

REPORT OF THE ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Robert Thomas, Chair

Commission Conference Room, One Parkway, 13th Fl., 1515 Arch St.

29 December 1998

Present

Robert Thomas, Chair

Penelope Batcheler

J. William Cornell

Herbert Levy

Suzanne Pentz

Randal Baron, Assistant Historic Preservation Officer

R. Scott Jacob, Executive Secretary

Richard Tyler, Historic Preservation Officer

Also

Richard Thom

Aliki Strakes, Preservation Alliance

Pia Roychowdhury

Howard Goldblatt

William Becker

Susan Becker

Tamara Myers

Roland Davies

Van Potteiger

Daniel Taylor

Elizabeth Schneck

William G. Schwartz

George Manos, Manos Architects

Vincent Cho

Edward Palmer

Patrick Leonard

Daniel Jones

Matthew White, Tenth Presbyterian Church

Bernice Hamell, Society Hill Civic Association (SHCA)

Rebecca Stoloff, SHCA

Ciril Magen, SHCA

Patrick Lavin, Greater Media Cable

Alan Werther

Philip Senechal

Jefferson Clark

Daniel Bosin

Dominic Ward

Sarah Ward

Mr. Levy, Vice Chair, recognized a quorum and called the meeting to order at 12:45 p.m.

209 North 3rd Street

Richard Tucker, Owner

Richard Thom, Architect/Applicant

DATE: c. 1825

PROPOSAL: Cut new windows in side wall; facade rehabilitation

This proposal involves renovating an empty building for a ground floor office with apartments above. This will entail installing new wood windows on the front facade and cutting new windows into the blank side facade. The ground floor of the side facade will receive a new door onto an alley the City deeded to the owner. Mr. Baron noted that several of the new window openings lie within a non-original portion of the building. The applicant clarified that the proposal also calls for a rehabilitation of the existing dormer, not its replacement.

Ms. Batcheler asked the applicant to consider locating the new door and a few of the windows in the location of existing cinder block-filled openings on the side facade. Ms. Pentz noted that the applicant must consider the location of the brick support piers of the side facade when introducing the new openings. Committee members also asked the applicant to use a three light pane configuration in the half-circle window on the top floor, a beaded barge board at the roof line, and the retention of the remaining shutter hardware. Richard Thom, architect for the proposal, agreed to comply with these requests.

The Committee inquired whether the applicant could incorporate double doors into the shopfront design to correspond with the original doors. Mr. Thom stated that current accessibility and safety codes do not permit them, but added that he can revise the design of the proposed door to lend the appearance of double doors.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the proposal, with the changes to the door, windows and barge board, with staff to review and approve details.

611 Spring Garden Street, German Society of Pennsylvania

German Society of Pennsylvania, Owner

Richard Thom, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1888

PROPOSAL: Mechanicals in side yard

Ms. Pentz recused herself from the discussion and the vote owing to her involvement with the proposal.

This proposal involves installing mechanicals for new air conditioning in the yard adjacent to the building as well as some external ductwork. Richard Thom, Architect for the proposal, stated that he will place a fence around the mechanical equipment, with a landscape screen in front

of it. Mr. Baron asked Mr. Thom to make the landscape screen as high as the fence, and to paint the exposed ductwork to match the brick of the building. Mr. Thom noted that a possible future addition would conceal the mechanicals and ductwork.

The remaining Committee members voted to recommend approval of the proposal, conditioned upon the installation of a fence and a landscape screen of equal height surrounding the mechanicals, and painting the exposed ductwork to match the brick.

311 Lawrence Court

John Ditunno, Owner

Robert LaRouche, Applicant

DATE: 1971

PROPOSAL: Enclose fourth-floor front deck

This proposal involves altering a modern row house within the Society Hill District. The applicant proposes roofing over the fourth floor deck similar to several other houses in the development down the street. The line of the roof would fall lower than the adjacent ones because a glass roof requires a steeper pitch. After learning that this rowhouse belongs to a "cluster" of only two rowhouses in this small development as opposed to a row of several, and because of its intact condition, Committee members decided not to recommend approval of the proposal. Mr. Thomas suggested using a roll-down awning instead of the permanent roofing.

