

REPORT OF THE ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Robert Thomas, Chair
Commission Conference Room, One Parkway, 13th Fl., 1515 Arch St.
27 October 1998

Present

Robert Thomas, Chair
Tony Atkin
Penelope Batcheler
J. William Cornell
Herbert Levy
Suzanne Pentz

Randal Baron, Assistant Historic Preservation Officer
R. Scott Jacob, Executive Secretary
Richard Tyler, Historic Preservation Officer

Also

William Lawless, William Lawless Galway Ltd.
Rita Ignas, William Lawless Galway Ltd.
Jack Duffy, William Lawless Galway Ltd.
Thomas DiNardo, William Lawless Galway Ltd.
Bernhard Neudecker
Richard Thom, Old City Civic Association
D. O. Krasnoff, Liberty Museum
Sandra Kelly, Liberty Museum
Jean Bodine, Garden Club of America, Philadelphia Committee
M. Mac Williams
Patricia Aden, Preservation Alliance
Monsignor Sharkey, St. Mary's Church
Eugene Brazil, Esq., St. Mary's Church
Michael Hauptman, Brawer and Hauptman, Architects
Irwin Borowsky, Liberty Museum
Laurie Fitzpatrick
Lynn Aschendorf, Knowlton Preservation Committee
Christina Romano, Conroy Catering
Anthony Marfia
Jack Conroy, Conroy Catering
James Gagnon, Drill Construction
R. Law
Jill Holden, Philadelphia Water Department
Michael Hansen, Hunter Mechanical
Curt Clark
Lenore Millhollen, Center City Residents Association (CCRA)
Kris Seedorff

Jon Mudrak
Jan Singer
Judith Eden, CCRA
Charles Robin, CCRA
Peggy M. Ulrich, CCRA
Toby Olson
Michael Twersky
Cary Borish
Jay Borish
Dave Terrell
Ted Capaldi, MBM Group
Melissa Moore, Sign Spec, Inc.
Steven Levinson
Ann Sacks
Mary Breen
Richard Steinbach

Mr. Thomas, Chair, recognized a quorum and called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m.

110-112 South Front Street

William Lawless, Owner/Applicant

DATE: New construction

PROPOSAL: Construct building on historic site

This proposal involves constructing a building on an historic site. The historic building included a carriage way entrance through Ionic Street. Following a fire that seriously compromised the vacant building on the site, the former owner applied for demolition citing both structural and economic factors. The Historical Commission finally gave approval to the selective demolition of the property to abate the imminently dangerous conditions with the aim of preserving as much historic fabric as possible. The Commission asked that any future rebuilding on this property incorporate the remaining historic material. To this aim the Commission required the owner to store the stone columns and entablature of the building on the site.

The present applicant seeks preliminary review to build a new structure incorporating the salvageable pieces of the stone columns and entablature and using the Flemish bond brickwork similar to that of the old building. The new building will incorporate a new design feature of inset balconies in place of the old double-hung windows. The applicant submitted two design schemes because he does not yet know if he can secure approval to rebuild over Ionic Street. The applicant also submitted design options to construct either scheme in two phases, as he has resources at this time only to build the first two floors, but plans to construct the upper floors in a second phase as funding permits.

Scheme I proposes to construct the new building the full width of the two lots and utilizing the air rights over Ionic Street by extending the upper levels, while maintaining the carriage way at the first level. Scheme II proposes to construct the new building only within the full width of the two lots leaving the air space above Ionic Street open. Mr. Tyler stated that the 100 blocks of Ionic Street still appears on the City Plan, so the applicant may require approval from City Council to rebuild over it. The Committee preferred scheme I, with all five stories constructed at the same time, but agreed to recommend approval of the two phase building schedule.

Richard Thom of the Old City Civic Association expressed approval and appreciation on behalf of the Association and other members of the community to Mr. Lawless for proposing to building on these lots in a manner sensitive to the demolished building as well as the neighborhood. He asked the applicant to build at least three levels in the first phase if Mr. Lawless cannot secure funding to build all five levels at once, and noted that the carriage way could pose problems for fire truck access, and recommended installing a stand pipe near the front of the building. Mr. Lawless agreed to look into the issue before he returns for final approval in December.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend granting preliminary approval of both schemes, but with a preference for scheme I if the applicant can secure permission to build the carriage way, and the two phase building schedule if necessary.

