

THE MINUTES OF THE ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE MEETING

OF THE

PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

David Hollenberg, Chairman

28 September 1989

- Present: David Hollenberg, Architect, Chairman of the Committee
Penelope H. Batcheler, Historical Architect for the
Independence National Historical Park
John Dickey, Architect
Donald Stevenson, Architect
- Patricia Siemiontkowski, Assistant Historic Preservation
Officer
Randal Baron, Preservation Planner
- Also: Carl K. Zucker, Attorney, and Donald A. Reiff, Architect, to
present plans for the construction of a new parking
garage at 2000 Walnut Street.
Zen Mazurkevich, Architect, to present plans for alterations
to 1231 Waverly Street
Steve Crane to present his proposal for the addition of a
deck at the rear of 2310 Delancey Street
John S. Rodgers, Architect, and Andy Cleff of the Clay Studio
to present a proposal for alterations to 137-139 North
2nd Street
Martin J. Rosenblum, Architect, to present his proposal for
alterations to the rear of 2212 Pine Street
Sam Wharton, EFCO, Stephen G. Pollock, Esq., Robert Gilberg
of the Rittenhouse Claridge and Jim Smith of Window
Associates to present a proposal for the replacement of
windows on the Walnut Street elevation of the Rittenhouse
Claridge at 201 South 18th Street
S. Mary Scullion and S. Margaret Conry of the Women of Hope,
Eugene F. Brazil, Esq. and Sam Wharton of EFCO to present
information regarding the replacement of windows at 1210
Lombard Street
Linda Cruz-Carnall, Esq. and William Hairston of Diggs
Overhead Doors to present a proposal for the replacement
of an illegal garage door at 227 Stamper Street with a
door more compatible with the character of the
streetscape

Joanne Weeks of the Washington Square West PAC
Robert Castaglia of 1233 Lombard Street
Mrs. Ralph Lemmer of 236 Pine Street
Sally Lou Buell of 236 Stamper Street
Lee and Dale Truscott of 8 Blackwell Place
Howard Kittell of the Preservation Coalition of Greater
Philadelphia.

SUBMISSIONS FOR ALTERATIONS

2000-2004 Walnut Street, Carl K. Zucker, Esq. for The Rittenhouse Parking Company and Donald Reiff for the architectural firm of Alesker, Reiff and Dundon. On 13 July 1988, the Philadelphia Historical Commission reviewed and approved an application for demolition of a pseudo-colonial structure at the southwest corner of 20th and Walnut Streets. This two-story, c. 1960, building stood within the boundaries of the proposed Rittenhouse/Fitler Residential Historic District and was identified in the inventory for that district as a non-contributing building.

The Commission approved the demolition of the existing non-contributing building to allow for the construction of a new garage and commercial building on the cleared site. The Commission found the preliminary design for the replacement structure, a post-modern interpretation of the Victorian mansion that once stood on the site, to be sympathetic with the overall character of the Rittenhouse/Fitler District and the Walnut Street streetscape in scale, proportion, massing and detail. It was agreed, however, that before a final approval could be granted for the new building, working drawings and specifications would need to be submitted for review and comment.

As requested, the applicant appeared before the Architectural Committee to present the final plans for this project. The proposed new six story replacement building will be faced with limestone and stucco. The first floor masonry openings will contain aluminum storefronts for commercial display. Masonry openings in to the garage at levels two through six will be filled with Chevron (aluminum) louvers which will allow no vision or direct light passage between interior and exterior spaces. These louvers will have a baked enamel finish in a dark grey color.

The Committee found the proposed overall design to be sympathetic to the historic character of the Rittenhouse/Fitler area and voted to recommend its final approval.

RECOMMENDATION: Final Approval.

- 2212 Pine Street, Martin J. Rosenblum, Architect. Mr. Rosenblum presented to the Committee plans to infill the open area under an existing second story piazza at the rear of the property and to replace an existing wooden fence with a new painted beaded board fence with swinging wood gates.

Mrs. Batcheler noted that the proposed work will require the removal of an existing privy in the rear yard and asked that the architect photographically record this feature for the Commission's files. Mrs. Batcheler suggested that the beaded board fence continue across the newly infilled piazza leaving only a small stucco panel above the top of the new fence. The Committee stressed the fact that this alternative treatment is a suggestion only and not a required change.

RECOMMENDATION: Final Approval.

- 1231 Waverly Street (rear 1236 Pine Street), Zen Mazurkevich, Architect. At its meeting of 28 July 1988, the Commission reviewed and approved the architect's proposal to close up and replace two windows on the third floor of 1231 Waverly Street with a pair of French doors and a balcony. This application was approved owing to the fact that the entire front wall of this building was rebuilt in 1985 and possessed none of its original integrity.

Mr. Mazurkevich's current application requests permission to retain the existing paired windows on the third floor, instead of installing French doors and a balcony, and to reverse the existing placement of the window and door openings on the first floor. This change on the first floor will allow a more efficient use of space on the interior of the house. The architect proposes to match the existing brickwork in size, color and bonding and to match the existing color and texture of mortar and size of mortar joints.

