

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

**27 JUNE 2006
ROOM 578, CITY HALL
VINCENT RIVERA, CHAIR**

PRESENT

Vincent Rivera, AIA, Chair
Robert Thomas, AIA
Daniela Voith, AIA
Suzanne Pentz
Daniel McCoubrey, AIA

Jonathan Farnham, Acting Historic Preservation Director
Randal Baron, Historic Preservation Specialist
Jorge Danta, Historic Preservation Planner
Karen Gonski, Administrative Technician
Erin McGinn-Cote, Historic Preservation Planner

ALSO PRESENT

Robert Volpe, Lily Properties
Edward Bell, EBA
Becky Stoloff, SHCA
Liz Blazeovich, PAGP
Judy Robinson, Continuum
Poe Leggette, LDG
John Gilligan, VFW Post 5205
Jennifer Morgan, Polatnick Zacharjasz Architects
Michael Skolnick, Polatnick Zacharjasz Architects
Michael Moufarrej, Polatnick Zacharjasz Architects
Paul Steinke, Reading Terminal Market
Brian Mahony, Robert A.M. Stern Architects
Neil Sklaroff, Ballard Spahr Andrews & Ingersoll
John Gallery, Preservation Alliance
David Mercuris, Washington West
Steven Weixler, Society Hill Civic Association
Rebecca Stoloff, Society Hill Civic Association
Kathleen Lewis
Randolph Lewis
Kevin Rasmussen, Architect
Steve Shapiro
Jason Thompson, Rissay Ltd.
Craig Deutsch, Harmon-Deutsch Architects
Patricia Mattera
Kristin Mullaney, Amburn/Jaronowski
Charles Eller
William Cheeseman
Patricia Dobkin
Jan Chevalier

CALL TO ORDER: Architectural Committee members Robert Thomas, Suzanne Pentz, and Daniel McCoubrey called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.

501 PINE STREET

Owner: Robert Volpe

Applicant: Edward Bell

History: Built c. 1809 for William Jones. Individually designated, Significant in Society Hill Historic District

Project: Construct side and rear addition

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to demolish the rear façade of the main block, three-story rear ell, and one-story rear addition of this “significant” late Federal rowhouse. The rear is partially visible from Fifth Street. The application proposes a contemporary rear wall to be built in place of the rear wall. The new façade would have a one-story projection with a roof deck. This projection would be the full width of the main block. The second floor would have a set of French doors with transom to access the deck. The third floor would have a full-width balcony and would be accentuated with a window and door. The new rear façade and addition would be finished in stucco.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Denial, pursuant to Standards 1, 2, and 9.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Baron presented the proposal to the Committee. Robert Volpe, the owner, and Edward Bell, the architect, represented the application.

Mr. Bell stated that the rear stair tower is modern construction, not historical. He also stated that the one-story rear addition is not very old. Mr. Bell noted that the original stairwell was located in the main block. He said that the current addition is not stylistically appropriate for the house. Mr. Baron reminded the Committee of its recent recommendation of denial on a very similar application for a nearby building. In response, Mr. Volpe reiterated that the stair tower was built later. He detailed his plan to remove the stair tower and replicate his neighbor's rear facade. He also contended that the fourth story is not visible. He said that the foliage blocks the view of the rear.

Mr. Thomas asked if the double rear windows were original; Mr. Baron stated that he thought they were not. Mr. Baron asked if a beam could be installed to hold up and save the historic second- and third-floor rear wall. Mr. Bell indicated that it would be possible. He displayed a slightly revised rear elevation. Mr. Thomas stated that he needed to see interior plans to understand the design for the rear. Mr. Bell stated that he had no interior plans with him.

Mr. Thomas suggested that the rear plan could be slightly modified to retain the paired windows on the second and third floors along with the existing rear main block wall. Retaining the double windows would allow more light into the main block. The door leading to the new deck could be located on the right side, where the stair tower now stands. Mr. Volpe expressed concern about removing the masonry wall at the first floor while retaining it above. Mr. Bell reassured him that a beam could be used to hold up the masonry above the first floor.

Mr. Volpe noted that, due to poor condition of the stucco on the rear, he would like to restucco the wall. Mr. Thomas noted that the wall could be appropriately restuccoed. Mr. Volpe questioned if he would lose square footage with the retention of the historic rear wall. Mr. Bell replied that he would not because they had proposed to building the new wall in the location of

the old. Mr. Bell asked if the rear façade could be treated differently if it is discovered that it is not original. Mr. Thomas replied that it could and suggested additional research to determine its date.

Ms. Pentz asked if any grade work would be done. Mr. Bell replied that the existing grade would be retained.

Rebecca Stoloff of the Society Hill Civic Association stated that she was in agreement with the Committee's suggestions.

Mr. Baron noted differences in two drawings; the later version shows a skylight. Mr. Volpe noted that a three-foot square skylight already exists, but that he would like to have either a nine-foot wide skylight or three smaller ones instead. Mr. Baron asked if the installation of the skylights would require the cutting of the roof rafters. Ms. Pentz suggested allowing the rafters to remain intact across and under the skylights. Ms. Pentz then asked if the air conditioners would be removed from the front wall. Mr. Bell said that they would.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee recommended approval of the proposal provided the original rear wall at the second and third floors and the paired windows are retained; the doors to the deck are located in the area exposed by the demolition of the stair tower; the skylights are flat and located on the north face of the gable roof; and the roof joists at the skylights are retained; with the staff to review details.

