

REPORT OF THE ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Arlene Matzkin, Chairperson
Commission Conference Room
Suite 1301, 1401 Arch Street
25 June 1996

Present

Arlene Matzkin, Chairperson
Penelope Batcheler
J. William Cornell
Herbert Levy
Suzanne Pentz

Richard Tyler, Historic Preservation Officer
Jeffrey Barr, Historical Research Technician
Laura Spina, Historic Preservation Specialist

Also

William McDowell, Redevelopment Authority (RDA)
Richard Miller, Bower Lewis Thrower Architects
Eric Rahe, Bower Lewis Thrower Architects
Meale Quenzee, John Milner Associates
Richard Tucker
Margaret MacKenzie, Police Department
John Morrissey, John Morrissey Contractors
Paul Buote, John Morrissey Contractors
Lonne Rice, Drexel University
Robert Yannazzo, Edwards & Kelcey Consultants
Mark Bower, Edwards & Kelcey Consultants
Amy Freitag, Fairmount Park Commission
Bernard Nearey, Rittenhouse-Fitler Historic District
Shelly Merhige, Council President Street's Office
Milton Marks, Preservation Alliance
David Polatnick, Polatnick Zacharjasz Architects
Ben Miller, Polatnick Zacharjasz Architects
William Wheeler
Jerry Culston
Hyman Myers, Vitetta Group
Nan Gutterman, Vitetta Group
Mary Ossi, Vitetta Group
Chadwick Pickeral, Wolfe Scott Architects
Christy Collins, Ithaca Partnership
Gail Bachman, St. Mark's Church
Lanny Leibowitz
John Echenrode, Fairmount Park Commission
William Doran
Connie Caino, Fairmount Park Commission
John Carr
James Ruckmann, Fairmount Park Commission

Ms. Matzkin called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

1701-1705 Arch Street, Robert Morris Hotel

Peggy Walton, Applicant

PROPOSAL: Neon & painted sign

A representative of Peggy Walton stated that Ms. Walton installed the neon border inside the window and it matched the neon sign of the Dunkin' Donuts next door. Ms. Matzkin stated that since the sign was inside the window, the Commission did not have jurisdiction.

The Committee voted that the Committee and Commission did not have jurisdiction over the sign.

1115-1145 Market Street, Reading Terminal Headhouse

Eric Rahe, Architect

PROPOSAL: Window vents, signage

Richard Miller and Eric Rahe described the changes proposed for the Reading Terminal Headhouse Public Area Improvements which included several parts: reglazing of several second floor windows; installation of several window vents that correspond with existing vents on the Filbert Street facade, installation of a sign and two pylons on the sidewalk on Market Street; and signs for SEPTA. The pylons will support banners that will advertise the Convention Center; the sign will serve as a directory for visitors. Ms. Matzkin questioned the need for the pylons on Market Street. The Committee discussed the size and dimensions of the pylons. Ms. Matzkin asked about the clock. Mr. Miller stated that, when the funds become available, the clock will be restored and replaced in the Market Street sidewalk. Mr. Levy questioned the placement of the window vents. Mr. Rahe explained that the position of the ductwork dictated the position of the vents.

The Committee also discussed ideas to brighten the area under the overpass on Filbert Street. The Committee said that the color is authentic, but suggested using a lighter shade of paint.

The Committee voted to recommend approval.

205 Vine Street

Mark Tucker, Applicant

PROPOSAL: Shop window, door, cut side windows and door

Mr. Tucker presented the proposal to alter the front facade and to cut side windows in the party walls of the building. Once part of a row, the building now stands alone. Mr. Tucker owns the property to the west of the building, so the windows and door would not pose a problem. He stated that he did not own the property to the east of the building, but the owner of the property guaranteed that the lot would not be developed. The

Committee emphasized the risk Mr. Tucker assumed by installing windows on a party wall next to a lot he did not own. Mr. Tucker understood the risk.

