

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE

OF THE

PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

26 May 1988

David Hollenberg, Chairman

Present: David Hollenberg, Chairman
David DeLong, University of Pennsylvania, Preservation Program
John Dickey, F.A.I.A.

Marea Petrillo, Chief Assistant City Solicitor, Law Department
Richard Tyler, Historic Preservation Officer
Patricia Siemiontkowski, Assistant Historic Preservation Officer
Sally Elk, Historic Research Technician
Randal Baron, Preservation Planner
Maureen Heaney, Clerk Steno I

Also: Martin Dorf, to resubmit a proposal for the shape of the floor cut at the street level of the Bourse Building located at 21 S. 5th Street.
Andrew Moroz, to present a proposal for the construction of a roof deck atop a three-story addition at the rear of 413 S. 3rd Street.
Larry Goldenberg from Garden State Brickface and Stucco and Bruce Chafetz, owner to present a proposal for the application of an acrylic polymer wall finish to the building located at 1703 Walnut Street.
Neil Schlosser, architect and Ted Revlock to present a proposal for alterations to 3424, 3428 - 3430 and 3432 - 3436 Sansom Streets.
John Deasey, architect to present a proposal for window alterations to the Warwick Hotel located at 17th and Locust Streets.
And others.

ALTERATIONS

- 21 S. 5th Street, The Bourse Building. Mr. Dorf appeared before the Committee today to resubmit his proposal for the introduction of a new floor cut at the street level of the Bourse Building. At the last meeting of the Architectural Committee, held on 27 April 1988, the Committee members decided that the wavy cut conflicted radically with the formal interior space of the building and that a more subtle design approach was necessary.

This resubmission proposes a shallow curve cut along one side of the floor and a straight cut on the other side. At the basement level, Mr. Dorf redesigned the supporting structure as recommended by the Committee. The columns and exposed beams have been pulled back and placed under the walkways as suggested.

The Committee recommended that the drawings be revised to follow a rectilinear form. Each of the four corners of the cut-out should be executed as a 90 degree angle and if not, to be executed in a form with corners to be at least inferable as 90 degree angles. The Committee suggested that within this basic form numerous design variations are possible.

The Committee recommended that the Architect undertake a complete redesign of the floor cut which incorporates into it the concerns and comments of the Committee members.

Mr. Dorf agreed to revise his plans and resubmit for a conceptual approval prior to the Commissions June 8th meeting.

The Committee did not object to the use of a bridge to span the cut into the floor provided the bridge is placed perpendicular to the cut. The Committee agreed also to consider a second bridge should the architect choose to have two crossovers.

- 413 S. 3rd Street, Andrew Moroz, architect. This submission calls for the construction of a roof deck atop a three-story addition at the rear of 413 S. 3rd Street. Access to the deck will be achieved through the north side of the rear dormer window on the main building. The architect also proposes the removal of an existing shed-type, glass structure at the ground floor on the rear of the main building. This structure will be replaced with a conservatory.

The Committee recommended an approval of this submission. However, the Committee asked for a redesign of the deck railing and suggested that the use of a thinner ballister or a fence of simple design more in keeping with the character of the conservatory. Mr. Hollenberg abstained from voting.

- 1703 Walnut Street, Bruce Chavetz, owner and Larry Goldenberg from Garden Stated Brickface and Stucco. Mr. Goldenberg appeared before the Architectural Committee to present a proposal that calls for the

application of an acrylic polymer wall finish to the facade of the building located at 1703 Walnut Street. Mr. Goldenberg presented a sample panel of the finish material. The proposed color will be a buff tone similar to the color of the stucco which presently exists on the building.

The Committee inquired about the condition and composition of the material presently on the facade of this building. They asked, too, about the structural condition of the entire building.

According to the applicant, the building is structurally sound. The facade material does not consist of limestone block but rather of cement struck to resemble stone.

Mr. Hollenberg stated that this building currently is not individually designated but is in a pending historical district.

The applicant reported that his plans to reface the front were drawn approximately four months ago.

The Committee strongly urged that the applicant study the possibility of restuccoing the building. However, they agreed to commend an approval of the proposed application of an acrylic polymer wall finish if restuccoing does not prove feasible.

3424 Sansom Street, Schlosser/Rivera/Krumholz, Architects. Neil Schlosser presented to the Committee for its review plans for a two-story addition at the rear of 3424 Sansom Street. The proposed new structure will have a brick base, a stucco wall finish and a metal roof.

Following some brief discussion, the Committee voted to recommend an approval of the architect's plans as submitted.

3428-3430 Sansom Street, Schlosser/Rivera/Krumholz, Architects. Mr. Schlosser submitted for Committee consideration plans for the renovation of 3428-3430 Sansom Street to include the following:

- 1) construction of a new glass and steel addition at the rears of 3428 and 3430;
- 2) excavation of an existing front yard to create an open areaway;
- 3) lengthening of the front basement windows below grade into the proposed new areaway; and
- 4) restoration of the remainder of the building facades.

The Committee reviewed the proposed rear addition to these two buildings and voted to recommend its approval to the Commission. They expressed serious opposition, however, to the proposed excavation of the front yard and the lengthening of the basement windows.

The Committee stressed the special significance of this row of intact Second Empire rowhouses built c. 1870. Several of the houses retain their original front yards while others have been paved with either brick or concrete. No areaways currently exist on the street. The Committee found the proposed excavation and basement window alteration to be in conflict with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines and voted to recommend to the Commission a denial of this portion of the proposed rehabilitation.

