

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

**TUESDAY, 27 OCTOBER 2009
COMMISSION CONFERENCE ROOM, ROOM 578, CITY HALL
DAVID AMBURN, CHAIR**

PRESENT

David Amburn, Chair
John Cluver
Shawn Evans
Nan Gutterman
Dan McCoubrey
Suzanne Pentz

Jonathan Farnham, Executive Director
Randal Baron, Historic Preservation Planner III
Jorge Danta, Historic Preservation Planner II
Erin Cote, Historic Preservation Planner II
Rebecca Sell, Historic Preservation Planner II
Karen Gonski, Administrative Technician

ALSO PRESENT

Debra Brackett
Jay Hahn
Carey Yonce, Firm Architecture
Alan Razak
Cata Raisbeck
Richard DeMarco, Esq., Klehr Harrison Harvey Branzberg & Ellers
Anthony Tsirantonakis, Tsirantonakis & Associates

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Amburn called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. Ms. Gutterman and Messrs. Cluver and Evans joined him. Ms. Pentz and Mr. McCoubrey joined the meeting after its commencement.

3459 W. QUEEN LANE

Owner: Debra Brackett
Applicant: Debra Brackett
History: c. 1929; Contributing to the Tudor East Falls Historic District, 10/9/2009
Project: Legalize windows

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to legalize windows that were installed during the 60-day notice period prior to the review of the nomination for the Tudor East Falls Historic District. The Historic Preservation Ordinance requires that notice be sent to all owners of properties in the proposed district at least 60 days prior to the Commission's review of the district nomination at a public meeting. The jurisdiction of the Commission begins with the date of the notice. If the Commission votes to designate the proposed district, its jurisdiction continues; if not, the jurisdiction lapses. Notice for the Tudor East Falls District was sent on 9 July 2009. The

Committee on Historic Designation reviewed the nomination on 8 September 2009 and the Commission reviewed the nomination and voted to designate the Tudor East Falls Historic District on 9 October 2009. The staff observed the installation of new windows that had not been reviewed or approved by the Commission on 17 September 2009. A violation was issued. The owner submitted an application seeking legalization that includes a work estimate dated 1 June 2009. The Transition Regulation, Section 6.3.b of the Rules & Regulations, was designed to address this situation. It states that:

the Commission, its committees and staff shall consider the prior existence of executed contracts, substantial design development or other evidence of a material commitment to development in the review of applications. This regulation shall not apply to buildings, structures, sites or objects within a proposed district that were previously designated individually.

This property was not individually designated prior to the creation of the historic district. Also, even though the windows do not precisely match the historic window, they are sympathetic to the building and district.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval, owing to the commitment to work before the date of notice, pursuant to the Transition Regulation, Section 6.3.b of the Rules & Regulations.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Cote presented the application to the Architectural Committee. Property owner Deborah Brackett and, designer Jay Hahn represented the application.

Mr. Cluver asked the staff to comment on the windows it would have approved at the staff level had the applicant contacted the Commission prior to the installation. Ms. Cote responded that the staff is conducting research to identify appropriate replacement windows for the steel casement windows that are found in this new historic district. She reported that the staff has not yet concluded that research. Ms. Cote pointed out that the current windows are aluminum clad and have a mullion configuration that differs slightly from the original configuration. She stated that the original windows had one mullion and four casements at the first floor and two mullions and three casements at the second floor. The new windows have slightly different configurations but are similar to and compatible with the original windows. The new windows are casements with very similar pane configurations.

The Committee members all agreed that, owing to the documentation that shows that the owner had entered into an agreement for the window replacement with a contractor prior to the district notice date, which signals the start of the Commission's jurisdiction, the Commission should legalize the windows under the Transition Regulation. They also noted that, although they do not precisely replicate the original windows, the new windows are similar to and in the spirit of the original windows.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval of the legalization, pursuant to the Transition Regulation, Section 6.3.b of the Rules & Regulations.

2404 DELANCEY PLACE

Owner: Alan Razak and Jacqueline Buhn

Applicant: Carey Jackson Yonce

History: c. 1890

Project: Install windows and doors, stucco side and rear facades, alter and add deck to non-historic garage

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to modify a garage and install a garage roof deck and doors, windows, balconies, and stucco. In September 2006, the Commission reviewed a similar application to rebuild the garage, remove the fire escape, install windows, doors, balconies, and cut new openings on the rear elevation. The Commission approved the proposal as submitted, with the staff to review details. The work was never undertaken.

