

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

**24 July 2007
CITY HALL, ROOM 578
9:30 A.M.**

PRESENT

Rudy D'Alessandro
Suzanne Pentz
Robert Thomas, AIA
Dan McCoubrey, AIA
Daniela Voith, AIA

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

ALSO PRESENT

Hyman Myers, FAIA, Vitetta
Jamie Swidler, In House Studio
Diana Nicholas
Liz Blazeovich, Preservation Alliance
Van Strother, New Covenant Church
Kevin Smith, Manayunk Neighborhood Council
Sandy Sorlien, Manayunk Neighborhood Council
Laura Siena, West Mt. Airy Neighbors
Stephen Varenhorst, Stephen Varenhorst Architects
Drew Kmetz, Stephen Varenhorst Architects
James Morrissey, Stephen Varenhorst Architects
Guillermo Lei
David Hollenberg, AIA, University of Pennsylvania
Ann Beha, ABA
Philip Chen, ABA
Kahled Tarabieh, University of Pennsylvania
John Gallery, Preservation Alliance
Eric Poulain
Timothy Calligan, Aegis Property Group
Betty Mon, Mon & Associates
Michelle McAleese, YCH Architects
Jeff Krieger, Krieger Architects
Peggy Conver, Chestnut Hill Academy
Cynthia Padilla, Krieger Architects
Jeffrey M. Laufer, JMLAA
Alyson Herman
Dan Russoniello, Archer & Buchanan Architects
Jonathan Tori
Cynthia Ray

John Kontra
Brett Harmon, Harmon Deutsche Architects
Rustin Ohler, Harmon Deutsche Architects

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Thomas called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. Ms. Pentz and Voith and Mr. McCoubrey joined him on the Architectural Committee. Mr. D'Alessandro joined the Committee while the meeting was in progress.

114 LOMBARD STREET

Owner: Susan Troxell and Eric Michaelson

Applicant: Martin Solitryn

History: c. 1970, contributing to the Society Hill Historic District

Project: Install aluminum-clad windows throughout, install garage door, and install gate

OVERVIEW: This project proposes the installation of aluminum-clad windows on the front and rear facades. The new windows would be similar to the existing wood casement windows in shape, color, and dimension, but not materials, and fit within the existing masonry opening. There would also be an internal screen and crank system for operation.

This application also proposes to install a flat panel garage door to match the existing flat panel garage door and replace a decorative entry gate, not original to the building, with a plain vertical-bar entry gate, similar to other gates in the row.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Denial of the windows, pursuant to Standard 6, and approval of the gate and garage door, pursuant to Standards 6 and 9.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Sell presented the application to the Committee. Jaime Swidler and Diana Nicholas represented the application.

Ms. Swidler described the deteriorating conditions of the extant wood windows. She noted that clad windows would require much less maintenance. She requested that the Committee recommend approval of the clad windows. Mr. Thomas explained that the Commission has approved the replacement of wood windows with metal windows, but only above the fifth-floor level, where the change from the historic material would not be evident to the public. He stated that the Commission has always required the replacement in kind at lower levels. Ms. Voith suggested that, if the rear is not visible, perhaps the Commission would consider a non-historic material in that area. Ms. Nicholas stated that the rear is not visible. Mr. Thomas suggested that they produce documentation at the Commission meeting demonstrating that the rear is not visible. Mr. Farnham stated that the staff may approve non-historic replacement windows for secondary facades that have minimal or no visibility from the public right-of-way. The Committee members agreed that the garage door and gate are acceptable.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval of the garage door and gate, pursuant to Standards 6 and 9, denial of the windows as submitted, pursuant to Standard 6, but approval of the appropriate wood windows at the front facade, wood or clad windows at the rear facade, with the staff to review details.

7406 GERMANTOWN AVENUE (AKA 7500 GERMANTOWN AVENUE)

Owner: New Covenant Church

Applicant: Van B. Strother

History: 1890-1892, Wilson Brothers, Wissinoming Hall, Penn. School for the Deaf

Project: Construct five-story exterior elevator tower, create entrance with canopy and trellis, alter fire escape

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to construct a five-story exterior elevator tower, create a new entranceway with canopy and trellis, and alter a fire escape at the rear of this large building on the campus of the New Covenant Church. The Wilson Brothers, a prominent architectural and engineering firm, designed this and the other large stone buildings on the pastoral campus in the early 1890s, during the same period it designed the significant Reading Terminal train shed on the 1100-block of Market Street.

The applicant proposed a similar project in August 2006. The staff considered the application incomplete. The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial of the project as submitted, but to recommend approval of an interior elevator. The applicant withdrew the application before a review by the Commission. The applicant submitted a revised application in January 2007. The Architectural Committee recommended denial pursuant to Standards 9 and 10. The applicant also withdrew the revised application before a review by the Commission. The applicant then submitted an application for an interior elevator, which was approved at the staff level. The applicant later abandoned the interior scheme when he discovered that it would be very expensive to relocate utilities that stood in the path of the elevator shaft.

Contending that the interior elevator is infeasible, the applicant has now submitted a proposal for a revised exterior elevator tower as well as a new entrance. The tower and entrance would be located between two rear wings on the south side of this E-shaped building. The construction of the elevator tower would require cutting through the eave of the roof and removing windows, a chimney, and a dormer. The tower would be faced with stone. A glass link would connect the stone tower to the historic building. The tower would be topped with a gable roof, recalling the dormer. A new entranceway would be created adjacent to the elevator tower by cutting down a window. A single-leaf wood door with sidelights is proposed to fill the opening. The rendering erroneously depicts a double-leaf door in the opening. A canopy would be added above the door. A trellis would be added flanking the tower and entranceway. The fire escape would be altered to extend beyond the entranceway. No detailed information has been provided regarding the door, sidelights, trellis or canopy.