239 Chestnut Street

David Caudillo, Owner/Applicant

DATE: 1852

PROPOSAL: Legalize sign

This proposal involves legalizing an existing back lit metal sign. The Committee did not object to the sign.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval.

335, 337 South 12th Street

Bernhard Neudecker, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1845

PROPOSAL: Legalize vinyl windows

This proposal involves legalizing vinyl windows installed on the front facade of two rowhouse apartment buildings. The new sash have an eight-over-eight pattern rather than six-over-six, and the muntins have no depth or shadow line. Mr. Neudecker, owner of these building, explained that he did not know of the buildings' designated status. Mr. Baron stated that the Commission has several permits from the Neudeckers on file, and has denied him through-wall air conditioners in the past. One of the two buildings has an Historical Commission plaque. Mr. Neudecker, who also owns several other buildings in the neighborhood, explained that he has a medical condition, and it has become harder for him to maintain the buildings. The applicant

explained that he installed the windows to create an efficient and cost effective improvement to the buildings. Mr. Thomas explained to Mr. Neudecker that if he can demonstrate financial hardship, he can take the issue before the Commission's Financial Hardship Committee.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend denial because the new windows fail to match the old in material, design and appearance.

252 South 4th Street, St. Mary's Church

Old St. Mary's Church, Owner

Monsignor John Sharkey, Applicant

DATE: Founded 1763; enlarged 1810; renovated 1963

PROPOSAL: Replace brick wall with steel and brick fence

This proposal involves replacing a brick wall that enclosed the south side of the church yard cemetery with a new brick and steel fence. This fence used to form the rear portion of the enclosure for the National Park Service garden on Locust Street.

Jean Bodine of the Garden Club of America stated that her organization donated the "magnolia garden" abutting the churchyard wall in 1959. She presented a compromise design scheme that includes a five-foot span of a solid brick wall to either side of the fountain between the park and the cemetery. Ms. Bodine explained that the Garden club wishes to have a solid wall instead of a steel bar fence to provide a sense of enclosure, as well as focus for the fountain. She also asked that the new brick piers match the piers of the Locust Street fence more closely. In response to the Garden Club's proposal, Monsignor Sharkey, the applicant, expressed misgivings about a large solid portion of the wall, and explained that opening up to the park forms one of the intentions of the proposal. The Committee thought the applicant should consider incorporating some of the suggestions Ms. Bodine provided, and asked him to submit a revised design scheme before the Commission meets on 12 November 1998. Monsignor Sharkey agreed to comply.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approving a new fence and wall, incorporating elements of the design compromise provided by the Garden Club of America, with staff to review and approve details.

1318 Rodman Street

Laurie Fitzpatrick, Owner/Applicant

DATE: 1846

PROPOSAL: Vinyl windows and stucco on rear wall

This proposal involves stuccoing the rear facade and installing two vinyl windows. The facade has minimal visibility from half a block away through a vacant lot and trees on South Street. Committee members noted the strong likelihood of future construction on the adjacent vacant lot, and for that reason thought the proposal warranted approval.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval.

321 Chestnut Street

Irvin Borowsky, Owner

Sandra Kelly, Liberty Museum, Applicant

DATE: 1905

PROPOSAL: Alter front window

This proposal involves constructing a new front window in front of the plane of the existing window. The new window will contain a single pane, and will sit out several inches further toward the street than the existing. Committee members rejected the proposal as submitted and asked the applicant to install the new glazing in the existing frame, or an in kind replacement of that frame with the existing setback.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend denial of the proposal as submitted, and approval of the new glazing in the existing frame, or an in kind replacement of that frame in the existing plane.

1900-1938 Park Mall, Temple University - Main Campus

Temple University, Owner

Michael Hauptman, Architect/Applicant

DATE: c. 1870s

PROPOSAL: Preliminary review for conversion of rowhouses to shops; raised walkways; additions to sides and rears of rowhouses

This preliminary review involves conversion of two rows of houses and the chapter house of the former Park Avenue Methodist Church into commercial establishments on the ground floor and residential use above. The proposal includes:

1. A raised platform across the front of the buildings and ramps at either end for handicap accessibility.
2. Vertical pavilions in the gap between the two sections of rowhouses.
3. Three story structures in the areaways between the rear ells of the houses.
4. Additional openings on the sides of the rowhouse at 1900 Park Mall to accommodate a new use as an inn.