Four of the five Committee members voted to recommend denial of the proposal. Mr. Levy abstained.

707 Pine Street

Pia Roychowdhury, Owner/Applicant

DATE: 1761

PROPOSAL: Replace pineapple feature on railing

This proposal involves the restoration of the pineapple shaped iron feature on the railing of an historic row house. The Redevelopment Authority plans call for the replacement of this feature in the rehabilitation specifications for the building similar to the remaining pineapple feature on the neighboring rowhouse. The applicant explained that she has encountered much difficulty in finding an accurate replication of the pineapple, and has received estimates of several thousand dollars to have it copied. Committee members discussed several options to mitigate the expense of replacing the pineapple feature, including the use of stock materials from a catalog, with staff to review and approve details.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of replacing the pineapple feature, including the use of stock materials from a catalog, with staff to review and approve details.

212 Race Street

William Becker, Owner/Architect/Applicant

DATE: c. 1830

PROPOSAL: Fenestration on side facade

Mr. Becker proposes to install new windows in the former party wall of the building. Committee members expressed concern that these new elements through a former party wall may precipitate problems in the future, and asked the applicant to secure written permission from the owner of the neighboring property for the proposed changes.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the proposal, conditioned upon the submission of a letter of consent from the owner of the neighboring property for the proposed changes.

634 South American Street, nw corner at Bainbridge Street

Matthew Sandler and Corliss Cavalieri, Owners

Tamara Myers, Applicant

DATE: c. 1800

PROPOSAL: Privacy fence at rear deck

The proposal involves adding a privacy screen to the top of the railing of a visible roof deck. Mr. Baron explained that the screen will attach to a previously approved deck railing. The applicant explained that she will construct the screen of wood panels containing one-half inch slats. Mr. Thomas noted that the garage addition of the house, on which the deck sits, is recessed from the historic portion. The applicant stated that the screen includes a slight return for support.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval.

222 Bainbridge Street, sw corner at American Street

Roland Davies, Architect/Applicant

DATE: c. 1770

PROPOSAL: New dormer, deck and side vent

The proposal includes:

1. A rear deck.
2. A new dormer and door to access the deck.
3. A kitchen stove exhaust vent through the wall of the rear ell.

Committee members discussed issues of precedent set by prior Commission approvals of additions to visible rear ells. Ms. Batcheler noted that this particular house has suffered considerable insensitive alteration already, but urged the Committee to deliberate the proposed changes carefully. The Committee asked the applicant to incorporate more openness in the railing of the deck. The applicant submitted a photograph of a neighboring building at the southeast corner of Monroe and South American Streets to illustrate a possible rail design. The Committee agreed to recommend approval of a similar railing on the subject property.

Committee members expressed concern over the largeness and design of the proposed dormer and access door. Mr. Levy suggested redesigning the dormer to resemble the rear dormer of the adjacent house. The architect agreed to redesign the dormer as recommended.

The applicant explained that the proposed exhaust vent will sit above the windows of the rear ell's first floor. Committee members noted that the vent should approximate or slightly exceed the size of a brick, and asked the applicant to paint it to match the bricks.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of:

- 1. A rear deck, with railings that incorporate more openness such as the railing on the neighboring building at the southeast corner of Monroe and South American Streets.*
- 2. A new dormer to resemble the rear dormer of the adjacent house and deck-access door.*
- 3. A kitchen stove exhaust vent through the wall of the rear ell painted to match the bricks.*

913 Spruce Street

John and Karin Sirlin, Owners

David Amburn, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1816

PROPOSAL: Rear deck, garage modification

This proposal involves modifying an existing garage and installing a deck on top. Committee members did not object to the proposal, but did discuss issues of water drainage.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the proposal, with staff to review and approve details.