The Commission approved a similar but larger elevator tower for an adjacent building on the campus in 2003. The tower is similarly situated at the rear between two wings, but is much closer to the public right-of-way. After the tower was constructed, the Commission received a complaint about the approval from a member of the public who contended that it was a conspicuous and inappropriate addition to the historic building.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval of the elevator tower with a stone facing and glass link, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standard 9. Denial of the entranceway and trellis, owing to incompleteness.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Sell presented the application to the Committee. Van Strother, the church's in-house architect, and consultant Hyman Myers represented the application.

Mr. Myers asked why the application had been forwarded to the Commission and not reviewed at the staff level. He claimed that it should have been reviewed at the staff level because the façade in question has no visibility from the public right-of-way. Mr. Thomas stated that he visited the site and had concluded that the façade is visible from W. Gowen Street. Mr. Strother stated that trees limited the view. Mr. Farnham agreed with Mr. Thomas that the façade in question is visible across the lawn from the street. He did note that this façade is not nearly as conspicuous from the street as is the Commission-approved elevator tower on the nearby building.

Ms. Voith asked if the application proposed in-concept or final approval. Ms. Sell stated that it requested final approval. Ms. Voith contended that the application was incomplete. She asserted that it lacked the requisite details and that the architectural drawings were substandard.

Mr. Thomas noted that the Committee had suggested an interior elevator during an earlier review. He asked if the interior elevator was feasible. Mr. Myers stated that the church had planned for an interior elevator, but discovered that several utilities, especially the primary electrical service, intruded on the only location for a shaft. He stated that it would be extremely expensive to move the electrical service to a new location. He also noted that the introduction of an elevator in the building would raise building code issues such as insufficient corridor widths that would not be encountered with an exterior elevator. Mr. Thomas suggested that the applicants document the cost differential between an interior and exterior elevator. Mr. Thomas noted that his firm had studied many options when it added an exterior elevator to the Swedish Museum, which is designated as historic. Mr. Strother stated that he had explored all of the possibilities and had determined that the exterior elevator was the only feasible solution. Mr. Strother stated that he could testify to the hardship induced by the requirement to limit the elevator to the interior. Ms. Voith replied that she wanted to see documentation. She also stated that the Department of Licenses & Inspections would not allow Mr. Strother to keep the fire escape if he proposed to alter it. She again stated that the application required more details, especially for the elevator tower. She stated that it was not worthy of an in-concept review. She asserted that, for example, the plans included no details about the masonry cladding on the elevator tower. Mr. Myers replied that he could display color photographs of the stone he planned to use on the tower. Ms. Voith stated that color photographs were not adequate. She requested an architectural drawing showing the coursing of the stone. Mr. Myers reminded the Committee that this elevator tower is proposed for the back of a very large building, between two rear wings.

Laura Siena of West Mt. Airy Neighbors asked if the Commission had approved the elevator and trash chute tower on the other building. Mr. Farnham stated that it had. Mr. Strother stated that he was not happy with the other tower and had designed this smaller tower to improve on that design.

The Committee members noted that the application lacked detailed information on the door and trellis.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial.

1 LEVERINGTON AVENUE

Owner: Venice Island Realty

Philadelphia Management; Lubert-Adler Partners; Neducsin Properties

Applicant: Stephen Varenhorst, AIA

History: large open space with c. 1995 restaurant building
in Main Street Manayunk District

site of mill buildings, which were demolished between 1929 and 1945

Project: Construct residential complex

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to construct four buildings containing 280 condominium units on a 4.5 acre site on Venice Island, which is situated between the Schuylkill River and the Manayunk Canal. The site runs from the Paul Cret-designed Green Lane Bridge west to Leverington Street. The site is almost entirely vacant. The only structure on it is a unoccupied, non-historic restaurant building, which was erected in the 1990s. This building would be demolished as part of the project.

Major textile manufactories including the Crompton, Wabash, Arcola, and Eagle Mills were located on the site. A densely packed collection of five to seven-story, water-powered, masonry, mill buildings stood along the river and the canal, occupying all of the usable land. The first were erected prior to the Civil War. The mills were expanded throughout the nineteenth and into the early twentieth century. The mills still stood when the stock market crashed in 1929, but had been completely demolished by 1945.

The new condominium buildings would be six stories and 89 feet tall and would stand on columns raising the first floor 19 feet above grade and the flood plain. The architectural style is contemporary. The exterior would be clad in white and brown wood grain panels. Parking is planned on grade beneath and around the raised structures. Each unit would have a private deck as well as access to a common roof deck.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval, pursuant to Manayunk Ordinance Section PM-704.2.7, "Design: Additions, alterations, and new construction shall be designed so as to be compatible in scale, building materials, and texture, with contributing buildings in the historic district."

DISCUSSION: Ms. Sell presented the proposal to the Committee. Architects Steven Varenhorst and James Morrissey represented the application.

Mr. McCoubrey asked Ms. Sell to read the pertinent section of the Manayunk ordinance. Ms. Sell replied that it mandates that "new construction shall be designed so as to be compatible in scale, building materials, and texture, with contributing buildings in the historic district."

Mr. Varenhorst presented two photographs of the site before the demolitions of the mill buildings. He explained that, owing to the significant potential for flooding, the new buildings must be raised off the ground. They are 89 feet tall to the top of the four-foot parapet. The first floors are 19 feet above grade to allow fire trucks to pass under the buildings. He stated that he endeavored to reduce the masses of the buildings. They are 44 feet wide, not the 60 or 70 feet that is typically specified for buildings of this type. The private roof decks cut into the buildings, giving them a varied roof line and reducing the mass. The buildings are arranged asymmetrically on the site, adding variety. Mr. Thomas asked how the complex fit into the historic district. Mr. Varenhorst contended that the buildings are consistent in scale, massing and arrangement with the historic mill buildings that stood on Venice Island.