Again, since this is a 1980's replacement front, the Committee found this change in the position of window and door openings on the ground floor and the retention of the two window openings on the third floor to be acceptable. Mrs. Batcheler asked, however, that the drawing be corrected to show the relocation of the existing cellar window on the front elevation.

RECOMMENDATION: Final Approval.

2310 Delancey Street, Steve Crane, Applicant. Mr. Crane presented to the Committee his application for the construction of a small deck atop an existing bay window at the rear of 2310 Delancey Street. The rears of the 2300 block of Delancey Street are highly visible and face directly onto Fidler Square. Mr. Crane proposes to convert the top of an existing projecting two story brick bay into a small deck enclosed by a simple iron railing. Access to the deck will be through an existing tall window which will be converted into a door. It will be unnecessary to alter the masonry opening to allow access to the proposed deck.

The Committee determined that the proposed construction of a small deck at the rear of 2310 Delancey Street would not compromise the integrity of the building or the streetscape and voted to recommend its approval. Precedent for similarly designed decks exist on this block.

RECOMMENDATION: Final Approval.

137-139 North 2nd Street, John S. Rodgers, Architect, and Andy Cleff of The Clay Studio. Mr. Rodgers presented to the Committee his proposal for the installation of new storefronts in two adjacent commercial buildings at 137 and 139 North 2nd Street. The buildings, 139 North 2nd (c. 1920) and 137 N. 2nd (c. 1885) presently retain no trace of their original storefront appearance but instead have modern brick infill. An insurance survey exists for 137 which details the original storefront design.

The plans presented by Mr. Rodgers propose two similar new wood storefronts each with a double door gallery entrance, a central show window and a glass door leading to the upper floors. The architect's proposed storefront treatment for 137 does not follow the survey except for the transom detail. Both buildings will be used for gallery space - 137 by Nexus and 139 by The Clay Studio. From a program perspective, Mr. Rodgers noted the necessity of having double doors on both storefronts to accommodate large works of art and equipment. Moreover, there is no access into the building from the rear of the property. A separate single door opening is also required for access to the upper floors.

Mrs. Batcheler suggested that the two buildings, being of different periods, should be treated somewhat differently on the ground floor. Mr. Rodgers, however, related to the Committee his client's desire to have the storefronts look alike owing to the use of both structures as the 2nd Street Arts Building. Mrs. Batcheler suggested raising the transom bar on 139 and reducing the thickness of the trim to approximate that existing on the second floor.

Following considerable discussion, the Committee agreed to recommend a final approval of this project subject to some minor revision in the storefront design at 139. This revision will consist of a general paring down of the storefront bulk through the elimination or reduction in the width of the wood trim. The panel below the storefront window should not be raised but flat or recessed. The Committee asked the architect to revise the proposed design of the storefront at 139 and present it to the staff for a final review.

Finally, the Committee also recommended that the Commission approve the introduction of four new windows on the south party wall of 137.

RECOMMENDATION: Final approval subject to staff review of revisions.

201 South 18th Street, The Rittenhouse Claridge, Stephen G. Pollock, Esq., Robert Gilberg, Esq., for the Rittenhouse Claridge, Sam Wharton of EFCO, and James Smith of Window Associates. Mr. Pollock outlined for the Committee his client's proposed phased replacement of all existing metal windows at the Rittenhouse Claridge with new anodized aluminum windows. The proposed replacement windows will be double hung rather than a series of fixed and hopper type windows that currently exist on the building. The applicant wishes to update the look of the building, increase energy efficiency and provide for safer operation of the windows.

Mr. Wharton provided for the Committee's review detail drawings of the existing windows and, for comparison, detail drawings of the proposed new windows. Mr. Wharton noted that the original windows were manufactured with a mill finish and that, over the years, the mill finish darkened losing much of its original silver appearance. For this reason, the applicant is proposing an anodized window in a brown finish to match the weathered look rather than the original shiny aluminum look of the windows. Mr. Wharton also pointed out that the original windows were designed with different glass planes not too dissimilar from the proposed double hung windows. The glass plane is, in fact, according to Mr. Wharton about an inch and a quarter deeper on the operable sash than it is on the fixed sash. The Chairman noted that the vertical section provided by the applicant did not show this condition. Mr. Wharton advised the Committee that the section is incorrect and that the drawing would be revised to accurately reflect the existing condition.

The Committee noted that a fenestration pattern of differently sized windows appeared evident from the photograph and that the original vertical muntin pattern should be replicated. Mr. Wharton also explained that the placement of new fixed and operable windows will duplicate the existing placement on the building.