In order to provide handicap accessibility and use the buildings as stores, the architects propose to build a raised platform across the front of the buildings and ramps at either end. The ramp will, for the most part, entail covering, though not destroying, the stone stoops of the houses. The applicant intends to construct the ramp and terrace in cast stone with a brick base. Committee members objected to the use of brick at the base because the houses have brownstone bases. They also asked the applicant to use a simpler railing.

The designers also plan to build vertical pavilions in the gap between the two sections of rowhouses. The pavilions, which will house a café, will help define the plan of a circular plaza. Mr. Atkin recommended the applicant ensure that the design of the pavilions complement the other new elements of the proposal. Committee members also wanted the levels of the pavilion additions to echo those of the rowhouses.

The preliminary proposal also entails constructing three story structures in the areaways between the rear ells of the houses. The Committee wished to see the new construction set back more to retain a sense of the areaway. The applicant explained that setting them back any further would decrease the amount of space available for the new use, but agreed to redesign the additions to retain the sense of the areaways.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval in concept of:

- 1. A simplified raised platform across the front of the buildings and ramps at either end, without the brick base, and constructed in a manner that will encapsulate the historic material beneath it.*
- 2. Vertical pavilions in the gap between the two sections of rowhouses, with levels to echo those of the rowhouses and designed to complement the other new elements of the proposal.*
- 3. Three story structures in the areaways between the rear ells of the houses, set back to retain a sense of the areaways.*
- 4. Additional openings on the sides of the rowhouse at 1900 Park Mall.*

8001-8101 Verree Road, "Knowlton"

Jack Conroy, Owner

Anthony Marfia, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1879-1881

PROPOSAL: Large addition; new gate; parking lot

The applicant has returned with a proposal seen in preliminary form two months ago. The design has improved with the retention of the rear porch and the removal of Colonial Revival details from the addition. The applicant has decided not to follow the Committee and Commission's request to reduce the contact of the new building with the front porch because he fears it will damage the flow of interior space. The new building has changed orientation somewhat and will now use more of the downwardly sloping space behind the house.

The Committee considered the revised proposal an improvement, and asked the applicant to make some changes:

1. A hipped roof over the kitchen portion of the addition in place of the proposed flat roof, and some windows in the walls of the kitchen portion of the addition.
2. Not glaze the front corner of the house but instead to build a railing around the porch, with staff to review and approve details.

The Committee did not object to the proposed parking lot and new gate opening.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of:

- 1. Parking lot*
- 2. Gate cut*
- 3. Proposed addition, conditional upon the submission of new drawing reflecting the Committee's recommendations regarding the hipped roof and porch rails, with staff to review and approve details*

note: The applicant submitted a revised drawing reflecting the Committee's recommendation regarding the roof and windows of the kitchen addition after the meeting.

401 North Broad Street

401 North Broad Street Associates, Owner

Michael Hansen, Contractor/Applicant

DATE: 1929

PROPOSAL: Basement fencing; louvers

This proposal calls for installing fencing in the basement level of the building to provide protection for emergency generators for a communications company. The applicant also seeks approval for vents. Committee members thought the applicant should redesign the louvers to span the entire width of the transom portion of the windows, and paint them gray.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval, with the condition that the applicant redesign the louvers to span the entire width of the transom portion of the windows, and paint them gray.

401 North Broad Street

401 North Broad Street Associates, Owner

James Gagnon, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1929

PROPOSAL: Basement fencing; louvers

This proposal calls for:

1. Fencing installed in the basement level of the building to provide protection for emergency generators for a communications company.
2. Vents in the transom portion of several windows.
3. A small communications antenna near the center of the roof.

As in the other proposal for 401 North Broad Street on this month's agenda, Committee members thought the applicant should redesign the louvers to span the entire width of the transom portion of the windows, and paint them gray. The Committee did not object to the antenna, owing to its obscure location.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of:

1. *Fencing installed in the basement level of the building to provide protection for emergency generators for a communications company.*
2. *Vents in the transom portion of several windows, with the condition that the applicant redesign the louvers to span the entire width of the transom portion of the windows, and paint them gray.*
3. *The antenna in a remote location on the roof.*

792 South Front Street

Lisa Colon, Owner

Curt Clark, Contractor/Applicant

DATE: c. early Nineteenth Century; modern addition, mid-Twentieth Century (?)