Ms. Voith stated that the application was incomplete. She explained that she owns a home six blocks up the hill from the site and would work diligently to protect her neighborhood from unwanted intrusions. She stated that, in order to fully evaluate the proposal, she would need a section drawing from the river, through the site, canal, and train yard, and up the hill to the residential area. She stated that without such a drawing she would deem the application incomplete. Mr. Morrissey showed two photomontages included in the application that placed the proposed complex in panoramic photographs of the area. He contended that these photomontages accurately depicted the impact of the construction on the area. Ms. Voith rejected the photomontages, asserting that Photoshop, a digital imaging software package, could be used to manipulate and deceive. She claimed that the complex would have a detrimental impact on the residential neighborhood up the hill. Mr. Varenhorst stated that the railroad viaduct, which is very tall, and former railroad yard stand between the site and the residential neighborhood up the hill. Mr. Farnham presented a large map of the Manayunk Historic District, which demonstrated that the residential area is outside the district's boundaries.

Mr. Varenhorst presented a 4' x 8' model of the complex. The Committee moved from the conference table to the model. Ms. Voith questioned the accuracy of the model. She stated that the historic mill buildings would not have been as tall as the proposed buildings. Mr. Farnham presented a bird's-eye view of historic Manayunk, which showed that the historic mill buildings on the island between the river and the canal were five or six stories tall.

Mr. Thomas asked about the connection to the Green Lane Bridge, which had been mentioned. The applicant responded that they may connect to it with a stair, but noted that the connection was not part of this application.

Ms. Voith again objected to the design and stated that it proposed a radical shift in scale, proportion and rhythm from the two to four-story buildings on Main Street east of Green Lane. Others countered that this site is not within that context, but would be located in the historic mill area, which differs greatly from that of Main Street. Ms. Voith objected to the landscaping depicted in the model. She contended that the complex included too much paving and not enough green space. Mr. Varenhorst disagreed. He stated that much more of the site was proposed as green space than is required by zoning. He stated that 40% of the site would be open area. He noted that his design team had strived to move the roadways away from the river and canal to allow for more green space. All other architects' designs for the site had situated the streets at the water's edge, leaving no space for the public to appreciate the waterfront. Mr. Varenhorst explained that the flood plain code required that the buildings be raised above grade; he had raised them slightly higher to allow fire trucks to pass under them, obviating the need for driveways along the water. He asserted that the slight addition to the height was a worthwhile trade-off for the open waterfronts. Ms. Voith asserted that the applicant was not being truthful and his model was deceptive. She held up a drawing from the application and claimed that it showed that 20%, not 40%, of the site would remain open. She claimed that this drawing demonstrated that the applicants were being dishonest. Mr. Morrissey explained that Ms. Voith had misinterpreted the drawing. It was a drawing of the lot coverage allowed by the zoning for the site, which is 80%, not a drawing of their proposed development. He stated that the zoning code requires that 20% of the site remain open; they are proposing to leave 40% of the site open. Ms. Voith conceded this point, but asserted that the proposed landscaping is not appropriate. Mr. Varenhorst objected to Ms. Voith's repeated assertions that he and his colleagues were not being honest with the Committee; he stated that they were being completely forthright.

Kevin Smith of the Manayunk Neighborhood Council stated that the scale of the proposed complex is foreign to the district. He stated that, if built, the complex would be a detriment to Manayunk and the landmark bridge. He contended that the expanse of parking gives the complex the appearance of a suburban mall. Mr. Smith stated that the buildings on sticks have no relationship to the canal, river, or bridge.

Sandy Sorelien of the Manayunk Neighborhood Council stated that she is an urban planner and an architectural photographer. She stated that the view of Manayunk from the expressway will be blocked. If this complex is built, Manayunk will look like Conshohocken. Mr. Varenhorst stated that he had strived to fragment the complex, which could have appeared massive. He noted again that the buildings are narrow, 44 feet wide, not 60 or 70 feet wide. He pointed to view corridors between the buildings and stated that the historic views to and from Manayunk would be maintained.

Ms. Voith stated that the recommendation was denial. Other Committee members requested an opportunity to discuss the proposal further. Ms. Voith asked again why the buildings are lifted 19 feet off the ground. Mr. Varenhorst again explained about the flood zone and fire trucks.

Mr. Smith submitted two photographs of pre-cast panels on an unidentified building and stated that they were the same panels these architects planned to use. He stated that they were an inappropriate dark brown in color and claimed that the color in the model was not accurate. Mr. Morrissey looked at the photographs and stated that the panels represented in them were nothing like those they planned to use on this development.

Mr. Thomas stated that he is concerned by the proposed height of these buildings, but understands the need to raise them above the flood-prone land. Mr. Smith interjected that the piers on which the buildings would stand are six feet taller than required by the flood code. Mr. Varenhorst again stated that he raised the buildings higher to accommodate fire trucks and avoid running roads along the water. Ms. Sorelien stated that the regularity of the height is problematic. She suggested that the heights of the buildings be varied like those in Manayunk. Mr. Varenhorst stated that he had varied the arrangement and had broken down the individual masses with balconies and changes in materials.