38-44 N. FRONT STREET

Owner: 38 N. Front Street Associates, LP

Applicant: Judy Robinson

History: c. 1830

Individually designated 01/06/1977; Significant in Old City Historic District

Project: New window openings along side façade.

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to alter existing window openings and cut new ones along a side façade that faces Cuthbert Street. The building has minimal openings along this façade and reads mostly as a solid brick wall. The applicant proposes to create new window along the entire length of the wall and close three historic openings to align them with the proposed windows. In addition, the application proposes to cut new openings on the rear of the property and install balconies with French doors. This area of the building faces a private parking area.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval of new openings on the rear of the property, pursuant to Standard 9. Denial of the proposed windows along Cuthbert Street as submitted. The staff suggests that the new openings are placed away from Front Street, that historic openings be left undisturbed, and that the new windows be differentiated from the historic six-over-six windows.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Baron presented the proposal to the Committee. Architect Judy Robinson and developer Poe Leggette represented the application.

Mr. Baron stated that the fenestration in the Cuthbert Street façade is complicated because it includes original windows as well as infilled and altered openings and non-historic windows.

Mr. Thomas asked if this application proposes any changes in the front elevation. Mr. Baron stated that the applicant intends to work with staff to restore the front façade under a separate

application. Mr. Baron noted that the south and west elevations, where work is proposed, face a parking area and have been reconstructed with newer brick. Mr. Thomas stated that the new openings would be acceptable in this location owing to the lack of visibility and the newer brick.

The Committee members then reviewed the proposed windows for the Cuthbert Street façade. They established principles for their review: that former hayloft door openings be reopened to their entire original openings; that the windows in former door openings appear as glazed doors, not windows; that historic window openings not be moved; and that brick from newly cut windows be salvaged and toothed in to close the twentieth-century openings.

For the historic hayloft door openings, the Committee suggested the installation of casement windows with a bottom solid panel and single-glazed light.

Ms. Robinson explained that the proposal to realign the windows resulted from the interior layout. Mr. Thomas demonstrated that the interior plan could easily be modified to accommodate the historic window openings. The Committee suggested that the historic window opening locations be retained.

Mr. Thomas and the other Committee members opined that the new windows were necessary for the new use and were set back sufficiently from Front Street to express the solidity of the original wall.

Mr. Baron asked the Committee to offer suggestions for distinguishing the new windows from the old. The Committee members suggested that the new windows should be wood with muntins, but without the stone lintels of the historic openings.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee recommended approval of the proposal, provided that, on the Cuthbert Street façade, former door openings be reopened to their original sizes; that windows in historic door openings appear as glazed wood doors; that historic window openings not be moved; that the new openings not include historic-looking stone lintels; and that historic brick from newly cut window openings be salvaged and toothed in to infill non-historic openings; with the staff to review details.

8217 GERMANTOWN AVENUE

Owner: VFW Post 5205

Applicant: John P. Gilligan

History: Built in 1859. Designated 11/29/1966

Project: Legalize vinyl windows

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to legalize vinyl windows installed without the Commission's approval or a building permit. The vinyl windows match the historic pane configurations, but lack the historic proportions, profiles, and other details.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Denial, pursuant Standards 5 and 6.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Baron presented the proposal to the Committee. John Gilligan, the applicant, and Mr. Lorenzov, Assistant Vice Commander of the Post, represented the application.

Mr. Baron reported that a Philadelphia Historical Commission plaque hangs at the front door of the Post. He noted that windows were supplied and installed by Matus Windows, a company that has extensive experience with the Commission.

Mr. Gilligan lamented the deterioration of the building and the efforts to maintain it. He explained that the windows were replaced in wood during the 1960s. In 1979, changes were made to the cornice. Mr. Gilligan also stated the roof was recently repaired. Ms. Pentz noted that the building is highly unusual. Mr. Gilligan spoke of the Post's financial difficulties and explained that the group is a non-profit organization. Mr. Lorenzov commented that he has contributed help with the maintenance since about 1970. At one time, the windows were practically falling out of the building, he said. Mr. Thomas noted that the original windows were double hung with unequal "cottage" sash. Mr. Lorenzov said that the jambs were about nine inches wide.

Mr. Thomas explained the Committee must base its reviews on the Secretary of the Interior Standards. He suggested that the applicants consider submitting an application based on financial hardship. Mr. Baron said that he provided information on the hardship application to the applicants. Mr. Thomas remarked that, had the applicants appeared before the Committee prior to undertaking the work, the Committee could have suggested several solutions to the window problems. Mr. Baron suggested that a compromise solution may be possible if the Commission finds that there is a hardship.

Mr. Thomas reiterated the Committee's obligation to base its reviews on the Standards. Mr. Gilligan claimed that they had no knowledge of the City's historic preservation law.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial, pursuant to Standards 5 and 6.

1126-1136 ARCH STREET, READING TERMINAL MARKET

Owners: RDA & PCCA

Applicant: Paul Steinke, Reading Terminal Market

History: Wilson Brothers & Company, 1891-1893

Project: Install restored historic sign

OVERVIEW: This application proposes installing an historic sign for the Reading Terminal Market on the Reading Terminal Railroad shed. The enameled metal and neon sign originally hung at the corner of 12th and Market Streets. It was removed without the Commission's approval in 1999, when the headhouse was rehabilitated for the Marriot hotel. The sign was stored in an RDA garage and then returned to the Market last year for a complete restoration.