PROPOSAL: Demolish visible rear addition; build new addition

Mr. Clark seeks to demolish the visible rear ell of his house to build a somewhat larger new addition. Mr. Clark claims that the current rear ell, visible from Catherine Street dates from recent years. He would like to use vinyl windows on the new addition. Staff and Committee members expressed concern that the rear ell may date from a much earlier period than the applicant suggested. The Committee agreed to recommend approval of the demolition on the condition that staff examine the rear ell, and determines that it constitutes a non-historic aspect of the building. They thought that the drawing for the rear ell did not convey enough information to consider at this time.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the demolition and new construction, with the condition that a staff member examines the rear ell, and determines that it constitutes a non-historic aspect of the building.

City Hall

Department of Public Property, Owner

Deborah Russo, Applicant

DATE: 1878-1901

PROPOSAL: New entrance railings

Mr. Thomas recused himself from the discussion and the vote owing to his architectural firm's association with the project.

Recently the Commission approved the installation of handrails at the west side entrance of the northwest corner and the east side entrance of the northeast corner of City Hall. After their installation, both Mayor Rendell and City Council President Street thought the design inappropriate for City Hall, and insisted that the railings be replaced immediately with a more historically appropriate design. The new submission calls for the installation of bronze handrail molding in the "Ram's Head" form, with a typical "Ram's Head" termination detail. Committee members did not object to the design, but recommended turning the ornate termination details in toward the railing, to meet code and to mitigate the likelihood of users hurting themselves or catching their clothing on them.

The remaining members of the Committee voted to recommend approval, with the ornate termination details turned in toward the railing.

2047-2041 Sansom Street

Samuel Rappaport Estate, Owner

Jan Singer, Rappaport Estate, Applicant

DATE: 1925

PROPOSAL: Metal windows

The proposal involves reinstallation of multi-pane metal windows removed from this parking garage because of their dangerous condition. The applicant proposes new windows constructed from several superimposed aluminum grids. The windows fall at the rear and side facades of the structure.

Charles Robin, owner of the building directly behind this building, requested that the applicant install non-operable new windows, to reduce the amount of noise and automobile exhaust that emanates from the garage. The applicant explained that the proposed windows will remain inoperable.

The committee voted unanimously to recommend approval.

1631 Walnut Street, Latham Hotel

Ocean Properties, Owner

Jon Mudrak, Contractor/Applicant

DATE: c.1915

PROPOSAL: Patch and coat terra cotta bays

This proposal involves patching spalling portions of the building's terra cotta bays and covering the patches and the rest of the bays with a coating to provide a uniform color. The applicant stated that approximately fifteen locations on the facade require repair. Patricia Aden of the Preservation Alliance objected to the proposal, contending that the applicant should take a conservative approach to the amount of material that will receive a coating, and conduct a test on a small sample patch to check for a good match with the terra cotta. The Committee agreed with Ms. Aden's objection.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend denial of the coating proposal, and recommended approval of conducting sample patch tests to find a material that matches the terra cotta, or to coat all the areas of patching to match the terra cotta, and cleaning, with staff to review and approve details.

1839 Spruce Street, Rittenhouse Place

Rittenhouse Place Condominium Association, Owner of building

Cary Borish, Co-owner of ground-floor restaurant condominium unit

David Terrell, Applicant

DATE: 1924

PROPOSAL: Café windows

Mr. Thomas recused himself from the vote owing to his architectural firm's association with future work at the restaurant.

This proposal calls for legalizing the operable café windows installed without a permit in the first floor storefront of the Marathon on the Square restaurant. Cary Borish, owner of the restaurant contends that he replaced non-operable doors, that a previous tenant partially obstructed. He claims that the doors were in very poor repair, and that he did not think they constituted an historic feature. Mr. Borish has the old doors in storage, and agreed to allow staff to examine them.

Michael Twersky, lawyer for the condominium association, submitted a letter, and spoke in opposition to the café doors. He cited several passages from the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Buildings* that the new windows do not conform with. In particular, he explained that Mr. Borish had removed historic fabric. He also said that the old doors belong to the condominium association, not Mr. Borish. Committee members required additional information before making a recommendation, such as a clear photograph of the old doors that formerly occupied the opening. In addition, they asked Mr. Baron to examine the doors and give an assessment of their age and condition.

The Committee voted unanimously to ask the applicant to submit additional information before making a recommendation, such as a clear photograph of the old doors that formerly occupied the opening, with staff to examine the doors and give an assessment of their age and condition.

