

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE OF THE PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

15 February 1984

Herbert W. Levy, A.I.A., Chairman

Present: Herbert W. Levy, A.I.A., Chairman, Architectural Advisor to the Commission
Theodore T. Bartley, Jr., F.A.I.A., Preservation Committee, American Institute
of Architects, Philadelphia Chapter
John Dickey, F.A.I.A.
Henry J. Magaziner, F.A.I.A., National Park Service
Janet Klein, Vice Chairman of the Commission
William Blades, Philadelphia Historic Preservation Corporation
Patricia Siemiontkowski, Architectural Historian

Also: Techow Lei, Architect/Planner, to present preliminary plans for the re-
habilitation of the Robert Morris Hotel at 1701-1705 Arch Street.
Maureen Carlson, Designer, to present her proposal for the rehabilitation
of 249 South 12th Street.
Michael Closeme, Office of Housing and Community Development, to discuss
with the Committee the proposed rehabilitation of 702 South Front Street.
Morris Schindler and Jim Murphy, Architect, to present plans for the
rehabilitation of 53-55 North 2nd Street.
Cecil Jones, President of World Wide Travel, to present a sign proposal
for the facade of the Belgravia at 1811 Chestnut Street.
Messrs. Chavis and O'Neill, representing the College of Physicians of
Philadelphia, to request permission to demolish 20, 22 and 24 South
21st Street.
Steve Chatlin of Lifetime Builders to request an approval of illegal work
at 2315 St. Albans Place.

SUBMISSIONS FOR ALTERATIONS

✓ Robert Morris Hotel (Wesley Building), 1701-1705 Arch Street, Techow Lei,
Architect/Planner. Mr. Lei appeared before the members of the Architectural
Committee to discuss his proposal for the rehabilitation of the Robert
Morris Hotel, a fourteen story office building of Gothic design built
in two phases (1914 and 1921) by Ballinger Company.

Mr. Lei explained to the Committee his intention to remove all existing
signs and canopies from the face of the building and to install a revolving
door on the 17th Street elevation of the building as shown on the original
plans drawn by Ballinger. He further reported his intention to renew
the existing wood storefront windows on the ground floor with anodized
aluminum. The sash and frames on the upper floors would be repaired and
the wood painted. The Committee urged Mr. Lei to keep the upper part of
the wood storefront frame, including the transom, intact. A renewal of
the lower section of the storefront would be permitted provided the
scale of the new store window, its color and its materials are sympathetic
with the original Ballinger design.

The Committee, following some discussion, voted to recommend an approval, in concept, of this project and asked Mr. Lei to prepare a final submission which takes into consideration the recommendations offered by the Committee members.

- ✓ 249 South 12th Street, Maureen Carlson, Designer. Ms. Carlson presented to the members of the Architectural Committee plans for the rehabilitation of 249 South 12th Street, a three-and-a-half story brick building constructed c. 1839 and altered for commercial use on the ground floor c. 1920.

Ms. Carlson explained her client's wish to have the structure cleaned and repaired and to install a new shop door on the ground floor. No additional work is planned at this time.

The Committee members agreed to recommend an approval of Ms. Carlson's rehabilitation proposal for 249 South 12th Street but explained to her that the building will not be eligible for the receipt of a plaque. If the owner desires a plaque, additional rehabilitation work will be required.

- ✓ Masonic Temple, 1 North Broad Street. The Architectural Committee reviewed the design of the cast bronze plaques proposed for installation on the Masonic Temple building at 1 North Broad Street. Each plaque measures 4'6" by 30" and displays the Masonic logo in cast brass with a satin highlighted finish.

The members of the Committee found the design of the sign, its size and its materials to be in keeping with the character and integrity of the Masonic Temple and voted to recommend its approval. One plaque will be placed on the North Broad Street elevation of the building; the other, on the Filbert Street elevation.

- 702 South Front Street, Michael Closeme, Office of Housing and Community Development. Mr. Closeme of the Office of Housing and Community Development appeared before the members of the Architectural Committee to discuss the City's proposed rehabilitation of 702 South Front Street, a three-and-a-half story house built 1767-1769 and altered in the mid-nineteenth century and, again, in the early twentieth century.

Mr. Closeme explained to the Committee members the City's program under which the owner of 702 South Front Street qualifies for a grant which allows only for repair and rehabilitation work which will bring the house up to Code. Cosmetic work does not qualify.

Following some discussion of the condition of the building, the Committee agreed to allow the rehabilitation of the structure to its mid-to-late nineteenth century appearance. This includes the replacement of the

existing window sash to conform to that cited in the 1867 insurance survey on file in the Commission office. The Committee also agreed to the retention and repair of the existing turn-of-the-century cornice. If the window frames are rotted and require replacement, they must be replaced in kind. The members recommended that the existing frames be repaired with an epoxy filler and painted.

Before any final approval is granted, the Committee agreed to ask Mrs. Balcheler to examine the building with Mr. Closeme to determine its condition, particularly the window frames, and to recommend appropriate repair techniques.

- ✓ 53-55 North 2nd Street, Schindler Associates, Morris Schindler and Jim Murphy, Architect. Messrs. Schindler and Murphy presented for the Committee's review plans for the rehabilitation of buildings at 53 and 55 North 2nd Street, two commercial loft structures constructed c. 1845 and c. 1885, respectively.

Following some discussion of the rehabilitation proposal, the 1885 insurance survey for 55 North 2nd Street and Baxter's view of 2nd Street showing no. 53, the Committee agreed to grant an approval, in concept, of this project. Final drawings, including details, should be submitted to the staff for a final review and approval.