219-225 South 18th Street, Rittenhouse Regency

Rittenhouse Regency Affiliates, Norman Dimson, Managing Partner, Owner

Brad Shaw, Houlihan's Restaurant Group, Applicant

DATE: 1929

PROPOSAL: New storefront and metal entrance awning

The applicant returns with a new storefront design based on drawings that have received approval on the rest of the building's facade. The new café doors will have a multi-pane design with true divided lights. A new, barrel-vaulted metal awning over the door represents a departure from existing design on the building. William Schwartz, counsel for the applicant, explained that the barrel vault mimics the theme of the interior ceiling. The proposal also includes open-sided, non-illuminated canvas awnings with no lip. The Committee agreed that these elements complement the existing shopfronts on this building.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the proposal.

1535 Locust Street, ne corner at 16th Street

Bank Philadelphia, Owner

Elizabeth Schneck, Applicant

DATE: 1928

PROPOSAL: Redesign ATM location; illuminated signage

This proposal involves modifying an existing ATM installation and adding a slightly projecting sign. The applicant stated that protective coating will keep the copper panel proposed for the roofing of the ATM niche from oxidizing.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval.

1709 Walnut Street

Green Village Food Market, Owner

George Manos, Architect/Applicant

DATE: c. 1929

PROPOSAL: New storefront facade

The architect has modified his proposal to rebuild the storefront of this Art-Deco commercial building. Committee members agreed that the revised proposal complements the building better. George Manos, architect for the proposal, asked the Committee to recommend approval of the photomural from the earlier proposal because he considers it an integral component of the new design. The Committee agreed to recommend approval of the photomural conditional upon further submission of details to the Architectural Committee for its review. The Committee also asked the applicant to continue the base to the left side of the right-side door.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the new proposal, with the base to the left side of the right-side door, and with the specifics of the photomural to return to the Architectural Committee.

1701 Delancey Street, rear of Tenth Presbyterian Church

Tenth Presbyterian Church, Owner

Matthew White, Applicant

DATE: 1859

PROPOSAL: Mechanicals in yard; new gate

This proposal involves:

1. Installing a transformer within an enclosed but visible yard space.
2. Replacement of the current chain link fencing with an upgraded chain link or when money becomes available an iron fence, with a post and light built to accommodate either fence.
3. Replacing an existing fire escape with a ladder type escape.

The Committee did not object to these proposed alterations.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of:

- 1. Installing a transformer within an enclosed but visible yard space.*
- 2. Replacement of the current chain link fencing with an upgraded chain link or, when money becomes available, an iron fence and installation of the new brick gate.*
- 3. Replacing an existing fire escape with a ladder type escape.*

1509 Walnut Street

Avado Brands, Inc., Owner

William Palmer, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1960

PROPOSAL: Café windows; louvers in basement windows

This proposal calls for removing the existing awnings and installing wood café doors within an existing non-original storefront opening and louvers in the basement window openings. The applicant also seeks to install a fire department connection with an accessory bell. Committee members asked the applicant to install the new louvers back behind the existing basement grates.

The Committee voted unanimously to approve the proposal with the new louvers set back behind the existing basement grates, with staff to review and approve details.

Society Hill, 10 Locations: South Front and Lombard Streets, sw corner; 100-110 Spruce Street; South 2nd and Lombard Streets, sw corner; South 2nd and Spruce Streets, sw corner; South 3rd and Walnut Streets, sw corner; South 4th Street and St. James Place, se corner; South 6th and Locust Streets, se corner; South 6th and Pine Streets, se corner; South 6th and Spruce Streets, se corner; South 8th and Pine Streets, sw corner