2100 Spruce Street

Joseph Friedberg and Jo Buyske, Owners

Barry Ginder, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1880

PROPOSAL: New balcony on carriage house; yard features

This proposal calls for:

1. Shortening the modern balcony on the carriage house.
2. Filling in a non-historic driveway entrance with bricks to match the existing wall.
3. Constructing several trellis-like elements in the rear yard.

Barry Ginder, architect for the project, explained that he intends to reuse bricks from another portion of the wall, as well as salvaged portions from the historic brownstone cap to fill in the non-historic gated opening. The proposal also calls for the use of one section of cast stone for the cap. Committee members did not object to shortening the balcony or rebuilding the wall, but asked staff to review a sample of the bricks the applicant chose to use to fill in the gate opening.

The Committee thought the proposed trellises rise too far above the brick wall. They recommended the architect reduce the height of the fences shielding the HVAC units to no higher than the masonry portion of the wall. The Committee also asked that the high end of the trellis extend no higher than the floor of the balcony next to it, and that the pointed parts of the trellis support extend no more than eight inches above that floor.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approving of:

- 1. Reducing the modern balcony on the carriage house.*
- 2. Filling in a non-historic driveway entrance, with staff to review brick samples.*
- 3. Constructing several trellis-like elements in the rear yard, reducing the height of the fences shielding the HVAC units to no higher than the masonry portion of the wall, with the high end of the trellis extending no higher than the floor of the balcony next to it, and the pointed parts of the trellis support extend no more than eight inches above that floor.*

209-211 Chestnut Street

MBM Group, Owner

Melissa Moore, Applicant

DATE: c. 1850

PROPOSAL: ATM installation

The applicant has returned with a revised proposal to fill in a window bay with an ATM. They revised the drawings to set back the machine housing within the opening to match the plane of the glazing. The applicant will move the fire department standpipe to an adjacent bay. Ms. Batcheler and Mr. Thomas objected to replacing a window with a solid feature on this intact storefront. The applicant explained that he conducted a search for another, comparable location for the ATM with no desirable outcome.

Three of the five Committee members voted to recommend approving the proposal. Ms. Batcheler and Mr. Thomas dissented.

1326-1346 North Broad Street

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission/New Freedom Theater, Joint owners

Robert Saxon, Architect/Applicant

DATE: Main House - 1853; Theater addition - c. 1876

PROPOSAL: Demolish and rebuild theater addition

This proposal calls for the demolition of the theater addition to the Edwin Forrest mansion and building a new wing. The architect proposes to construct the new building using Dryvit and split-face block clothed in some neo-Italianate details. The applicant has provided two engineering reports to explain the necessity to rebuild the structure. The applicant failed to appear before the Committee.

Although the engineering report casts serious doubt on the viability of several of the walls, Committee members thought that the front, character defining wall, might be saved through the use of support columns, building a new theater box behind. Mr. Tyler recommended that the Commission might consider hiring an engineer to explore saving the facade. All the Committee members found the proposed new design incompatible with the historic building both in materials and design. They recommended that if the front wall could not be saved that the applicant should reconstruct the front facade.

The Committee voted unanimously to deny the proposal and recommended that the applicant submit a new proposal to save the facade or if that proves impossible to reconstruct the front wall in front of the new theater.

Addendum

201-217 South 18th Street, Rittenhouse Claridge

Kenneth Kaiserman, Owner/Applicant

DATE: 1955

PROPOSAL: Apply waterproof coating to east facade

This application is for the treatment only of the eastern elevations.

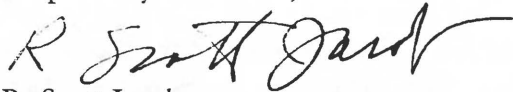
In the mistaken belief that the application of a waterproof coating does not require Historical Commission review and approval, the owner had the east facade primed. The Commission staff contacted the owner who had the work stopped. Further delay will necessitate removal of the prime coat and prevent treatment until next spring.

A structural engineer advised the owner of the necessity of coating the east facade of the building to prevent further spalling and water penetration. Coating samples at the loading dock reveal that a "clear" coating gives a distinctively brown cast to the yellow brick, and that a yellow tinted coating can better match the color of the brick.

Staff reviewed the samples and engineer's findings, and polled members of the Architectural Committee by on 2 and 3 November 1998.

The Committee members agreed to recommend approval of the application of a waterproof coating to the east facade of the property with staff to review the color.

Respectfully submitted,



R. Scott Jacob
Executive Secretary