Mr. Tucker asked if a muntin could be installed in the store window, requiring smaller pieces of glass and providing extra support. The Committee found a wood muntin acceptable.

Discussion followed on the size and style of door. The plan followed the staff recommendation for a four-foot-wide door designed to mimic the extant two-leaf door. The owner wanted a smaller door. The Committee decided that a smaller door with a side light would not be appropriate. After discussing several ideas the Committee and Mr. Tucker returned to the original proposal for the door.

The Committee voted to recommend approval of the front facade alteration, with staff to approve the design of the wood muntin in the store window, and new windows and door to be cut in the party walls.

3101-3199 Chestnut Street, Drexel University

John Morrissey, Contractor

PROPOSAL: Visible roof condensers

John Morrissey explained that the extant roof condensers require replacement. The new condensers would be comparable with the existing equipment in size and color, and placed in the same location which is visible from some positions on the street.

The Committee voted to recommend approval.

Gypsy & Lincoln Drive, Wissahickon Hall

Mark Bower, Applicant

PROPOSAL: Stucco, trim, porch repair; new railing; painting

Mark Bower and Robert Yannazzo described the project to the Committee. Three different contractors are working on the project: one for the interior work, one for the roofing, and Mr. Bower's firm for the remaining exterior work. Mr. Bower presented the proposal for the work to be done by his firm only. The Committee expressed concern about the roof work, because much of the damage that the proposal seeks to correct resulted from poor water drainage. The Committee recommended a maintenance program that would include routine cleaning to provide proper water drainage.

Mr. Bower explained briefly the proposed roof work and stated that the roofing contract should remedy the water drainage problems. One area of considerable trouble is the second floor roof-deck. The police officers use the deck constantly, creating a large amount of foot traffic. Many types of waterproofing would not sustain such usage. The Committee and Mr. Bower and

Mr. Yannazzo discussed several options for the deck treatment.

The Committee also reviewed the plans for repairing the stucco and railing, and the painting of the exterior.

The Committee voted to recommend approval of the proposal as submitted, but the Committee noted that problems may arise with the roof-deck flooring.

1811 Walnut Street

David Polatnick, Architect

PROPOSAL: Rear addition

David Polatnick presented the final drawings for the rear of the Rittenhouse Club. The drawings reflected the changes that the Committee requested from the last meeting, including moving the door, setting back the roll-down gate and making the arch over the roll-down gate metal. Mr. Polatnick explained that the windows on the rear of the Rittenhouse Club exist and the area of the wall that is a solid brick is the site of the interior fire stairs. Ms. Matzkin suggested having some windows in the fire stair to break the expanse of the brick wall. Mr. Polatnick agreed that he could introduce some fenestration.

Judith Eden, Vice-President of the Center City Residents Association, questioned the visibility of the rear five-story facade. Mr. Polatnick stated that at various points a small portion of the rear facade may be visible, but the extant windows would not be changed. Mr. Polatnick presented photographs that were taken from various points around the building to demonstrate that the rear facade was not visible from most public spaces and the portions that may be visible will not change. Ms. Eden inquired about the placement of the mechanical systems. Mr. Polatnick explained that the mechanical systems would be placed on the roof of the two-story addition and set back away from the facade. With the parapet, the systems would not be visible.

The Committee voted to recommend approval of the rear facade.

Mr. Tyler stated that the Committee has recommended approval of the various aspects of the entire proposal which include: removal and storage of the front steps on Walnut Street; dropping the front doors down to grade and installing a transom above; awnings on the windows flanking the front door; a metal and glass canopy over the front door; banners on the two flagpoles; partial demolition of the rear of the building, and construction of a two-story rear addition.

Milton Marks asked to see how much of the front windows would be covered by the awnings. He and Ms. Eden also questioned the use of the banner brackets, saying that the brackets are very small. Mr. Tyler stated that the brackets themselves may be replaced as long as the new brackets are fitted into the existing locations.