The Market would like to hang the sign at the corner of 12th and Filbert Streets on the west façade of the trainshed. It cannot be rehung in its original position at the corner of 12th and Market Streets. A neon sign very similar to the restored sign once hung at the corner of 12th and Filbert Streets, as an included historic photograph evidences. However, that sign projected; the Market would like to hang the restored sign flat against the façade.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval, pursuant to Restoration Standard 7.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Farnham presented the proposal to the Committee. Reading Terminal Market general manager Paul Steinke and board member Rebecca Stolloff represented the application.

Mr. Steinke explained to the Committee this was an original sign that had been restored. He offered to reuse existing holes in the wall to hang the sign. Mr. Thomas suggested that the staff to review details to ensure the preservation of the wall at the mounting points. Ms. Pentz commented that it might be better to mount the sign slightly lower than proposed to allow for some of the stone wall to be seen above the sign. Mr. Steinke responded that he has the room to adjust the position of the sign and still maintain the requisite height above the sidewalk.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval, provided the sign is mounted in the mortar joints or existing holes and it is lowered to expose the top course of the stone, pursuant to Restoration Standard 7.

1811-1813 WALNUT STREET, 126-132 S. 18TH STREET

Owner: Philadelphia Rittenhouse Investors

Applicant: David Polatnick, Polatnick Zacharjusz Architects

History: front façade by Newman, Woodman & Harris, 1900

Project: Modify approved design; add one story at courtyard

OVERVIEW: This application proposes a revision to a design approved by the Commission in February 2004. Known as 10 Rittenhouse, the overall project includes the demolition of several buildings on S. 18th and Sansom Streets, the partial demolition and rehabilitation of the former Rittenhouse Club at 1811-1813 Walnut Street, and the construction of a high-rise condominium tower with retail and parking space.

The current application proposes swapping the second and third floors of the complex and adding one floor of retail space to the already approved two-story retail space in the courtyard area north of the remaining section of the Rittenhouse Club and south of the tower. The proposed revision would require minor alterations to the designs of the base of the tower and the new rear façade of the Rittenhouse Club. The revisions would not involve historic fabric, but would slightly adjust the 18th Street and Sansom Street facades. Because the ceiling heights and uses differ between the two floors, swapping them would result in slight adjustments to window opening locations and other façade details.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval, pursuant to Standard 9.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Farnham presented the proposal. Neil Sklaroff and architects Brian Mahoney and Michael Skolnick represented the application.

Mr. Mahoney presented the project in detail. He explained that, owing to changes in the program, they had swapped the second and third floors. Mr. Mahoney stressed that this alteration resulted in minimal exterior changes. He explained that the alterations to the landscaped inner courtyard behind the former Rittenhouse Club building. The Committee members agreed that those changes had no public visibility.

Ms. Voith requested a more detailed explanation of the exterior changes at the 18th Street facade. Mr. Mahoney proceeded to explain each point using elevations of the previously approved design and the new design. He again explained that the key design elements of the façade remained in place, such as the cornice line, fenestration, and materials. Ms. Voith stated that she believed the previous design was better proportioned and more sympathetic to the typical Philadelphia residential scale. Mr. McCoubrey concurred. Mr. Skolnick stated that they

were only proposing slight variations in the window spacing and proportions. The Committee members discussed the changes and agreed that they were insignificant.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval of the proposal, pursuant to Standard 9.

1805-1809 WALNUT STREET

Owner: Philadelphia Alison LP

Applicant: Michael Skolnick, Polatnick Zacharjasz Architects

History: Presbyterian Ministries Fund for Life Insurance, Davis, Dunlap & Barney, 1924
significantly enlarged in 1951

Project: Add penthouse; cut window openings; replace windows

OVERVIEW: This application proposes several alterations to the Presbyterian Ministries Fund for Life Insurance building, also known as the Alison Building. It was erected in 1924 as a 5-bay, 4-story building. In 1951, three bays at the west and three stories were added.

The application proposes to modify and add to an existing mechanical penthouse to create both mechanical and residential spaces. The Commission approved the demolition of the rear section of the penthouse in February 2004, when it approved the tower. The application proposes expanding the penthouse to the east to allow outdoor mechanical equipment to be moved inside and to create one residential unit. The new penthouse would be no taller than the existing penthouse and would extend only two feet south of the existing penthouse, toward Rittenhouse Square.

The application proposes to cut new window openings in the east and west party walls. The windows visible from the public right-of-way would be fenestrated with the historic six-over-six pane configuration. Those not visible to the public would be fenestrated like the tower. No details for the windows are provided.

The application proposes to replace existing windows on the front and east facades at floors 4 to 7. No details for the windows are provided.

The application originally proposed adding a new limestone cornice and coping on the main façade. This portion of the application has been withdrawn; the existing cornice and parapet will be retained and repaired.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval of the penthouse, window openings, new windows, and replacement windows, provided the replacement windows match the historic windows in dimension, configuration, profile, and material, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standards 6, 9, and 10. Denial of the new cornice and coping, but approval of the repair of the existing cornice and parapet, pursuant to Standard 6.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Farnham presented the proposal. Attorney Neil Sklaroff and architects Brian Mahoney and Michael Skolnick represented the application.