Mr. McCoubrey summarized his opinions. He stated that, overall, the design was nicely executed. However, he had four suggestions. The height should be reduced. The heights of the buildings should be more varied. The buildings at the eastern end of the complex should be arranged in a more varied manner. And the exterior material should be considered carefully. Ms. Pentz agreed with Mr. McCoubrey. She stated that the overall project was well executed. She suggested reducing the height of the buildings. She noted that she would like to see a sample of the cladding material. Mr. Thomas concurred. He complimented the site plan. He suggested varying the heights of the buildings, which would not result in the loss of any units. He also asked to see samples of cladding materials. Ms. Voith apologized for "being direct" and acknowledged that the architects had expended a great amount of effort in the design. She again stated that the recommendation must be denial and requested that any subsequent application include information about the impact of the complex on the residential area on the overlooking hill.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial.

2321 MADISON SQUARE

Owner/Applicant: Eric Poulain

History: c. 1855; mansard, late 19th century; penthouse, 20th century

Project: Add rooftop deck

OVERVIEW: This proposal calls for adding a deck on top of the mansard roof of this rowhouse. The applicant would use the existing penthouse for access. The deck would be visible from the public right-of-way. A similar deck was denied by the Commission within the last year for the building across the street.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Denial, pursuant to Standard 9 and the Roof Guideline.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Baron presented the proposal to the Committee. Eric Poulain, the owner, represented the application.

Mr. Baron noted that the penthouse was in place at the time of designation. He also reported that the Commission had recently denied a deck proposed for the house directly across the street.

Mr. Poulain explained that his mansard and penthouse overhang onto the neighboring property. He stated that, many years ago, two brothers owned the adjacent houses. One brother gave the other an easement to build across the property line. He acknowledged that the penthouse is very visible from the street. He noted that it is in poor condition and allows water into the building. He reported that he has been advised by contractors to demolish it. The members of the Committee expressed their approval of its demolition. Mr. Poulain explained that the penthouse is unusually configured. The stairs rise up toward the front of the house to a door near the front façade. To access the room in the penthouse, one must exit the door at the stairs and walk across the roof toward the rear to a second door into the room in the penthouse. It is dangerous without a railing. Mr. Thomas stated that the Committee must review the deck in light of the Standards and Guidelines.

Ms. Voith suggested stepping the deck back to make it less visible to the public. Mr. Poulain noted that Laura Spina, a former Commission staff member, had also suggested that he set it back. Mr. Thomas concurred. Mr. Baron reminded the Committee that the Commission had previously denied a proposed deck that would have been set back for the house across the street. Mr. Baron suggested that the Mr. Poulain prepare a mock-up for review. Mr. Thomas suggested that a case could be made for the deck owing to the unusual penthouse, which historically provided access to the roof. Mr. Poulain added that he had been denied homeowner's insurance because there is access but no railing at the roof. John Gallery of the Preservation Alliance observed that the Committee was being overly encouraging to the applicant. He asserted that the Commission has not approved decks proposed for mansards. He opined that the applicant's suggestion that the penthouse should be demolished was appropriate. He asserted that an inappropriate penthouse should not justify an inappropriate deck. The Committee suggested that the applicant redesign the deck and document its visibility before proceeding with the application.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial as submitted, pursuant to Standard 9 and the Roof Guideline.

201 S. 34TH STREET, MUSIC BUILDING

Owner: University of Pennsylvania

Applicant: Richard Russell

History: 1890, Cope & Stewardson, architects; additions 1966 & 1967

Project: In Concept: demolition of additions and rear ell, construction of three-story addition

OVERVIEW: This in-concept application proposes the demolition of additions and a rear ell and the construction of three-story addition to this historic building. The firm of Cope & Stewardson designed the building for the Foulke Long Institute, an orphanage for daughters of fallen firefighters and Civil War soldiers. The University of Pennsylvania converted it for use as a science building in the early twentieth century. It later converted it to house the music department.

The applicants have studied two major avenues to expand and improve the facilities for the music department. Both would involve the demolition of the c. 1960s accretions and the restoration of the main block of the building. One path would retain the rear ell and add to it; the other would demolish the rear ell and add onto the east side of the main building.

The applicants are applying for approval in concept for this second path. They have studied the plans for the building and believe that the rear ell was either significantly altered from the original Cope & Stewardson plan or not built according to the plans on record. In either case, the wing was used to house the kitchen, pantry and support functions of the orphanage. They propose its demolition because it will improve the function of the new building in terms of acoustics, size of spaces for recording and performance, and for campus space planning. Currently the east side reads as a rear service area. The new plan would allow the creation of a green on the south side and the development of a primary façade on the campus walkway. The option that retains the rear ell would block westward views of the main building. The design of the addition in place of the ell would respect the massing, materials and rhythms of the main building.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval, provided the addition connects to the main block below the projecting eave, pursuant to Standards 9 and 10. Standard 9 advises that “new additions will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property”. The rear ell proposed for demolition does not “characterize” the property; the main block does. Standard 10 advises that “new additions will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the property.... would be unimpaired” the main block, not the altered or later rear ell is the essence of this property. It will remain unimpaired.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Pentz recused owing to her firm's involvement in the project. Mr. Baron presented the application to the Committee. University Architect David Hollenberg and architects Anne Beha and Philip Chen represented the application.

Mr. Hollenberg stated that the retention or removal of the rear ell is the primary issue when considering an addition to the Music Building. He reported that the request for proposals to architects stipulated that the rear ell should be retained and incorporated into the enlarged building. He explained that the architects concluded that the retention of the ell would hamper the design of any addition from a programmatic perspective. The architects therefore prepared two designs, one with and one without the ell. The design without the ell has great advantages. The architects have been preparing both designs, with and without the ell, for quite a while, increasing the design costs. The University has reached the point in the design cycle where it must make a decision, retain or demolish the rear ell. It has submitted the in-concept application

as part of the decision making process. Mr. Hollenberg noted that the State Historic Preservation Officer must review the project as well owing to an agreement regarding the demolition of Smith Hall.