Pat Lavin, Greater Media Cable, Applicant

PROPOSAL: Cable boxes on sidewalks

This proposal involves installing cable boxes on the sidewalks. These boxes will supply cable service for emergency purposes for up to four hours. Patrick Lavin of Greater Media Cable stated that the proposed boxes will measure 17" by 28" wide and 36" high. He described attempts to reduce the number of boxes to fewer than ten. Mr. Baron stated that the boxes have some detrimental impact on the street scape and asked the applicant to explore alternative, or possibly underground, locations, and cited the various sorts of approvals required, such as a City Council Ordinance and Streets Department approval. Mr. Baron also suggested the Committee send the issue to the Telecommunications Committee. He mentioned the receipt of several letters from Society Hill Civic Association opposing the installation of the boxes. Mr. Baron also asked why the need arose for the boxes now, since Society Hill has had cable for many years. Mr. Lavin explained that the boxes provide emergency power for several hours should the usual system fail.

Bernice Hamell of the Society Hill Civic Association cited several problems the neighborhood has had with Greater Media. She spoke of an agreement stating that all equipment would go underground. Ms. Hamell also asked that Greater Media Cable come to the Society Hill

Civic Association so that they may review the application. Committee and staff members discussed the possibility of installing the boxes underground, and asked the applicant to return with a revised design reflecting this recommendation, or documentation proving the impossibility of this method.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend denial of the proposal as submitted, the applicant to return after further study of the possibility of installing the boxes underground.

237-247 South 18th Street, Barclay Hotel

Barclay Condominium Association, Owner

Philip Senechal, Unit Owner

Alan Werther, Applicant

DATE: 1928

PROPOSAL: Balcony in visible side court of building

Mr. Tyler stated that this proposal comes before the Committee for preliminary review.

This application represents a modification to a former proposal to install a balcony and doors to access the balcony. That application, denied by the Committee, Commission and the Board of Licenses and Inspections Review has now reached court. The applicant now seeks to install the balcony on the west wall of the U-shaped light court adjacent to an existing fire landing.

Alan Werther, applicant and attorney for the unit owner, presented new drawings for the proposal without dimensions, and explained that it will remain partially obscured by the existing fire balcony. He stated the dimensions as five feet by ten feet, and explained that they had to lengthen it to miss an existing window. The balcony will now only extend beyond the fire balcony by two feet. Mr. Werther said that the view corridor of the proposed balcony spans an area along the north side of Locust Street less than thirty feet wide. The Committee asked the applicant to submit drawings with dimensions.

Jefferson Clark, design consultant for the project, explained that he designed the balcony railing to match the fire balcony railings. Mr. Baron stated that the applicant must have the balcony painted black to match the fire balcony, and the muntins of the proposed french doors painted cream to match the existing windows.

Mr. Werther also showed the Committee photographs of other small balconies and window railings within the light court of this building. Mr. Baron noted that these additions most likely existed prior to the building's designation and do not constitute a precedent. Committee members expressed concern that approving this proposal will set a precedent for this as well as other designated buildings.

Mr. Tyler suggested asking the condominium association of this building to adopt the design details and location of this proposal as a regulation for other unit owners. Committee members agreed that, should this proposal receive approval, a regulatory system should relegate any future applications for similar balconies to this or like locations behind the fire balconies within the light court, and on this building only. Mr. Werther noted that current discord among the controlling

members of the condominium association may precipitate difficulties in passing any regulations presently. Mr. Tyler asked whether, in view of the simplicity of this proposal, this application warrants final approval with staff to review and approve details. He also stated that the Commission could notify the condominium association of this application and the Commission's decision.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the new proposal with the details reviewed and approved by staff, and to advise the Commission to request the condominium association to devise a regulatory system to relegate any future applications for similar balconies to this or like locations behind the smoke stairs within the light court, and on this building only.

127 Kenilworth Street

Dominic and Sarah Ward, Owners/Applicants

DATE: Original building - c. 1860

PROPOSAL: Rebuild house on historic site

This proposal comes back with a revised drawing to show the construction of a new house. The house will follow much of the design of the now demolished historic carriage house formerly standing on the site. The Committee raised no objections to the plans for the new construction. *The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the proposal, with staff to review and approve detail of the window sills.*

Respectfully submitted,



R. Scott Jacob
Executive Secretary