Mr. Skolnick clarified that the application no longer included alterations to the cornice at the Alison building. He explained that their intent was to repair the parapet and maintain the simple cornice. Mr. Mahoney stated that the large profile cornice shown in the renderings was a drafting error.

Mr. Mahoney described the proposal. He mentioned that the proposed penthouse atop the Allison building would extend two feet further south than the existing penthouse and that this would allow for a more harmoniously proportioned front elevation for the penthouse.

Committee members asked about the parapet height and whether the proposed terrace at the south would require a railing. Mr. Mahoney stated that the current parapet exceeds the minimum required for a railing. Therefore, the proposed terrace at the front of the penthouse would not need an additional railing facing the Square.

Mr. Mahoney also explained that the application proposes cutting new windows along the east façade. He stated that there were currently window openings in an air well along that elevation. He noted that the front façade has six-over-six windows, but the air well has nine-over-nine windows. He stated that they were proposing to use six-over-six to unify these new openings with the more formal front façade.

Mr. Mahoney lastly explained a proposed landscaped rooftop garden, which would act as a buffer zone between the penthouse and the tower. Mr. Mahoney stated that the proposed garden would create a privacy buffer between terraces at the penthouse and the tower while, simultaneously, enhancing the view of this roof from the tower.

John Gallery of the Preservation Alliance requested a clarification on the proposed brick for the penthouse addition. Mr. Gallery noted that the air well is clad with light colored brick, but the rest of the façade is red brick. Mr. Mahoney explained that they had not decided yet, but that the design team had considered the concerns expressed by Mr. Gallery during a private meeting. Mr. Skolnick stated that they believed a red brick would be a more appropriate choice, given the visibility of that entire elevation and the penthouse along Walnut and 18th Streets. The applicants agreed to work with the staff on the brick choice.

Pat Mattera, an interested party, requested additional information about the proposed penthouse. She expressed concern about the proposed two-foot extension of the penthouse to the south beyond the footprint of the existing penthouse. Mr. Mahoney explained the proposed design for the penthouse once again. Ms. Voith asserted that the proposed two-foot extension would result a positive visual impact; clad in limestone, it would balance the brick-faced existing penthouse to the west with the brick-faced penthouse addition to the east. The Committee members agreed that this was an excellent design solution to a difficult problem.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval of the revised proposal without the new cornice, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standards 6, 9, and 10.

210 W. WASHINGTON SQUARE (THE AYER BUILDING)

Owner: Washington West Associates, LP

Applicant: Washington West Associates, LP

History: Built 1928 by Ralph Bencker, architect

Individually designated 09/12/1974; Significant in Society Hill Historic District

Project: Side deck, canopy over main entrance and new sidewalk.

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to construct a roof deck on the roof of a side one-story portion of the building. This area of the building sits adjacent to the Washington Square

restaurant and it is visible at an oblique angle from Washington Square and Locust Street. The roof currently supports mechanical equipment, which would be moved to the main roof of the building. The Historical Commission already approved the location for the equipment during a previous review.

The roof currently has a 1.6' parapet. The applicant proposes to install the same aluminum and glass railing; previously approved by the Commission for the upper floors above this roof. The deck would be separated into three separate spaces, two private decks and a common room terrace, by an aluminum panel privacy screen. This screen would be stepped as it meets the railing of the deck and topped by planters. A total of six windows would be cut down into doors for access.

In addition the application proposes to install a small canopy over the main entrance. The canopy would be constructed out of metal and glass and would extend six feet from the plane of the doors. The sidewalk would be relayed with patterned concrete. Freestanding planters would accentuate the piers.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval of the deck, canopy, and sidewalk with planters, pursuant to Standard 9.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Baron presented the proposal to the Committee. Developer David Mercuris and architects Jennifer Morgan and Michael Skolnick represented the application.

Mr. Baron explained that, in a previous review, the Commission had denied a proposal for a large freestanding canopy at the main entrance. Unlike the canopy proposed earlier, this canopy attaches to the stone jambs of the doorway. Mr. Rivera stated that the proposed canopy, although much simplified, was still problematic. He noted that the canopy would create a disruption of the monumental verticality of the door. Mr. Thomas concurred and stated that the existing address sign was not original. Steven Wexler of the Society Hill Civic Association asserted that the canopy was greatly improved over the earlier design. He stated that his organization did not oppose the canopy. Ms. Morgan stated that it was needed for inclement weather.

Mr. Thomas requested a clarification on the proposed concrete sidewalk. Mr. Skolnick explained that the proposed concrete pattern would be subtle. He stated that the pattern would reflect the piers of the façade, which would be further accentuated by the planters. Mr. McCoubrey opined that the building should not be separated from the ground in such a manner and that the proposed sidewalk alterations might detract from the monumentality of the façade. Mr. Farnham stated the Commission would only have jurisdiction over the planters if they were attached to the sidewalk or the building; if they are street furniture, they would be outside the Commission's jurisdiction.