2125 Chestnut Street, Unitarian Church

Chadwick Pickeral, Contractor

PROPOSAL: Cornice & dormer repair; replace cobblestone with flagstone

Chadwick Pickeral presented the proposal for the Unitarian Church which includes two parts. The first part consists of replacing a cobblestone terrace with flagstone. The wrought iron gates that lead from the terrace to the sidewalk will be removed, restored, and rehung. All extant trees will remain. Another flagstone terrace will be regraded to match the level of the sidewalk. Ms. Spina explained that the flagstone formed part of another terrace which the Church had maintained. Several years ago, the church removed the flagstone and kept it in storage.

The second part of the proposal calls for the restoration of two dormers. Mr. Pickeral explained that he will replace the missing and damaged wood details in kind. The proposal also includes a bird-repellent system. The Committee questioned the cornice treatment because it appeared to be boxed; the proposal offered to replace the box. The Committee suggested an investigation of the present cornice. If it proves that the original cornice was simply boxed, the Committee requested that the original cornice serve as the template for the restoration work. Mr. Pickeral did not know if the original cornice existed but agreed to investigate and call the staff if the original cornice exists.

The Committee voted to recommend approval.

245 S. 17th Street and 1630 Locust Street

Nan Gutterman, Architect

PROPOSAL: Garage, cut second floor window, facade restoration

Hyman Myers described the proposal for the left half of a twin designed by Frank Miles Day. The proposal includes: restoration of the facade, installation of a three-bay garage, and cutting a second floor window. The owner wants to install a garage on the first floor of the house that will hold five cars. To accommodate the garage, the owner would have to close the basement window and access, and remove the store window and front door. Mr. Myers designed a garage door which featured historic-looking elements and tried to create a storefront appearance. The Committee asked if the Zoning Board of Adjustment had approved the use or if the Streets Department had approved the curbcut. Mr. Myers stated that the owner has not applied for those permits yet. The Committee stated that too much historic fabric would be lost, especially the door which is a significant feature. The Committee voted unanimously to recommend denial.

Bernard Nearey, of the Rittenhouse-Fitler District, stated that the inventory of the Rittenhouse-Fitler District lists this building as "significant." The building is almost an intact

design of Frank Miles Day and no historic fabric should be sacrificed for a garage.

Mr. Myers stated that the owner intends to restore the facade, but he is depending on the approval of the garage. Mr. Myers explained that area parking garages did not provide the safety that the owner wants for the fleet of cars of the company.

Judith Eden stated that the public has an interest in the project, because if the curbcut is approved, the public loses two more spaces to park on the street.

Mr. Myers then provided the Committee with a Plan B which called for only a three car garage. The front door would be kept, but the basement would be closed and the storefront would be removed. The garage door would still feature historic-looking elements and mimic a storefront. The windows would have faux venetian blinds so that people on the street do not see the cars. Again the Committee stated that too much historic fabric, four feet of original brick and stone (over 120 square feet total), would be lost. The Committee voted to recommend denial by a vote of four to one, with Mr. Cornell dissenting.

The proposal included installing a glazed panel under a second floor window. Ms. Matzkin stated that Frank Miles Day must have had a significant reason to differentiate the middle window from the flanking windows. That significance cannot be overlooked. Ms. Batcheler stated that cutting the window would result in loss of original fabric. Mr. Myers stated that the building has party walls on three sides, and the opening of the window would allow more light into the room. The Committee unanimously voted to recommend denial of the window.

In the course of its deliberations, the Committee applied the Secretary of Interior's *Standards for Rehabilitation*.

The First Standard states "A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment." In this context the word use does not imply the exercise of a zoning function by an historic preservation agency. Rather it considers use as a factor in seeking to assure the minimal change. The Committee found that the introduction of a garage in the house violates this standard, because it calls for the removal of a substantial amount of historic fabric from the first floor.

The Second Standard reads "the removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided." This standard's guideline recommends against "removing a feature of a building, streetscape, or landscape that is unrepairable and not replacing it; or replacing it with a new feature that does not convey the same visual appearance." Plan A for the

garage removes a significant element, the front door, and both plans remove almost all of the historic brick and stone from the first floor.