Mr. Hollenberg introduced Ms. Beha, the architect. Ms. Beha began with a summary of her research into the two-building complex. She stated that she had discovered important facts about the relationships of the two buildings that comprised the orphanage. Ms. Voith stopped Ms. Beha and requested that she not delay the discussion with superfluous information. She requested that Ms. Beha provide the “highlights” only. Ms. Beha referred to her large plans and drawings. She pointed out the modern additions and ell and stated that the original ell was smaller. It housed a kitchen and laundry at the first floor and small bathroom at the second floor. It was enlarged at some point about 1912. She displayed a photograph taken in the attic of the ell that showed an infilled window on the rear of the main block; it had been on the exterior, but was subsumed and infilled when the ell was enlarged. She informed the Committee that what had been the rear of the orphanage building is now the front of the Music Building for the students, who use the walkway extensively. Part of her charge is to improve the appearance of the building along the walkway. She also noted that the Music Building and Morgan, the other orphanage building to the south, had once been connected by a glass loggia. Ms. Beha reported that the University will fully restore the exterior of the Music Building.

Ms. Beha discussed the two possible avenues for the design of the rear addition and displayed several study drawings. Scheme A would retain the rear ell. She noted the primary programmatic and architectural problems with this approach. Attaching to the ell would not allow her to easily create the double-height spaces needed for the performance rooms. Therefore, to achieve the needed space, the addition would need to be pushed down into the ground and out into the walkway, beyond the north façade of the historic building. Occupied basement spaces are not an option owing to the deleterious effects of humidity on musical instruments and to a University-wide directive prohibiting them. She stated that integrating the new building with the ell would create problems owing to the floor heights in the ell. She noted that she is proposing the demolition of the 1960s addition that stands next to the ell; if required to retain the ell, she would, essentially, rebuild the demolished 1960s addition, which has many demonstrable programmatic flaws.

Ms. Beha then presented Scheme B, which mandates the demolition of the rear ell. She stated that this scheme better accommodates the program and is “much gentler” to the historic main block because the new structural system can stand on its own and does not need to submit to the requirements of the rear ell. She stated that the addition would connect to the main block under the projecting eave, as the staff had recommended. She stated that the side facades of the addition can align with those of the main block and therefore be less visible from the street. She also noted that, with this scheme, she has the room to create green space along the walkway at the rear. She then discussed the design features of the addition including the transparent link to the old building and the rhythms of the new three-bay facades, which are based on the historic facades. She stated that the proposed terra cotta cladding system is drawn from the terra cotta detailing on the original building. The addition will have terra cotta panels including projecting panels or “fins” on the east. She concluded her presentation with views of the design and landscape studies.

Mr. Thomas verified that the addition would connect to the old block below the cornice line; he agreed with the staff that the projecting eave on the rear of the historic main block should be preserved. He stated that the project had been presented very well and opined that the Scheme B addition was a “wonderful idea.” He stated that the addition works well with the rhythm and

scale of the historic building and he appreciated the contemporary styling, which would not be confused for an historic building.

Ms. Voith stated that she admired the rear of the historic building, which steps up with cornices and roof lines from the ell to the main block. She stated that it presents a variety of massing and scale. She objected to the Scheme B addition, which would be “quite large.” She contended that the rear should step back toward the main block, not project out with fins. She objected to the possibility that pedestrians on the walkway would be walking under the fins. Ms. Beha clarified that the fins would not project out over the walkway; the building would be set back eight to ten feet from the walkway. Ms. Voith suggested that the architect maintain the “layering” at the rear.

Mr. McCoubrey agreed with the staff that the main block is the character-defining feature of the historic building. He acknowledged that the ell is old, but contended that the quality of the rear space has changed significantly with the construction of the large addition in the 1960s. The current context is nothing like its historic context. He concluded that retaining the rear ell would significantly compromise the design of the new addition and suggested that the Committee recommend approval of the demolition of the ell. Ms. Voith agreed that “the ell ought to go,” but again suggested that the architect maintain the sense of “layering.” Mr. McCoubrey asked the architect how much of the rear façade of the main block she intended to preserve. She stated that she intended to retain the remaining portion of the rear façade of the main block, but noted that much of it was lost with the addition in the 1960s.

Mr. Baron suggested that an interpretive plaque could be used to tell the story of the orphanage. He also noted that Scheme A would require the addition to project out to the north into the view from the street and into the walkway.

Mr. Thomas stated that the context in which the orphanage buildings stand has changed significantly since 1900. They are now surrounded by very large institutional buildings. He asserted that, in light of this change, the proposed removal of the rear ell satisfies the Standards. Ms. Voith agreed.

John Gallery of the Preservation Alliance stated that he recommended denial owing to the demolition of the rear ell. He stated that the proposed work includes demolition; he claimed that the removal of the rear ell is wrongly being characterized as an alteration, but is clearly a demolition. He stated that he must express “extreme concern” about the “efforts that have been going on since the Dilworth House to characterize true demolitions as alterations as a way of allowing various developers to avoid the requirements of the ordinance.” Mr. Gallery remarked that no financial hardship or public interest argument has been offered to justify the demolition of this 100-year-old historic fabric. He asserted that the ell has historic significance regardless of whether it is original or a later addition. He concluded that there are no grounds for demolition. He objected to the statement by the staff that the rear ell does not characterize the property. He stated that one could argue that the rear ells of the houses on Elfreth’s Alley do not characterize the properties. If you accept the staff’s argument, you are accepting the assertion that the rear ell of any property may be demolished. He agreed that demolishing the rear ell would improve the design of the addition, but he asserted that the improvement of the addition cannot be a justification for the demolition of historic fabric. He strongly disagreed with the staff recommendation and discouraged the Committee from setting such a precedent. He objected to what he called “the types of decisions that have been made recently ... by calling things alterations that are in fact true demolitions.” He noted that he has appealed all of these alteration decisions. He agreed with the comments offered by Ms. Voith and stated that the current configuration at the rear of the building is much more interesting than the proposed

addition. He labeled the rendering of the rear of the new addition from the walkway “one of the grimmest paintings he has seen in a long time.” He stated that the second scheme, which retains the rear ell, is a much better solution. He concluded that the removal of the ell is a demolition, not an alteration, and the proposed addition without the ell is not an appropriate design.