Ms. Voith requested a clarification on the proposed deck. Mr. Skolnick explained the deck proposal to the Committee members. Ms. Morgan added that it is consistent with the balconies already approved above the proposed deck. Mr. Thomas mentioned that he disagreed with certain design elements of the deck, but that these were not a preservation concern. Mr. McCoubrey asked why the railing was mounted on top of, rather than inside, the parapet. Ms. Morgan agreed to move it inside the parapet. The Committee members agreed that, with the relocation of the railing, the deck was acceptable.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial of the canopy and planters; approval of the deck with doors provided the railing is mounting inside, not on, the parapet; and approval of the sidewalk, with the staff to review details.

302-304 GASKILL STREET

Owner: Randolph Lewis

Applicant: Steven Shapiro

History: Built c. 1798.

Individually designated 01/22/1963; Significant in Society Hill Historic District

Project: Construct side and rear addition.

OVERVIEW: The Historical Commission reviewed and denied an application for this property at its May 2006 meeting. The applicant now proposes a revised plan that accounts for the Committee's and Commission's many criticisms.

The application again proposes to construct rear and side additions. The side addition would be constructed on a vacant parcel adjacent to the property. The addition would be four stories and would be faced with brick and would be articulated with recessed stone panels and contemporary casement windows. Previously the addition was designed to complement the historic building, but was deemed too historicist. The revised plans show a completely contemporary design. Furthermore, the new addition retains a greater percentage of the party wall, which had been previously proposed to be demolished.

The application also retains a stairwell addition on the rear of the historic building. This addition would again require the demolition of the one-story rear ell and the selective demolition of the rear façade and the rear gable. The current plan shows a small cut into the rear gable, which connects the stairwell with the fourth floor of the new addition. The previous application proposed the total demolition of the rear portion of the gable.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval, pursuant to Standard 10.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Danta presented the proposal. Owners Randolph and Kathleen Lewis, architect Kevin Rasmussen, and contractor Steve Shapiro represented the application.

Mr. Rasmussen explained the new proposal, stressing the changes to the application based on comments received at the Committee and Commission meetings. Mr. Rasmussen stated that he will retain as much of the original building as possible. He is proposing to retain more of the party wall and most of the rear of the roof. He also noted the design changes that were made in order to save historic fabric, among them a smaller roof deck and narrower connection between the stair well and the fourth-floor of the addition. He stated that he had abandoned the historicist façade and was now proposing a contemporary but compatible façade for the side addition. He also presented a collage of the streetscape showing the varied building heights and sizes.

Mr. Thomas commended Mr. Rasmussen on the new design and the effort he had placed on preserving historic fabric. Mr. Thomas stated that he would recommend approval of the proposal. Mr. Rivera and Ms. Pentz agreed with Mr. Thomas.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval, pursuant to Standard 10.

228 SPRUCE STREET

Owner: Sheila and Ted Zeitzer

Applicant: Jason Thompson

History: Built c. 1770 by Issac Lobdell, house carpenter

Individually designated on 04/30/1957; Significant in Society Hill Historic District

Project: Roof deck over rear ell and balcony at second floor rear.

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to construct a roof deck and alter the rear wall on the ell of this house. The main block of the property dates from 1770. However, map and insurance research has proven that the rear ell is a nineteenth-century addition postdating 1859.

The applicant proposes to introduce a small balcony in the rear wall of the ell. This portion of the rear ell is obliquely visible from American Street. The balcony would protrude one foot from the face of the wall and would be about five feet in width. A set of wood French doors would be placed in the opening.

The application also proposes to construct a roof deck over the roof of the ell. The rear dormer of the main block is already altered into a door and provides access to this roof. The deck would be set back four feet from the edge of the rear ell and would have a five and a half feet screen wall to block the noise and view of the HVAC equipment. The deck and screen wall would not be visible from any public right of way.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval of roof deck and balcony, provided that the metal railing on the balcony is painted black, pursuant to Standards 9 and 10.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Danta presented the proposal. Sheila Zeitzer, the owner, and Jason Thompson, the architect, represented the application.

Mr. Thompson noted that the proposed Juliet balcony will be approximately twelve inches deep and fifty-five inches wide with an unadorned black rail. He also stated that he was proposing a brick molding that would be flush with the brick. Mr. Thompson stated that he intends to store the removed brick in the basement for future reinstallation.

Steven Wexler of the Society Hill Civic Association stated that his organization did not oppose the project.

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

236 S. 21ST STREET

Owner: Craig Sokolow

Applicant: Craig Deutsch

History: Built c. 1870; contributing in Rittenhouse-Fitler Historic District

Project: Demolish front façade; construct front façade, fourth-floor addition, and two-story rear addition.

OVERVIEW: This building is classified as Contributing in the Rittenhouse-Fitler Square Historic District. Although altered, the building retains its original massing, scale, and sufficient historic fabric to be restored.

The application proposes to demolish the historic façade and construct a new façade, a fourth-floor addition, and a two-story rear addition. The new front façade would have a commercial ground floor articulated in a pseudo Greek Revival manner with marble piers and cornice and wood multi-light doors and windows. The second and third floors would be clad in brick veneer. The second floor would have a continuous balcony and three sets of French doors with transoms. The third floor would have six- over-six double hung windows. The fourth floor addition would be articulated by a recessed balcony with doors and windows and the mansard would be roofed in a pre-finished standing seam metal roof. No details were provided on the two-story rear addition.

