

**THE MINUTES OF THE 426th STATED MEETING OF THE
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION
11 February 1998**

**City Council Caucus, Room 401, City Hall
Wayne S. Spilove, Chair**

Present

Wayne S. Spilove, Chair
Lynette M. Brown, Chair, City Planning Commission
David Brownlee, Ph.D
Duane Bumb, Deputy Director, Department of Commerce
Mary Rita D'Allessandro, Deputy Commissioner, Department of
Licenses and Inspections
Joseph James, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Public Property
Carol Lawrence
Shelly Merhige, Office of City Council President
Michael Sklaroff, Esq.
Robert Thomas
Dennis P. Ward, III
Scott Wilds, Assistant Director for Housing, Office of Housing
and Community Development
Stephanie G. Wolf, Ph.D

Richard Tyler, Historic Preservation Officer
Randal Baron, Assistant Historic Preservation Officer
R. Scott Jacob, Executive Secretary to the Commission
Laura Spina, Historic Preservation Planner

Mark Zecca, Esq., Deputy City Solicitor

Also

Andrew Terhune, Toll Brothers, Inc.
Judith Eden, Center City Residents Association (CCRA)
Lenore Millhollen, CCRA
William G. Schwartz, Rittenhouse Regency
Corrina Lucas
Thomas Ferrick, Philadelphia Inquirer
Ronald Avery, Daily News
Richard Lombardo, City Planning Commission
Allison Kelsey, Preservation Alliance
Patricia Wilson Aden, Vice President, Preservation Alliance

Wayne S. Spilove, Chair, recognized the presence of a quorum and called the 426th Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission to order at 10:05 A.M.

Mr. Spilove introduced Robert Thomas and Carol Lawrence as the two newest members of the Philadelphia Historical Commission. Mr. Thomas also serves as the new Architectural Committee Chair. Mr. Spilove expressed his gratitude to Arlene Matzkin, who sat on the Commission and chaired the Architectural Committee for the last six years.

MINUTES of the 425th Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission. Upon a motion made by Mr. Wilds and duly seconded, the Commission unanimously approved the Minutes of the 425th Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission held on 14 January 1998, Wayne S. Spilove, Chair.

Architectural Committee Report, 27 January 1998, Robert Thomas, Chair.

Mr. Tyler described minor changes to the Architectural Committee's recommendation regarding the Naval Home. He explained that the applicant requested an alteration in the wording of the report to reflect the Committee's recommendation more clearly. Mr. Tyler asked Mr. Thomas to read the revised recommendation to the Commission when describing the proposed conceptual zoning plan for the Naval Home.

Mr. Thomas read the Committee's recommendations before discussion of each proposal.

3905 Spruce Street, carriage house of Joseph Potts House

University of Pennsylvania, Owner

Richard Russell, University of Pennsylvania, Applicant

DATE: c. 1875

PROPOSAL: Stairtower addition

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Three of the four Committee members present at that time voted to recommend approval of the revised plans. Ms. Pentz recused herself from the discussion and the vote owing to her firm's association with the University of Pennsylvania.

Mr. Thomas described the proposal to add an enclosed stairtower on the blank side wall of this former carriage house to accommodate a second means of egress. Plans show a two-story structure constructed of brick with a slate roof. The former carriage house now serves as a campus police station, and does not meet current fire and safety codes. Mr. Thomas explained that the design uses materials that match or complement existing features of the building. Mr. Tyler stated that the proposed addition conforms with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*.

Mr. Ward made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation.

Ms. Merhige seconded the motion which carried with eight votes.

Mr. Brownlee recused himself from the discussion and the vote owing to his connection with the University of Pennsylvania. Mr. Sklaroff abstained owing to his law firm's association with the University of Pennsylvania.

645 North 22nd Street

Sean O'Leary, Owner

Douglas Grainge, Architect/Applicant

DATE: c. 1855

PROPOSAL: Roof deck, stairwell enclosure

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval, with staff to review and approve details.

Mr. Thomas explained that this proposal entails constructing a roof top stair enclosure and deck on top of this row house. He stated that a parapet wall hides much of the work. The enclosure will also contain a small sun room. Committee members asked that staff review and approve the details of siding and fenestration.

Mr. Sklaroff asked whether the building would have had a roof deck in the 1850s. Mr. Thomas stated that the building would not have had a roof deck at that time. Mr. Baron explained that the parapet wall completely hides the proposed roof deck. Mr. Tyler stated that the proposal meets the *Standards*.

Mr. Wilds made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation.

Ms. Wolf seconded the motion which carried with ten votes. Mr. Sklaroff dissented.