- ✓ Belgravia, 1811 Chestnut Street, Cecil Jones, President of World Wide Travel. Mr. Jones presented to the members of the Architectural Committee his proposal for the installation of a sign band across a portion of the facade of the Belgravia, the newly renovated office building at 1811 Chestnut Street.

The band will measure 14" x 20'0" and will be bounted in the banded area below the two large windows on the western half of the building facade. The sign will consist of cast bronze letters mounted on a bronze anodized aluminum sheet. This sheet will then be attached to the building using approximately 10 1 1/2" flathead screws and lead anchors.

The Committee found the design of the sign band to be acceptable and voted to recommend its approval.

- ✓ Langhurst, 6012 Ridge Avenue, Ueland and Junker, Architects. The members of the Architectural Committee reviewed the architects' resubmission for the construction of a new addition to the side and rear of this certified structure.

The Committee found the plans to be in agreement with the recommendations made at the 18 January 1984 committee meeting and voted to recommend their approval.

- ✓ 30th Street Station, E.L.D. Associates. The members of the Architectural Committee reviewed the storefront rehabilitation proposals for Godfather's Pizza and for an unnamed bar and restaurant in the 30th Street Station concourse.

The Committee, following some discussion, voted to recommend an approval of the plans as presented. They asked, however, that the staff check with Carl Demas of Amtrak to assure that he has seen the storefront plans and approves them.

DEMOLITIONS

- ✓ 20, 22 and 24 South 21st Street. Messrs. Chavis and O'Neill, representing the College of Physicians, appeared before the members of the Architectural Committee to request permission to demolish the buildings at 20, 22 and 24 South 21st Street, three of six structures (20 through 30) built in 1890 from the designs of Addison Hutton, architect.

It is the intention of the College of Physicians to demolish the three buildings to provide for parking on the site. The College has owned the properties at 20 and 22 South 21st Street for several years; 24 was purchased recently. A parking lot is maintained presently at 14, 16 and 18 South 21st Street.

According to Mr. O'Neill, the buildings continue to drain the College of its limited resources. Demolition would eliminate that drain while parking would generate some additional income for the College.

Mr. O'Neill also reported that the City of Philadelphia several years ago encouraged the College to demolish the 21st Street buildings to construct a showcase building. Funding for this project never materialized and the program was scrapped.

The members of the Architectural Committee discussed with Messrs. Chevis and O'Neill the significance of the 21st Street buildings and the presence of numerous other parking facilities in the immediate area. If additional parking is not critical to the College, the Committee recommended strongly that consideration be given to the sale of buildings. This would eliminate the costs of keeping and maintaining the buildings and result in a profit to the College while allowing for their preservation.

Following some further examination of the issue, the Architectural Committee voted to recommend that the Commission impose its six month statutory delay on the demolition of 20, 22 and 24 South 21st Street in order to explore, with the College, alternatives to the proposed demolition. In addition, the Committee recommended that the College be asked to submit for review a copy of its master plan for development including a time schedule for any proposed demolition and new construction in the area.

ILLEGAL ALTERATIONS

- ✓ 2315 St. Albans Place. Mr. Steve Chatlin appeared before the members of the Architectural Committee to request an approval for illegal work undertaken at 2315 St. Albans Place in 1979.

Lifetime Builders was cited by the Department of Licenses and Inspections in March of 1979 for not having obtained a building permit for the installation of aluminum siding on the facade of 2315 St. Albans Place. In response to this violation, Lifetime Builders applied for a building permit to legalize the work and presented their request for an approval to the Historical Commission and its Architectural Committee in May of 1981. The Commission, at that time, refused to approval the illegal work.

In response to a recent directive from the Department of Licenses and Inspections to obtain a building permit for this same illegal work undertaken at 2315 St. Albans Place, Mr. Chatlin again presented to Commission staff another building permit application.

The members of the Architectural Committee reviewed the application and, again, voted to recommend to the Historical Commission that the work at 2315 St. Albans Place not be approved since it is not compatible with the original character of the building or the streetscape.

Mr. Chatlin pointed out to the Committee that other buildings on the block, i.e., 2319, 2347 and 2349 St. Albans Place have had aluminum siding installed subsequent to certification of the street. The Committee asked the staff to check with the Department of Licenses and Inspections regarding these properties. If the work was done without permits, violations for these buildings should be issued as well.

Mr. Chatlin also reported that ownership of the property has changed and that removal of the siding, in view of this change, could not feasibly be undertaken.

Finally, if the Commission acts to accept the recommendation of the Architectural Committee to deny approval of the illegal work, the Department of Licenses and Inspections should be notified of the Commission's decision.

- ✓ 1420 Pine Street, Theodore J. Bartley, Jr., F.A.I.A. Mr. Bartley presented for review preliminary plans for the rehabilitation of 1420 Pine Street, a seven story brick building built c. 1898.

The Committee found the proposed rehabilitation program to be acceptable and recommended its approval in concept. Mr. Bartley abstained from voting on this matter.

15 February 1984

PLAQUES

- ✓ 1902 Waverly Street. The Committee reviewed the owner's application for a plaque for 1902 Waverly Street. It was the opinion of the Committee that a plaque could not be awarded to 1902 Waverly Street at this time owing to the absence of shutters at the second floor where hardware exists.
- ✓ YWCA, 5820-5824 Germantown Avenue. The Committee reviewed the application for a plaque for the YWCA and agreed that the building, at this time, did not merit a plaque. The Committee noted, specifically, the need to restore the transom over the door and to develop a uniform paint *scheme* for the entire building.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Siemiontkowski
Architectural Historian