The design of the new façade not only does not meet several key preservation standards and guidelines but it is utterly inappropriate. It proposes to demolish the historic façade of a Contributing building and replace it with a new façade composed of a pastiche of unrelated historical elements that have no connection to the historic building or the Rittenhouse-Fitler district.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Denial, pursuant to §14-2007 (7) (j), Standards 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 9, and the Addition Guidelines.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Danta presented the proposal. Architects Craig Deutsch, Paul Drzal, and Brett Harman represented the application.

Mr. Harman explained that he was expecting a recommendation of denial, but that he wanted the Committee's feedback so that he could work with the staff to revise the proposal. Ms. Pentz asked the applicants why they wanted to demolish the façade.

Mr. Drzal explained that "the façade has gotten mixed up."

Mr. Drzal explained the program and the changes they propose. Mr. Deutsch stated that the existing building covers 100% of the lot. He also stated that the existing floors would remain; the mansard would be altered to accommodate the fourth-floor addition. Mr. Thomas asked if the second and third floors would remain in their current locations. Mr. Deutsch replied that they would.

Mr. Thomas commented that the plans show interior spaces that do not make sense, especially a stair hall at the fourth floor. Mr. Deutsch agreed with the comment and noted that he would redesign the space.

Mr. Thomas asked if any historic photos of the building survived. Mr. Farnham responded that the staff had not located any yet, but that he was confident that some would be found.

Ms. Pentz stated that there must have been specific characteristics about the property that led to a Contributing classification. Mr. Danta explained that the Designation Committee had been very specific in its classification guidelines for the Rittenhouse-Fitler district. He stated that, according to the guidelines, buildings that retained original massing and scale and had enough fabric to be restored were deemed Contributing. Ms. Pentz asserted that enough historic fabric and evidence remained for a restoration. She also stated that the applicants were proposing significant demolition and would therefore require a finding of hardship or public interest. Mr. Thomas stated that restoring the facade would not preclude the proposed floor plan.

Mr. Deutsch then asked the Committee about the proposed fourth-floor addition. Mr. Rivera noted that the historic character and massing should be respected; any addition should be set back significantly from the front facade. Mr. Harman acknowledged the recommendation and stated that the owner would like to reside in the building. Mr. Harmon stated that he would withdraw the application.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee recommended denial, pursuant to §14-2007 (7) (j), Standards 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 9, and the Addition Guidelines.

730 S. AMERICAN STREET

Owner/Applicant: Peter and Susan Boni

History: Designated 6/24/1958

Project: Rear alterations and second-floor addition. Proposed

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to construct a one-story addition over an existing one-story non-historic rear addition. The addition would be the same width as the existing and would face an interior courtyard. The addition would be accentuated by a wood-clad bay window and would have a deck on top. This deck would require the alteration of an existing window into a door for access. The deck would have a wood railing throughout.

The application also proposes changes to three non-historic openings in the existing one-story rear addition. Currently three arched French doors open onto the inner courtyard. The applicant proposes to convert these openings into a single bay window that would extend two floors. The ground floor would have French doors with sidelights. The second floor would have nine-over-six double hung windows.

Finally, the applicant proposes to replace all the windows throughout the property with wood true-divided six-over-six windows.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval, pursuant Standards 9 and 10.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Danta presented the proposal to the Committee. Susan Boni, the owner, and Kristin Mullaney, the architect, represented the application.

Mr. Rivera remarked that the proposal respected the architecture of the historic building. He stated that a bargeboard or cap should be added at the roofline of the addition.

Ms. Pentz questioned if there was already a door at the third-floor rear. Ms. Mullaney responded that a door existed at the second floor, which the addition would cover, but not at the third floor. She stated that they are proposing to cut down a window and convert it into a door. Ms. Pentz

noted that the third-floor door would be a double door and not a single-leaf door. She asked about the type of lintel proposed. Ms. Mullaney stated that it would be a row-lock lintel.

Mr. Rivera stated that the cornice detail of the bay should wrap around the corner of the addition. Mr. Rivera opined that it should not be the full cornice, but rather a capping detail in the same manner as the outer frame of the bay. Mr. McCoubrey stated that the windows in the bay should be framed more appropriately with an outer delineation. Ms. Boni requested clarification on the cornice detail comment from Mr. Rivera. Mr. Rivera responded that it should be a finishing piece in a simplified profile to better respond to the outer frame of the bay and not a literal extrusion of the heavy cornice facing the courtyard. Ms. Boni agreed it would be an architecturally pleasing detail.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval, with staff to review details, pursuant Standards 9 and 10.

311 S. CAMAC STREET

Owner: Charles I. Ellis

Applicant: David Horlacher

History: designated 02/28/1961

Project: Demolition of a two-story rear ell, new construction of two-story addition and roof deck.

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to demolish a non-historic two-story rear ell with a roof deck. A new two-story addition with a roof deck would be constructed in its place. The new addition would be larger than the current ell, spanning the entire width of the building and extending approximately two to three feet further back on the lot. The new addition would be stucco with a sand finish. On the rear façade, at the second-floor level, there would be a two-foot by six-foot porch with a metal railing. The roof deck would measure ten feet by twelve feet.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval, pursuant Standards 9 and 10.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Cote presented the proposal to the Committee. Charles Ellis, the owner, and Steve Beltz, the architect, represented the application.

Mr. Rivera questioned if the crawl space into the existing basement would be vented. Mr. Beltz responded that it would.

Mr. McCoubrey asked how much longer the new addition would be than the existing addition. Mr. Beltz responded that it would be two feet four inches longer.