This application now proposes to install a garage roof deck and raise an existing garden wall. This application also proposes alterations including the installation of doors and windows within existing openings, a third-story balcony, a second-story railing, and scored stucco over the entire south and west brick elevations. The fire escape would be retained. The first story of the rear is not visible from the public right-of-way. The remainder of the rear as well as the exposed south party wall are visible, but not highly visible, from the public right-of-way.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval of the installation of a garage roof deck, garden wall, doors, windows, third-story balcony, and second-story railing, pursuant to Standard 9. Denial of the stucco installation on the second through fourth stories, pursuant to Standard 9.

DISCUSSION: Dan McCoubrey disqualified himself from the review owing to his professional association with the architect.

Ms. Sell presented the application to the Architectural Committee. Architect Carey Yonce and property owner Alan Razak represented the application.

Mr. Yonce explained that an earlier application, which the Commission reviewed a couple of years ago, did not receive the requisite zoning approval. He stated that this application is a scaled-down version of the earlier application.

Mr. Yonce noted that the main preservation issue presented by the application is the proposal to stucco the rear façade and party wall. He stated that the 24th Street party wall is visible from the public right-of-way. He added that he understands the staff recommendation of denial of the stucco; however, he claimed that there are mitigating factors. He explained that, according to historic maps, the rear was never intended to be exposed. It is deteriorating. He reported that the rear or west façade was not built as an exposed façade because it was constructed with a “common” brick and not a “finish” brick. He claimed that the brick is now deteriorating and that parging has been applied in the past. He concluded that his proposal is to extend the existing parging to the roofline and add a two-inch layer of insulation for energy efficiency. Mr. Evans asked if water is infiltrating the house. Mr. Razak confirmed that water was coming in through the west wall. Mr. Evans inquired about the age of the roof. Mr. Razak stated that he had the roof replaced in 1998. Mr. Amburn asked why the staff objected to the stucco. Ms. Sell replied that the staff opposes stucco on historically exposed brick walls because it covers and may damage the historic material and changes the historic appearance. Mr. Yonce argued that the wall was not historically exposed, but had become exposed over time. Ms. Pentz stated she was in favor of stucco to protect the wall, but objected to the scoring pattern. Mr. Yonce stated that the stucco scoring was meant to articulate the elevations, but could be eliminated from the

proposal. Mr. Amburn agreed with Ms. Pentz that the stucco on the main house should not be scored, but expressed sympathy with the applicant's desire for more insulation. He noted that parts of the west or rear wall had previously been parged. Mr. Farnham stated that it appeared that the south or party wall, which is visible from 24th Street, had never been parged or stuccoed above the roofline of the much shorter building to the south. Mr. Yonce agreed. He reminded the Committee that there had been smaller trinities to the south and west of the building. Mr. Razak stated that they had been demolished. Mr. Baron contended that the brick at the south and west may not be softer; it may simply be different brick. He explained that secondary elevations were often constructed with different brick that is not necessarily salmon or soft brick meant not to be exposed. Messrs. Yonce and Razak strongly disagreed and stated that the brick at the south and west was softer and was deteriorating rapidly. They noted that the brick used for the north wall, along a narrow alley, is finish or exterior brick that differs from the brick at the west and south.

Mr. Evans asked about the salvaged balusters and finials noted on the plans. Mr. Yonce replied that he intended to reuse balusters and finials that were already incorporated into the garage area. Mr. Cluver asked about the three-foot setback of the proposed wall at the garage. Mr. Yonce explained that it was set back to meet the zoning requirements. Mr. Cluver asked about the proposed bluestone cap. Mr. Yonce stated that it would be used to cap the extended parapet wall. Mr. Cluver asked how the height of the railing on the garage was determined. Mr. Yonce stated that it was based on code requirements. Mr. Cluver asked his fellow Committee members to comment on the proposed scoring for the stucco on the garage. Ms. Gutterman and Messrs. Amburn and Evans agreed that the scoring was acceptable on the non-historic garage, but not on the historic house.

Mr. Cluver suggested that the Z-channels used to attach the insulation to the exterior walls should be attached to mortar joints only, not the brick. He asked about the stucco detailing around the door and window openings on the west walls. Mr. Yonce stated that the detailing would be straightforward because the openings are already parged. He would not need to add a second layer of stucco. Mr. Evans asked if the proposed windows for the west or rear of the building would match the historic pane patterns. Mr. Yonce confirmed that they would.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval of the application, provided the stucco applied to the main house is not scored, with the staff to review details.