Standard Three notes that "each property shall 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 architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken". No historic predicate exists for the proposed appearance of the garage door which the architect designed to resemble a shopfront.

Standard Nine states "new additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment". The guideline for this standard recommends against "cutting new entrances on the primary facade" as well as "introducing a new entrance or porch that is incompatible in size, scale, material, and color". The garage plan does both. Standard Nine also does not recommend "removing or radically changing windows which are important in defining the overall historic character of the building so that, as a result, the character is diminished". The opening of the second floor window would destroy a planned and unique feature of the second floor facade.

The Committee voted to recommend denial of Plan A of the garage, denial of Plan B of the garage, and denial of cutting the second floor window because of the loss of historic fabric.

1625 Locust Street

Nan Gutterman, Architect
PROPOSAL: New lights

Nan Gutterman and Gail Bachman described the light fixtures that would replace lights that were installed in the 1950s. The fixtures reflect the architecture of the church and will be the same size and in the same location as the extant fixtures. The new light fixtures will be made of iron, oiled to match the doors. Ms. Batcheler asked if an elevation was drawn to show the placement of the lights. Ms. Gutterman said that an elevation had not been done.

The Committee voted to recommend approval.

232-240 S. Broad Street, Academy of Music

Nan Gutterman, Architect
PROPOSAL: Water pipes on wall

Nan Gutterman explained that the Academy must install water

pipes to be able to test the fire system. The proposal is for installing four water pipes, 2-½ inches in diameter, set in a vertical row, beside the extant water pipe.

The Committee voted to recommend approval.

122-124 S. 18th Street

Lanny Leibowitz, Architect

PROPOSAL: Glass connector link

Lanny Leibowitz described the glass link that will connect 122 to 124 South 18th Street. The glass tower will house the staircase and will be lighted at night. Ms. Batcheler noted misgivings about the lack of privacy in the lighted stairwell. The Committee recommended that Mr. Leibowitz investigate tinted or colored glass to remedy this situation. Mr. Leibowitz stated that bronze glass may be used.

The Committee voted to recommend approval.

Rodin Museum

Dennis Fledsher, Applicant

PROPOSAL: Steps

John Eckenrode of the Fairmount Park Commission stated that this proposal is similar to the proposal approved by the Committee and Commission in 1992. Instead of replacing all of the steps, only a third of the steps will be replaced and the rest will be repaired. Mr. Eckenrode showed the Committee a sample of the limestone which will be used to replace and patch the existing limestone, but he did not have a sample of the extant stone. The Committee could not determine if the sample was a good match. Mr. Eckenrode explained that the Committee chose from several samples in 1992 and he believed that the sample he brought was the one chosen. It is difficult to match new and aged stone, but the Committee stated that a visible match at a distance of about 50 feet would be acceptable.

The Committee voted to recommend approval with the staff to make the final approval of a stone match.

777 W. Valley Green Road, Brinkwood

Mark Ueland, Architect

PROPOSAL: New barn

Mr. Doran, owner of Brinkwood, explained the proposal for a barn/garage to the Committee. The barn will be located 150 feet from the house and not visible from the house or any public roads. Vegetation and elevation prevent park visitors from seeing the house or the proposed barn.

The Committee voted to recommend approval.

Ridgeland Mansion

Amy Freitag, Applicant

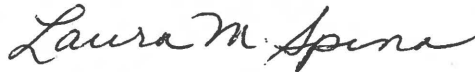
PROPOSAL: Porch glazing

The Committee reviewed the final drawings for the glazing of the porch. James Ruckmann stated that the wood supports for the glass will be painted to match the background and will not be highlighted like the columns of the porch.

Connie Caino stated that the center is having a celebration to commemorate the opening of the facility which will be attended by the Mayor, members of City Council and Senator Fumo.

The Committee voted to recommend approval.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Laura M. Spina".

Laura M. Spina
Historic Preservation Specialist