The Committee advised the applicant that it was not prepared to make a recommendation at this time. It was agreed that the concept of window replacement was acceptable. However, additional information was requested. The applicant was asked to revise the incorrect section, to provide a vertical muntin detail and to provide a building elevation showing the existing window pattern and the proposed window pattern. The Chairman suggested that an elevation of one floor of the building should be sufficient rather than the entire building. The Chairman further advised the applicant that a site visit by the Committee might be warranted.

RECOMMENDATION: No action at this time.

- 1210 Lombard Street, S. Mary Scullion and S. Margaret Conry of the Women of Hope, and Eugene Brazil, Attorney with the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. This application came to the Commission as a result of the illegal installation of six inappropriate aluminum windows into the former school building owned by St. Peter's Church. The work was halted and the Women of Hope advised to appear before the Historical Commission's Architectural Committee.

The building at 1210 Lombard Street retains its distinctive original wood, true divided light windows which take a variety of shapes and sizes, several with arched tops. The Women of Hope organization with grant money received from Mellon Bank ordered and purchased new windows for nearly the entire building to replace the old deteriorated windows. The new replacement windows are white aluminum with a 1/3, 2/3 meeting rail division and no muntins. S. Mary Scullion explained to the Committee that she was unaware of the building's designation as a historic resource. Before proceeding with this project, S. Mary Scullion telephoned the Department of Licenses and Inspections regarding the necessity of obtaining a building permit and was advised by that department that one was not needed for window replacement. The Women of Hope organization proceeded on this basis to take bids, to purchase replacement windows and to proceed with their installation. These windows are currently in storage in the basement of 1210 Lombard Street.

Although work was stopped on the portions of the building visible from the street, the staff allowed the Women of Hope to proceed with the installation of replacement windows on rear elevation only.

S. Mary Scullion provided the Committee with cost estimates for the restoration of the existing wood windows but explained that the Women of Hope organization does not presently have the funds to do this work. Robert Castiglia, a neighborhood representative, expressed his community's support for the preservation and repair of the existing historic windows on the three major elevations of this building all

of which are visible to the public. Joanne Weeks of the Washington Square West Project Area Committee supported the community's position.

Mr. Hollenberg advised the Sisters that replacement of all the historic wood windows with new aluminum windows is unacceptable. He further advised the applicants to consider the possibility of salvaging those wood windows from the rear elevation that are in good condition and reusing them on another elevation.

Mr. Stevenson questioned whether the contractor who provided the cost estimate for repair was capable of performing the proposed work and suggested that additional contractors be interviewed and asked to submit estimates. In addition, Mr. Castiglia suggested that the Women of Hope contact various charitable institutions for funds to undertake a correct restoration of the windows at 1210 Lombard Street.

Mr. Hollenberg asked that the Women of Hope present a proposal to the Committee for consideration. The Committee found the cost estimates, the letter from the contractor and other material submitted to be insufficient. Mr. Hollenberg asked for the submission of a window survey and drawings showing the proposed relocation of historic windows and the proposed replacement with non-historic windows. Mr. Stevenson asked that the applicant have the contractor submit some evidence that her company is able to repair the historic windows as outlined in her letter to the applicant.

Finally, the Chairman recognized the possible existence of financial hardship in this case. However, it was agreed that the further replacement of the existing historic wood windows with new aluminum windows should not be permitted. It was further agreed that removal of the six illegally installed windows should be undertaken but that the time frame in which this removal must be accomplished could be extended beyond the usual limit.

RECOMMENDATION: Removal of existing illegally installed windows.

227 Stamper Street, Linda Cruz-Carnall, Esq. and William Hairston, Diggs Overhead Doors. In August of 1987, the applicant erected a motorized, remote-controlled, steel rolling gate at 227 Stamper Street, the rear of 230 Pine Street. this gate was erected without a building permit and without the approval of the Historical Commission.

As a result of Licenses and Inspections enforcement action against the applicant, Ms. Vizcaino has been directed by the Board of Licenses and Inspections Review to remove the illegal gate. At its

meeting of 8 October 1987, the Architectural Committee found the industrial-type gate to be totally inappropriate to the historic character of Stamper Street. The Committee recommended that the applicant present a gate design more in keeping with the integrity of the street.

Ms. Cruz-Carnall presented to the Committee a proposal for replacement of the existing industrial-type garage door with a new redwood garage door. The design, as presented, calls for brick piers on the sides and a 1" x 12" x 18' piece of Redwood facing spanning the top of the 18' wide door. The door will be constructed of horizontal redwood panels. The motor will be suspended at the back of the garage enclosure away from the street.

The Committee found the design of the proposed garage entrance at 227 Stamper Street to be acceptable. The Committee did, however, recommend some minor revisions to the design. It was suggested that the brick piers extend up only as high as the masonry walls which currently exist on either side of the property. The area above the brick should be finished with redwood bargeboard atop the piers and extending back the length of the garage. It was further suggested that the motor be mounted inside the 2 x 8's to minimize the noise created by the operation of the motor.

RECOMMENDATION: Final approval subject to minor revisions.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Siemiontkowski
Assistant Historic Preservation Officer