Mr. Farnham replied to Mr. Gallery’s comments. He stated that Mr. Gallery was incorrect in asserting that the Commission and its staff had become more liberal with recommendations and approvals of demolition. He contended, in fact, that the record showed just the opposite. Until recently, no one had ever suggested that a finding of hardship be required to justify the demolition of a part of a building, especially a secondary part of a building like an ell. He noted that the Dilworth application may have been a turning point as Mr. Gallery noted, but a turning point to a narrower definition of demolition, at least for the staff, which considered the removal of the wings of the Dilworth House a “demolition.” He noted that the definition of “demolition” in the ordinance is open to interpretation. He asserted that the removal of the rear ell of the Music Building does not rise to the level of a demolition. He read the definition of “demolition” from the ordinance:

The razing or destruction, whether entirely or in significant part, of a building, structure, site or object. Demolition includes the removal of a building, structure or object from its site or the removal or destruction of the facade or surface.

Mr. Farnham stated that the operative phrase in this matter is “the façade or surface.” He noted that the ordinance does not read “any” but instead “the” façade or surface. He explained that the staff had discussed this matter at great length and concluded that, although the staff prefers the retention of the ell, its removal could not be considered a “demolition” in the legal sense. He acknowledged that the removal of the ell would include the demolition of facades or surfaces, but he stated that the staff did not interpret the ordinance to mean that the demolition of any façade was automatically a demolition in significant part. He also noted that the staff had looked to the Standards for guidance in this instance because the ordinance is open to interpretation. He stated that the rear ell does not characterize this group of two buildings, which were designated together as a complex. Mr. Farnham stated that he agreed with Mr. Gallery that rear ells on rowhouses are essential parts of rowhouses. He stated that the staff concluded that the rear ell is not essential to understand the history of this pair of buildings. Mr. Thomas stated that he “corroborated” the thinking of the staff. Ms. Voith stated that she perceived a double standard; residential buildings are held to a higher standard than institutional buildings. She stated that the demolition of the ell should be denied because it is visible from a public right-of-way. Mr. Farnham stated that visibility is not the only standard. The Commission has approved the demolition of numerous visible rear ells without findings of hardship. He reported that the Commission approved in-concept the demolition of a rear ell on an eighteenth-century building at its most recent meeting in July 2007. He asserted that that situation was directly analogous to the one under discussion. The rear ell at the Society Hill Synagogue was visible and was not in its original condition. Like the rear ell on the Music Building, it had been altered, but retained some historic fabric. He concluded that the Commission must have some discretionary space in which to operate; if the removal of any historic fabric triggers the requirement of a finding of financial hardship or public interest, then the Commissioners are reduced to nothing more than accountants. Mr. McCoubrey agreed that the Commission must have the discretion to weigh historic value to determine what is and is not demolition.

Ms. Beha stated that allowing the demolition of the ell will allow her to better preserve the core of the historic building. She stated that, if the ell is removed, much more of the budget can be applied to restoring the historic main block. If the ell must be retained, the addition will be very

expensive because the underpinning of the foundation will be very costly. She also asserted that this building has been a music building much longer than it was ever a residential orphanage building. The significance of this building is as an academic building. This demolition will ensure the long-term preservation of two historic buildings. Regarding the current design of the addition, she acknowledged that it must be refined. Ms. Voith and Messrs. Thomas and McCoubrey reiterated their support of the staff recommendation.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval, provided the addition connects to the main block below the projecting eave, pursuant to Standards 9 and 10.

12-16 LETITIA STREET

Applicant: Rustin Ohler

Owner: John Kontra

History: built c. 1885 individually designated 1976, Contributing to Old City District

Project: legalize deck

OVERVIEW: This project involves legalizing a rooftop deck for an industrial building with no rear ell. A deck existed previously in this location, but burned in a recent fire. The owner replaced it without a permit. The deck rail, though pulled back will have some visibility from 2nd Street. A metal railing would be less visible than the current wood rail.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval, provided the wood railing is replaced with a metal railing, pursuant to Standard 9 and the Roof Guideline.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Voith excused herself from meeting. Mr. Baron presented the application to the Committee. Condominium association representative John Kontra and architects Brett Harmon and Rustin Ohler represented the application.

Mr. Kontra reported that this deck replaced an identical deck that had been destroyed in a fire. He stated that the earlier deck had been approved by the Commission. He claimed that he retained the approved plans for that deck, which was part of a larger rehabilitation, but they were too delicate to bring to the meeting. Mr. Harmon asked if the Commission had any record of the earlier approval. Mr. Baron stated that he was unaware of any record. Mr. Farnham stated that the staff would search the Commission's files for a record of the approval.