241-43 CHESTNUT STREET, UNIT H

Owner: Ben Hur Chestnut LP; 243 Chestnut GP, LLC; Jerry Harary; In Mocean Group

Applicant: Kenneth Gioffre

History: 243 Chestnut, Borie Brothers Bank, 1897, Wilson Eyre, Jr., architect;
rear addition approved by Commission, 8/8/2003

Designation: individually designated, 11/4/1976;
significant in Old City Historic District, 12/12/2003

Project: Relocate and install new signage

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to relocate an existing sign on a non-historic addition at the rear of 243 Chestnut Street, along S. 3rd Street, and to add a new sign on a historic door surround along Chestnut Street.

An existing sign would be relocated further south on a non-historic addition at the rear of the historic building. The Commission approved this non-historic addition, which faces 3rd Street, with the current signage on 8 August 2003. The staff would approve the alteration of this sign alone at the staff level. However, the second sign included in this application obliged the staff to forward the application to the Commission for its review. The application proposes to install a second sign, a blade sign, into the elaborate door surround on the historic building at the corner of 3rd and Chestnut Streets. The proposed location for the blade sign, the keystone in the arched doorway, is inappropriate. It would destroy the proportions and symmetry and conceal the important decorative element of this door surround. It would not comply with Standards 2, 5, and 9.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Denial, pursuant to Standards 2, 5, and 9.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Danta presented the application to the Architectural Committee. No one represented the application.

The Committee members all agreed that the blade sign proposed for the historic door surround was entirely inappropriate and did not comply with the Standards. Mr. Amburn asked if anyone could suggest a location for the blade sign. Mr. Cluver answered that a sign might be appropriately installed between the door and the window.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval of the relocation of the sign on the non-historic addition, but denial of the blade sign on the historic door surround, pursuant to Standards 2, 5, and 9.

1957 LOCUST STREET

Owner: Walnut Street Equities LLP

Applicant: Richard DeMarco on behalf of Cata Raisbeck

History: c. 1860; contributing to Rittenhouse Fidler Historic District, 1995

Project: Legalize façade alterations to first floor

OVERVIEW: The application proposes the legalization of work to the storefront performed without a permit by a tenant. A violation was issued for the work. Former tenants have also altered this storefront illegally.

The application provides few details about the work undertaken or the legalizations sought. The applicant has not submitted architectural drawings indicating the alterations. The applicant has provided photographs showing some of the alterations, but not all alterations are depicted and the limited annotations do not fully describe the alterations or the relief sought.

The alterations include the reconstruction of the storefront window facing 20th Street. The new storefront window does not replicate the historic window. A wide center mullion was added and the sizes of the transoms were altered. The storefront on Locust Street is intact above the bulkhead and provides a good model for a reconstruction of the historic design. The tenant also installed new metal door, which is not based on an historic design. Perhaps most noticeable of the changes is the installation of an air conditioning unit on the first-floor brick wall along 20th Street. Inappropriate awnings with unusual clear plastic “skylight” sections were also installed.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Denial, owing to the incompleteness and Standard 6.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Baron presented the application to the Architectural Committee. Attorney Richard DeMarco and tenant Cata Raisbeck represented the application.

Mr. Baron introduced photographs depicting the wall-mounted air conditioning unit, which was not documented in the photographs submitted by the applicants. He explained the numerous alterations made to the storefront over the years. Some were permitted; others were not. He noted that the storefront window recently altered had once had a sliding window for sidewalk sales, but that was removed many years ago.

Mr. Evans asked if the air conditioning unit at the brick wall projected through the wall or was simply attached to it. Mr. Baron explained that it sits on brackets that are mounted to the wall, but does not project through the wall. He stated that hoses and wires run across the wall and into the building through the storefront. Mr. Evans commented that the unit is very inappropriately mounted. Others questioned whether it met building and safety codes.