Ms. Pentz inquired if they planned to alter any openings. Mr. Beltz said he intends to alter two interior openings, closing one opening and moving one another. He also plans to close a window opening.

Mr. Beltz offered a letter of no opposition from the Washington Square West Civic Association. Mr. Rivera noted that they were keeping the deck away from the sidewall. In response to Mr. Rivera's question on the drainage, Mr. Beltz stated that they will have a scupper at the roof.

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

244 S. WARNOCK STREET

Owner/Applicant: Philip Geetter

History: Designated 01/31/1961

Project: Legalize vinyl windows, cornice and dormer, and chimney stucco.

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to legalize work done to the building by the previous owner. This work included installing vinyl windows, cladding the dormer with vinyl siding, installing aluminum capping around the entire house, and applying stucco to the chimney.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Denial, pursuant Standards 5 and 6.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Cote presented the proposal to the Committee. No one represented the application.

Mr. Baron stated that the staff requested violations after discovering the work undertaken without the Commission's approval or a building permit. The work appears to have been undertaken as part of a purchase agreement.

Mr. Rivera opined that, regardless of the identity of the person who undertook the illegal work, the burden falls upon the current property owner to correct the violations. He stated that the buyer must beware. Mr. Baron suggested that the Committee review the illegal work based on the Standards and let the Commission consider any extenuating circumstances. Ms. Pentz and Mr. Rivera agreed that the work was not appropriate. Mr. McCoubrey commented on the inappropriate aluminum windows.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial of the legalization, pursuant to Standards 5 and 6.

2047 RITTENHOUSE SQUARE STREET

Owner/Applicant: William Cheeseman

History: early nineteenth century rowhouse converted to a garage

Contributing to the Rittenhouse-Fitler Historic District.

Project: Replacement of windows, lintels and sills, door, and cornice, add entry steps

OVERVIEW: This application proposes alterations to the front façade of the building. The alterations would include replacing the wood cornice, replacing the wood lintels and sills with stone, installing six-over-six double hung sash windows, applying a stone trim to the base of the building, and installing a new wood overhead garage door. The main entrance door would be replaced with a new wood door and placed higher than it is currently by adding stone steps to the entrance and installing a smaller transom that would be the same size and configuration of the existing transoms over the garage door.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval of the garage door, main entrance door, entry steps, transom, lintels and sills, and cornice replacement, pursuant to Standard 4. Denial of the window enlargement and six-over-six double-hung sash windows, pursuant Standard 3. The staff suggests one-over-one double-hung windows.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Cote presented the application to the Committee. William Cheeseman, the owner, represented the application.

Mr. Cheeseman clarified that although the drawing stipulates the replacement of the cornice, he would like to repair or replace it depending on what he discovers concealed beneath the plywood. He noted that he already has a permit for the restoration of the masonry, which will be undertaken by William Proud Masonry.

Mr. Cheeseman displayed photographs of neighboring properties that have stone bases. He noted the deterioration of his masonry at the sidewalk. It must be repaired or replaced and he would like to use gray marble like the stoop at 2027 or the granite like the base at 2044, depending on availability.

On the subject of the front door, Mr. McCoubrey asked if it would be a panel system. Mr. Cheeseman answered in the affirmative and stated that he wanted a similar profile to that of the garage door. For the windows, he proposed a dark stained mahogany. Committee members responded that, historically, wood was painted, not stained. Mr. Cheeseman stated that the sill of the door is three inches above the sidewalk. He would like to raise the sill and have steps up from the sidewalk, which would introduce changes to the door. He would like to build a new transom above the entry door that would relate to the size and height of the garage door.

In response to Ms. Pentz's question about the basement, Mr. Cheeseman stated that the basement was filled in when the garage was added in 1911. Ms. Pentz noted the proposed enlargement of the windows on the second floor. Mr. Cheeseman replied that there is a large expanse of wall above the windows. Originally, the windows were sized for a bedroom; the space is now a living room. He feels it is appropriate to enlarge the windows to allow for the movement of furniture and for better egress in an emergency. He stated that the scale of the garage door changes the entire façade; he would like the windows above the door to be enlarged by two courses of brick to give them a better presence on the elevation as well as serving additional functional needs. Ms. Pentz asked the applicant if he was proposing stone lintels and sills for durability. Mr. Cheeseman responded that the extant wood lintels are not practical. He would like to replace them all with masonry.

Mr. Cheeseman noted that he is proposing the retention of the three existing transoms above the garage door. He stressed the tripartite divisions on the façade such as the garage door, the entry door, and the six-over-six windows, which are three lights wide.

Mr. McCoubrey asked about the height of the entry door. Mr. Cheeseman stated that it is seven feet-eight inches tall. He stated that he would like to raise it to the height of the garage door. Mr. McCoubrey opined he would rather see a more traditional door. Mr. McCoubrey stated that a normal-height door with a larger transom would appear more appropriate. Mr. Cheeseman asked the Committee to grant him more license in this renovation. He requested approval of taller entry door with a smaller transom. He remarked that several buildings on the street have undergone more significant alterations. Mr. McCoubrey reminded the applicant that his building is in a historic district. Mr. Cheeseman countered that it did not look like it belonged in the district. Mr. McCoubrey asserted that the building could be restored and become an attribute to the district. Mr. Cheeseman stated that he did not want to install a six-foot-six-inch door after the steps are installed. Mr. Rivera suggested the transoms at the garage door and entry door should not be the same size. He suggested a seven-foot door and smaller transom, which is more in keeping with the others in the neighborhood.