Mr. Kontra stated that the deck is not visible from the street. Mr. Baron countered that the railing was and displayed a photograph showing that a small portion of the railing is visible from S. 2nd Street. Mr. Harmon objected to the claim of visibility, asserting that it was only possible to see it from the public right-of-way across a private parking lot. The Committee informed Mr. Harmon that there is no exemption for views across private property as he claimed. Mr. Kontra stated that his organization had the funds to complete one project, the replacement railing or a fire suppression system. He contended that the fire suppression system was more important. Mr. McCoubrey suggested that Mr. Kontra consider replacing the railing to legalize the deck. Mr. Kontra rejected that suggestion.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval of the deck, provided the wood railing is replaced with a metal railing, pursuant to Standard 9 and the Roof Guideline.

500 W. WILLOW GROVE AVENUE, CHESTNUT HILL ACADEMY

Owner: Chestnut Hill Academy

Applicant: Cynthia Padilla

History: Wissahickon Inn, 1882-84, Hewitt Brothers, architects
Commons Building, 1905, Frank Miles Day, architect

Project: Construct detached Science Building with related site improvements/

OVERVIEW: This application proposes the construction of a new science building at Chestnut Hill Academy. A previous scheme proposed a larger building that was linked to the historic inn building. The current application proposes a free standing building that is respectful of its surrounding historic neighbors without being historicist. The proposed location of the science building would involve the relocation of a parking lot closer to Willow Grove Avenue. This parking lot would be landscaped with a green buffer to diminish its visibility from the avenue. The entire project is underpinned by an environmental approach. The site is part of the Wissahickon watershed and the construction of the science building as well as the parking lot will incorporate water management strategies to maintain the important environmental balance of this site.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval, pursuant to Standards 9 and 10.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Danta presented the application to the Committee. Timothy Calligan, the project manager, architects Jeff Krieger and Cynthia Padilla, and Peggy Conner of Chestnut Hill Academy represented the application.

Mr. Krieger began his presentation with a summary of the school's master plan, which is divided into three phases. Phase One, the Commons, was approved by the Commission and is complete. Phase Two, the field house, has been deferred to a future date. Phase Three, the science building, is moving forward. He displayed the plan for the science building by BLT Architects, which the school rejected. It was too close to the main building and poorly sited. The new architect has developed a new plan for the science building; it has been moved away from the main building and rotated 90 degrees, creating a courtyard between the main and science buildings. It continues the pattern of green-building-green-building seen across the entire campus. To relocate the science building, a 75-car parking lot must be moved. It will be located parallel to Willow Grove Avenue and include a drop-off lane.

Mr. Krieger explained that the science building will be two stories and 18,000 sf. It will be positioned 95 feet from the main building. It will be stone at the lower story and stucco above with large dormers for mechanical equipment. It will have a double-loaded corridor running down the middle with laboratories on each side. The two rows of laboratories will be expressed by the double gabled roof. The building will have an entrance porch.

To both educate the students about the environment and to satisfy the strict Wissahickon Water Shed regulations, the design will include a storm water management system as well as other green features.

Mr. McCoubrey asked about the chimney material. Mr. Krieger replied that it would be stucco. Ms. Pentz asked about the original roof on the inn. Ms. Conner responded that it had been tile, but is now red asphalt. The roof on the science building will be red asphalt as well. Ms. Conner stated that it was the school's intention that the science building would fit into its context and look old from a distance, but look new up close. The Committee complimented the design.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval, pursuant to Standards 9 and 10.

1714 PINE STREET

Owner: Alyson & Stephen Herman

Applicant: Betty Mon

History: c. 1845, part of a row; rear alterations c. 1900.

Project: Legalize third-floor addition, replace windows

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to legalize a third-floor addition at the rear of the property. This property underwent major alterations around 1900, which included the addition of metal bay windows, leaded glass windows and a third-floor porch. Designation photographs, as well as aerial photography from 2004 reveal the rear porch in place. The porch has since been enclosed and windows added. The elevations submitted propose replacement of windows throughout the back as well as the front façade. However, no details were provided on the replacement windows.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Denial, pursuant to Standards 4 and 9.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Danta presented the application to the Architectural Committee. Expediter Betty Mon, architect Michelle McAleese, and property owner Alyson Herman represented the application.

Ms. Mon described the deteriorating conditions at the property, which resulted from a lack of maintenance by the former owner.

Mr. Thomas asked about the enclosing of the porch. Mr. Danta stated that a photograph taken in 2004 shows that the porch had not been enclosed at that time. Mr. Baron suggested an alternative that was recently approved in a similar situation on Pine Street. The owner of that property wanted to enclose an historic rear porch on a rowhouse. The Commission approved a plan to enclose it, provided it retained a sense of its original open configuration. The facades included a large amount of glass to retain the openness and were set back to expose the historic porch columns.

The applicants asked if the staff could approve the other aspects of the plans, not the porch, today at the staff level. Mr. Danta explained that he could not stamp any plans approved as long as the illegal enclosed porch was shown on the plans. Mr. Thomas advised the applicants that, before purchasing the building, they should have verified that all recent work was undertaken with building permits.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial of the application as submitted, pursuant to Standards 4 and 9, but approval of enclosing the porch, provided the columns and rafter tails remain outside the new facades and exposed, with the staff to review details.

3504 HAMILTON STREET

Owner: Lance Becker & Karin Rhodes

Applicant: Vicktor Brubaker

History: c. 1865; designated 3/31/1964

Project: Construct rear addition with deck; install decorative window grills in front façade

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to construct a one-story rear addition with a deck on the west side of the rear ell. This would involve demolishing the first-floor west wall of the rear ell and erecting a 10-foot by 13-foot sunroom in its place. The deck would be accessed by a cut-down window from the second-story bay. The alterations proposed for the south elevation of the main block have been approved at the staff level as it is a secondary façade and not visible from the public right-of-way. Alterations are also proposed for the one-story addition beyond the rear ell, which include a new door and infilling window openings at the rear. The window on the west wall of the main block and a door on the east side of the building are also proposed for infill. This application also proposes to install decorative window grills in the front façade.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Denial of the decorative grills and the infill of the window on the west wall of the main block, but approval of the sunroom addition and deck pursuant to Standards 9 and 10.

