed that it would.

Mr. Baron defended his scheme, asserting that it would allow for the retention of the rear dormer and more of the rear roof, while providing the additional space. Mr. Schaaf said that Mr. Baron’s design would create a cavern with a dormer window looking at a blank wall. He said that it would collect water and ice and would create significant drainage problems. He stated that it should be rejected because it would create a “crevasse in the middle of the roof.” He concluded that Ms. Bolender’s design is “much more successful.” Mr. Schaaf disagreed with Mr. Baron’s claim that the removal of the dormer and a section of the roof failed to satisfy the Standards. He noted that Mr. Thomas was unable to discern the new addition from the old; it looks natural, he claimed. The roof is preserved. The chimney is preserved. He questioned whether the design satisfied all of the Guidelines, given that same fabric would be removed. Ms. Bolender

acknowledged that the dormer would be lost. Some Commissioners indicated that the dormer was not conspicuously visible to the public.

Ms. Cooperman asserted that the proposed design irrevocably distorts the original design of the building. Ms. Bolender disagreed. Mr. McCoubrey suggested that the new design creates a false sense of the history of the building. Mr. Schaaf disagreed and suggested slight changes to make the addition look less like a mansard. Ms. Merriman said that she finds the design to be a reasonable accommodation appropriate to this building and location. Ms. Bolender stated that the addition will not be highly visible. Ms. Cooperman suggested that the applicant should provide a graphic showing exactly how much of the addition will be visible from the public right-of-way. Ms. Bolender and Cooperman debated the potential visibility of the proposed addition from the street for several minutes. Mr. Thomas suggested that the Commission conclude the discussion.

Mr. McCoubrey explained that the Architectural Committee had recommended denial because of the loss of historic fabric as well as the alteration to the shape of the building. He said that the Commission has been rather consistent in asking applicants not to alter the shapes of main roof slopes, even when the roofs are not highly visible from the street. He added that the chimney is not drawn in the correct place in the current application materials. Mr. Baron pointed to a recent review of an addition proposed for a building in Manayunk. In that case, the proposal was revised to reduce the impact of the addition on the historic building.

Mr. Thomas asked if anyone in the audience wanted to comment on the application. No one offered comments.

ACTION: Ms. Merriman moved to approve the application in concept. Mr. McDade seconded the motion, which passed by a vote of 10 to 2. Ms. Cooperman and Mr. McCoubrey dissented.

ADJOURNMENT

ACTION: At 10:31 a.m., Mr. Mattioni moved to adjourn. Ms. Merriman seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES CITED IN THE MINUTES

Standard 2: The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinct materials or alterations of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.

Standard 5: Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.

Standard 9: New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new works shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

Standard 10: New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION

§ 14-1004(1) Criteria for Designation.

A building, complex of buildings, structure, site, object, or district may be designated for preservation if it:

- (a) Has significant character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth, or nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past;
- (b) Is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation;
- (c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style;
- (d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen;
- (e) Is the work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or designer, or professional engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth, or nation;
- (f) Contains elements of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship that represent a significant innovation;
- (g) Is part of or related to a square, park, or other distinctive area that should be preserved according to a historic, cultural, or architectural motif;
- (h) Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community, or City;
- (i) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in pre-history or history; or
- (j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social, or historical heritage of the community.