Mr. Baron noted that enlarging the window openings at the second floor would result in a mismatch with the adjacent building. Ms. Pentz objected to the proposed marble lintels, which

would not be historically accurate. Mr. Baron suggested that the new masonry lintels and sills should be painted to mimic the historic wood lintels and sills.

Mr. Baron attempted to clarify the recommendations of the Committee; he stated that the Committee was denying the proposal as presented. Mr. Rivera asked that it be noted that he was recommending approval of the enlargement of the windows, but that the other two Committee members were recommending denial. The Committee agreed to the use of granite for the steps and the use of marble for the lintels. However, Ms. Pentz stated her preference for wood lintels.

On the entry door, the Committee suggested a seven-foot, five-panel door with the transom occupying the remaining space. For the garage door, the Committee favored a door with two panels per transom bay with wider siderails, totaling six panels across and four down. Mr. Cheeseman objected to this design stating that it would appear too contemporary and would result in panels that are too wide. He proposed an oak door like one on the Academy of Fine Arts. He expressed his preference for this type of door, noting its simple detailing. Mr. Cheeseman lamented that too many garage doors look like swinging doors; he does not want the doors to look like barn doors, but instead automobile doors. Mr. Cheeseman stated that this building had been a home for a chauffeur; he would now like it to reflect the fact that it is a residence for a family. The Committee suggested one-over-one windows rather than the inappropriate six-over-six windows. Ms. Pentz suggested that the applicant preserve as much historic fabric as possible; she opined that the entry door may not need to be replaced. Mr. Cheeseman responded the door is in disrepair and needs replacing. The Committee agreed that a base like that at 2044 was appropriate.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee recommended denial of the proposal as submitted. The Committee offered recommendations on each aspect of the proposal, with staff to review details:

1. Denial of the enlargement of the second-floor windows;
2. Approval of marble lintels and sills;
3. Approval of gray granite steps;
4. Approval of stained, seven-foot, five-panel door matching the extant door with the transom to occupy the remaining space in the opening;
5. Approval of a painted garage door with six panels across and four down;
6. Approval of painted one-over-one windows.

2129 CHESTNUT STREET

Owner: Robert Chevalier

Applicant: Corporate Facilities Inc.

History: Built 1883, Theophilus Parsons Chandler, architect

individually designated 09/01/1983 and in Rittenhouse-Fitler Historic District

Project: Remove historic fence, install taller fence

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to install a six-foot cast-iron fence in the place of an existing cast-iron fence half that height. The existing fence delineates a corner garden space of the property along the sidewalk. The proposed fence would have the same profile of the existing fence, but would be inappropriately scaled for the ornate brownstone base.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Denial, pursuant Standards 2 and 9.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Cote presented the proposal to the Committee. Jan Chevalier and Patricia Dobkin represented the application.

Ms. Dobkin stated that she would like to replace the extant three-foot fence with a six-foot fence. Ms. Chevalier explained that the fence was damaged by an automobile. Mr. Baron opined that the existing fence is historic and the proposed fence is completely out of scale. Ms. Dobkin explained that the cornerstone was dislodged during the accident. She also expressed her preference for a taller fence; she noted safety concerns, especially with the early hour their employees begin to enter the building.

Ms. Pentz noted the photograph that showed that the installation of the taller fence had begun. Ms. Dobkin acknowledged that the installation had begun before she was aware of the historic designation. The applicants were apprised of the designation by an architect tenant. Ms. Pentz stated that she would accept the installation of the taller fence. Ms. Dobkin stated that they had seen photographs that showed that there was no fence until the 1930s or 1940s. Mr. Rivera opined that the proposed fence was not appropriate; it was too tall and out of scale. He suggested that a horizontal member be added to the taller fence to recall the height of the historic fence. Mr. Baron suggested that the applicant develop a detail for point where the fence meets the stone ornaments.

Liz Blazeovich of the Preservation Alliance stated that Preservation Pennsylvania holds an easement on the property.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial as submitted, but approval if a horizontal member is added to recall the height of the historic fence.

STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES CITED IN THE MINUTES

Standard 1: A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal changes to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.

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

Standard 3: Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.

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

Standard 6: Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of distinctive features, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.

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

work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale, and proportions, and massing, to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

Restoration Standard 7: Replacement of missing features from the restoration period will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence. A false sense of history will not be created by adding conjectural features, features from other properties, or by combining features that never existed together historically.

Addition Guidelines: Not Recommended: Duplicating the exact form, material, style, and detailing of the historic building in a new addition so that the work appears to be part of the historic building. Not Recommended: Imitating a historic style or period of architecture in a new addition. Recommended: Constructing a new addition so that there is the least possible loss of historic materials and so that the character defining features are not obscured, damaged or destroyed.

§14-2007 (7) (j): No permit shall be issued for the demolition ... of a building ... within an historic district which contributes, in the Commission's opinion, unless the Commission finds that issuance of the permit is necessary in the public interest, or unless the Commission finds that the building ... cannot be used for any purpose for which it is or may be reasonably adapted.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jonathan Farnham, Randal Baron, Jorge Danta, Karen Gonski, Erin McGinn-Cote