DISCUSSION: Mr. D'Alessandro arrived and joined the Architectural Committee. Ms. Cote presented the application to the Committee. Architect Dan Russoniello represented the application.

Mr. Russoniello described the property and the proposed changes to it. He noted that the owners have had architect Henry Magaziner, who is 95 years old, visit the house and talk to them about the many alterations his father, architect Louis Magaziner, made to the house in the early twentieth century. Mr. Russoniello discussed each of the changes he is currently proposing with the Committee. The Committee asked him to speak about the grilles and window infill that concerned the staff. Mr. Russoniello stated that his clients are no longer seeking approval of the window infill. They have modified the bedroom design and are now willing to retain the window. They continue to seek approval for exterior window grills at the first-floor, front façade. The front door already has an old, decorative security grille. The owners would like to install matching grilles on the windows. They would have them custom made to match the grille on the door. Mr. Thomas stated that he deemed security grilles acceptable, but not those that might be mistaken for historic grilles. He suggested simpler grilles that were reminiscent of the historic door grille, but not copies. The other Committee members agreed.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee noted for the record that the second-floor, west window infill had been withdrawn and voted to recommend approval of the remainder of the proposal, provided the window grilles are simplified, with the staff to review details.

2417 SPRUCE STREET

Owner: Jonathan M. Tori

Applicant: Jonathan M. Tori

History: Contributing to the Rittenhouse/Fitler District, 2/8/1995

Project: Exterior alteration to rear façade; construct second-floor deck

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to demolish the rear wall and roof of a one-story non-historic rear shed addition. Wood slider doors and sidelights and stucco are proposed for the rear wall of the addition. The roof would be squared off and a deck added. Access to the deck would be provided by cutting down a bay window. This application also proposes to add a door, by cutting down a window, at the rear of the main block, which would not be visible from Manning Street. New parking pavers are proposed for the rear yard, as well as, a new fence with a double-door gate off Manning Street.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval, pursuant to Standards 9 and 10.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Cote presented the application to the Architectural Committee. Jonathan Tori, the owner, and Cynthia Ray, his sister, represented the application.

Ms. Ray asked why the pointing and other aspects of the proposal had not been included in the overview. Ms. Cote explained that had been or could be approved at the staff level. Ms. Ray stated that the extant rear addition is “ugly” and in need of renovation. Mr. D’Alessandro asked about their intentions for the roof of the rear addition. Ms. Ray stated that it was now slightly pitched, but would become a flat roof. The Committee members agreed that the area proposed for work is minimally visible to the public.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval, pursuant to Standards 9 and 10.

3509 SPRING GARDEN STREET

Owner: 35th & Spring Garden Partners, LLP

Applicant: Jeff M. Laufer AIA

History: house, c. 1865; stable, c. 1890; designated 4/30/1963

Project: Expand parking area, construct addition

OVERVIEW: This property is comprised of three buildings: the c. 1865 Italianate house with a large side yard, the c. 1890 stable/service building, and the 1959 school building. The house with yard and stable are individually listed on the Register; the school building, which has its own address, is not designated. The plans indicate additions to the school building; however, it is not under the Commission’s jurisdiction. This application seeks an in-concept approval to expand the parking area in the open space on the lot. The applicant intends to use Turfstone where possible to maintain a green space and to retain a number of the mature trees on the lot.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval, pursuant to Standards 9 and 10.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Cote presented the application to the Architectural Committee. Architect Jeff Laufer represented the applicant.

Mr. Laufer stated that the school building was designed in 1959 and completed in 1960. He asserted that the carriage house was not designated by the Commission, only the house was; he noted that they are in a historic district and he presented the classifications for the buildings. Ms. Cote and Mr. Farnham explained that the entire property with the house, stable, and large lawn was designated individually by the Philadelphia Historical Commission in 1963. The entire property is under its jurisdiction. The school building is not designated. They also explained that the entire site is included within the Powelton Village National Register Historic District, but that the federal designation plays no role in the local review.

Mr. Laufer noted that the facility, which will be a pediatric care center, has a need for additional parking. It already has a curb cut and parking lot at the northeast. He would like to expand that lot. He would like to pave it with Turfstone, a material that allows grass to grow up through the open paving. This will lessen the visual impact of the loss of some of the lawn and also allow for storm water to drain on the site rather than run off. He will screen the parking to satisfy the Planning Commission's requirements. Mr. Laufer stated that the neighborhood's civic association supports the proposal. Mr. McCoubrey asked about the fence around the lawn. Mr. Laufer responded that it is old and will be retained.

Mr. Thomas suggested that the suburban setting with the trees and lawn is important to the Italianate house and the historic character of the site. He is concerned that the trees might be damaged during the construction and subsequent compacting of the soil by vehicles. He suggested that a landscape architect consult on the design. Mr. Laufer agreed and stated that he would consult with an arborist.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval, provided an arborist or landscape architect consults on the preservation of the trees, with the staff to review details.

ADJOURNMENT

The Architectural Committee adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES CITED IN THE MINUTES

Standard 4: Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and 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.

Standard 10: New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Manayunk Ordinance Section PM-704.2.7: Design: Additions, alterations, and new construction shall be designed so as to be compatible in scale, building materials, and texture, with contributing buildings in the historic district.

Roofs Guideline: Recommended: Designing additions to roofs such as residential, office, or storage spaces; elevator housing; decks and terraces; or dormers or skylights when required by the new use so that they are inconspicuous from the public right-of-way and do not damage or obscure character-defining features.