Mr. Schlosser stated his belief that the Historical Commission previously had reviewed and approved Design Criteria for the entire Sansom Street Row and that these criteria included sample basement areaway treatments similar to that proposed for 3428-3430 Sansom Street. The staff, subsequent to the meeting, reviewed the file and found no record of an approval of the May 1981/April 1982 design criteria referred to by Mr. Schlosser. The Commission's files do contain a letter, dated 6 April 1978, which indicated an approval of rehabilitation specifications for the row with a requirement that the submission of a complete set of working drawings be made for review before any final approval is granted. These specifications, however, did not include any proposed areaway treatments.

In 1984, under the former preservation ordinance, the Historical Commission did review and approve the introduction of a basement areaway at 3420-3422 Sansom Street. This areaway, however, was never executed. Moreover, the Historical Commission standards and guidelines for review of applications under the new ordinance are, unlike review under the former ordinance, governed by specific preservation/rehabilitation criteria.

Following extensive discussion concerning these issues, the Architectural Committee voted to recommend the approval of the rear glass and steel addition and the restoration of the front facades of 3428-3430 Sansom Street. They further voted to recommend to the Commission a denial of the proposed introduction of an areaway on the fronts of these two buildings and the lengthening of the basement windows as part of the areaway treatment. The Committee found the proposed areaway alteration to conflict with Interior's Standards and Guidelines since the areaway has no historical basis on this row and since it would impact adversely on the building and the streetscape by destroying the original front yard treatment. The Committee further noted the special significance of this row as a reasonably intact collection of Second Empire rowhouses which have survived encroaching development by the University of Pennsylvania.

3432-36 Sansom Street, Schlosser/Rivera/Krumholz, Architects. This submission involves renovations to the ground floors of 3432-36 Sansom Street as well as the replacement of an existing one story glazed porch on the west elevation of the building with a larger steel and glass addition with a metal roof.

The Committee found the proposed rehabilitation of the existing buildings at 3432-36 Sansom Street and the new construction at the side and rear of 3436 Sansom Street to be acceptable. A final approval of this project is recommended.

Warwick Hotel, 17th & Locust Streets, John Deasey, Architect. Mr. Deasey presented his plans which call for the lengthening of three windows on the 17th Street facade of the Warwick and the conversion of the corner window on Locust Street into a door. A second alternative scheme provided for the lengthening of two windows on the 17th Street facade and the conversion of the remaining window at that corner into a door.

Mr. Deasey stated that the transom and the frame will be retained over the windows and door. The lengthened windows on will each contain a solid pane of glass.

The Committee recommended an approval of the first scheme providing for a Locust Street corner entrance. The Committee further suggested that the existing at grade door opening on the Locust Street facade which is presently not in use be infilled and the wall restored to its original appearance.

123 Queen Street, Richard Tyler. Mr. Tyler presented two concepts for the development of 123 Queen Street for the Committee's consideration. In both instances, they entailed the reconstruction of the facade and front pitch of the gable roof of this early nineteenth century frame house demolished late last year in violation of Section 14-2007 of the Philadelphia Code. Both schemes enabled denser development as permitted by zoning, on the rest of the site to accommodate contemporary expectations for residential use. The Committee recommended approval of these conceptual presentations or a variation on them.

The Forrest Theater, Richard Tyler. At the request of representations of the Constitution Bank and the Forrest Theater, Mr. Tyler presented for review in concept a proposal to install a Money Access Center and play bills in the opening in the easternmost bay of the Theater now occupied by a shallow shop front. The Committee recommended the approval of the proposal in concept and noted that it should be simplified. Mr. Tyler also presented for review in concept a proposal to replace the glazing in the exterior doors to the main lobby of the Theater with bronze panels. The Committee recommended the rejection of this proposal and suggested continuation of the present practice of hanging curtains.

Plaques

Ms. Siemiontkowsk reported to the Committee the results of a survey undertaken to obtain information concerning plaque programs administered by the historic preservation offices across the country. Most cities have programs which provide that give the history of the property marked. Only a very few cities use plaques as markers to indicate the designation of a property as historic.

Following a review of the criteria used by cities that have instituted a plaque program to mark designated buildings, the staff developed and recommends for adoption by the Historical Commission the following criteria:

The Philadelphia Historical Commission may cause a marker to be placed on a locally designated building, structure, site or object or a building, structure, site or object which contributes to the character of a locally designated historic district in recognition of its importance to the City's architectural, cultural, or historical value or heritage. Any structure or site that possesses such significance may be considered for award designation. Generally, however, only an unaltered or restored building, structure, site, or object with minor and insignificant modifications, shall be considered to possess these qualities. A locally designated building, structure, site or object or a building, structure site, or object which contributes to the character of a locally designated district is not eligible to receive a plaque where the integrity of the original design or individual architectural features of the resource have been irretrievably lost; or where physical deterioration and/or structural damage has damaged the historical integrity of the resource.

The above criteria for the award of plaques will allow for the identification of many more historic properties in the city. The plaques will heighten people's awareness of the numerous historic resources in Philadelphia, enhance neighborhood pride and encourage owners to maintain their properties properly.

Following some discussion, the Architectural Committee voted to accept the staff report and to recommend to the Historical Commission the adoption of the criteria as framed in the report. The Committee further suggested that the determination as to whether a designated property is eligible for a plaque should be made by the staff with an opportunity for appeal to the Commission in the case of a denial.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Heaney

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