Mr. DeMarco stated that the zoning file for the store is very large and convoluted, owing to the numerous changes over the years. He provided copies of numerous zoning permits that stipulate that no changes would be undertaken to the exterior; nonetheless, former tenants changed the exterior many times. He stated that he and his client explained to the contractor that he needed to seek the Commission's approval and building permits, but the contractor rejected that advice and undertook all of the work without permits. Mr. DeMarco explained that the contractor replaced the storefront window because the old window was rotten. Ms. Raisbeck agreed that the contractor had been difficult. Mr. Evans stated that he found both the awnings and the air conditioning units highly inappropriate. Ms. Raisbeck stated that she had obtained two estimates for installing the condenser on the roof, but both were too expensive, approximately \$6,000. She stated that her yogurt machines produce significant heat and she needs extra air conditioning to keep her shop cooled. She stated that she considered, but could not afford, central air conditioning.

Ms. Raisbeck offered to replace the awnings. She asked for guidance. Mr. Baron stated that a shed type awning would be appropriate, provided it did not have the cut-out for the air conditioner and the clear plastic "skylights." He cautioned that the Department of Licenses & Inspections will require that awnings do not obstruct the sidewalk; they appear to hang too low and may violate the minimum height above the sidewalk requirement. Mr. Amburn noted that the Art Commission must review the awnings for approval as well.

Ms. Raisbeck stated that she recently opened her business and may not have the funding to comply with all review and permitting requirements. Mr. DeMarco stated that the application is not a financial hardship application, but he asked the Committee to take financial hardship into account. Ms. Raisbeck stated that her shop is the only one in the United States to offer this type of Italian yogurt. She stated that she provides a much-sought-after product to the community. She stated that she needed the air conditioning and advertising on the awnings to be able to provide this product.

Mr. Farnham stated that, although the storefront has been altered illegally many times and has lost much of its integrity, the Commission must protect the historic district. He stated that the air conditioning unit and awnings are especially inappropriate.

The Committee members suggested that the applicants submit a new application with architectural drawings and/or detailed annotated photographs showing all of the illegal work as well as the proposed corrections and legalizations. They contended that they would not

recommend legalization of the wall-mounted condenser. Mr. Baron noted that, if the Commission approved the application, it would not know what it was legalizing because the documentation is incomplete.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial, owing to incompleteness and pursuant to Standard 6.

1323 LOMBARD STREET

Owners: Bernard and Karen Bygot

Applicant: Sal Guerrero, Architect

History: c. 1835

Project: Legalize rear addition

OVERVIEW: The building suffered a fire. Under separate permit, the applicant is restoring the front façade. The owner is in the process of constructing a rear three-story addition that fills in the side yard next to the rear ell. A former owner altered the rear and stuccoed the rear façade. The new addition will also have this finish. The addition is similar to one at 1325 Lombard next door. It faces a small street of several rowhouses and the side of an electrical power station.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval, pursuant to Standard 9.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Baron presented the application to the Architectural Committee. Architect Anthony Tsirantonakis represented the application.

Mr. Tsirantonakis assured the Committee that he had not been involved in the illegal work, but had been brought in to resolve the problem.

Mr. Cluver asked if the addition would cover any windows on the neighboring building. Mr. Tsirantonakis replied that it would not. Mr. Baron asked if the addition would be any taller when completed than it currently appears. Mr. Tsirantonakis stated that it would not. Mr. Baron asked if he was considering any site alterations such as a fence or garage door at the sidewalk in the rear. Mr. Tsirantonakis stated that he was not. The extant gate would be retained. Mr. Cluver asked why the windows in the addition were not located at the same heights as the windows in the ell. Mr. Tsirantonakis explained that the windows are located at landings on a stairway, halfway between the floors.

Mr. Amburn asked his colleagues if they would have recommended approval of the addition if it had been presented prior to the start of construction. Ms. Gutterman and Mr. McCoubrey stated that that they would have recommended approval.

Mr. Baron introduced photographs showing that the rear of the building had been previously stuccoed. Mr. Tsirantonakis explained that a smooth stucco finish matching the adjacent surfaces would be applied to the new addition.

Mr. Cluver suggested that the mullion between the rear windows be reduced in width. He also suggested that the patio doors be reduced from fifteen to ten lights to increase the sizes of the panes to be compatible with the panes in the existing windows. Mr. Tsirantonakis agreed to adjust the designs of the mullion and patio doors.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval, provided the mullion width is reduced and the pane sizes of the patio doors are increased, with the staff to review details.

ADJOURNMENT

The Architectural Committee adjourned at 10:47 a.m.

STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES CITED IN THE MINUTES

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

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

Standard 6: Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, 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 works shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.