2300-2498 Grays Ferry Avenue, Naval Home

Toll Brothers, Inc., Owner

Andrew Terhune, Applicant

DATE: 1827-1840

PROPOSAL: Concept for zoning plan

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Mr. Atkin made a motion to recommend approval in concept of the zoning plan submitted by Toll Brothers, Inc. with further study of increasing the view corridors of the Governor's and Surgeon's Houses from Grays Ferry Avenue from 45 Degrees up to 60 degrees, and of design alternatives to assure mitigation of the visibility of the proposed parking lot in front of Biddle Hall.

Mr. Thomas explained that this proposal asks for the Commission's conceptual approval of a zoning plan for the development of the Naval Home site. He reviewed the various aspects of the proposed plan, as described in the report of the Architectural Committee. The Plan includes up to 1200 dwelling units in a mix of stacked townhouses, and low, mid- and high-rise buildings with provision for both surface and garage parking. The lawn in front of the main buildings will include a parking area, sheltered from the public view, possibly by an earthen berm or plantings. Mr. Thomas stated that the applicant assured the Committee that the Surgeon's and Governor's Houses as well as Biddle Hall will remain, with most of the new construction

sitting behind the existing buildings. New construction will partially wrap around the dependency buildings and will occupy the front corners of the lot along Grays Ferry Avenue. The plan shows the demolition of the rear portion of the Governor's House.

The developer expects to breach the brick portions of the wall to build along the property lines, while retaining the stone and iron portions on Grays Ferry Avenue as well as the gate houses. He explained that the proposed placement of parking lots or structures, and the location of the two high rise structures reflects the nature of the buildings and property surrounding the Naval Home. The developer plans to build the rear high rise opposite an abandoned factory and a school, which will minimize their impact on the surrounding community. The multi-family residences along Bainbridge Street will have doors facing existing row houses on Bainbridge Street.

Mr. Tyler stated that the Planning Commission sought comment from the Historical Commission regarding this conceptual zoning plan. He also noted that the State Historic Preservation Officer reviewed the plan and approved it with similar stipulations to the Architectural Committee's.

Ms. Wolf asked for comment on the scale of the four-story, stacked townhouses juxtaposed against the two-and-one-half-story dependency buildings. Mr. Thomas explained that the Committee did not receive any details for the proposed townhouses, only a conceptual footprint. Commission members agreed with the Committee regarding the need for greater view corridors to the Governor's and Surgeon's Houses.

Lenore Millhollen of the Center City Residents Association stated that the preservation of the Biddle Hall and the Governor's and Surgeon's Houses merits more attention than this proposal has offered, and expressed concern over the absence of a plan detailing the proposed reuse of the historic structures. Andrew Terhune, representing Toll Brothers Inc., stated that the developer has commenced stabilizing the historic structures to prevent more water damage, and noted the importance of restoring them to enhance the marketability of the development. Mr. Brownlee suggested that the Commission deny final approval of any new construction until after the submission of plans for the preservation and reuse of Biddle Hall and its dependencies. He added that removal of the rear wing of the Governor's House requires a demolition permit, so this conceptual zoning plan cannot approve that aspect of the proposal.

Commission members asked for comment regarding the parking lot in front of Biddle Hall. Mr. Terhune explained that depressing the grade of the proposed front parking lot and building up a berm will obscure the cars parked there from Grays Ferry Avenue. The proposed lot will accommodate about 100 automobiles. Mr. Brownlee cited the importance of the parade grounds to the Naval Home's history and function in front of Biddle Hall, and of opening up the view corridors to the

dependencies. He implored the Commission to require a high amount of ingenuity in the design of these items.

Patricia Wilson Aden, of the Preservation Alliance, stated that the Preservation Alliance, along with preservation agencies, examined and helped develop the current development concept. The Alliance has asked for the immediate stabilization and eventual restoration of the historic structures. Ms. Aden also confirmed the consistency of the Committee's concerns with those of the Preservation Alliance. She commented on the need for a high level of scale and stylistic compatibility among the old and the new buildings.

Mr. James made a motion to approve in concept the submitted zoning plan with further study of increasing the view corridors of the Governor's and Surgeon's Houses from Grays Ferry Avenue from 45 degrees up to 60 degrees, and of design alternatives to assure greater mitigation of the visibility of the proposed parking lot in front of Biddle Hall, with the additional provision that this action does not approve in concept the demolition of any building or structure on the Naval Home site. Mr. Brownlee seconded the motion which carried with eleven votes. Mr. Sklaroff abstained.

2360 South Street, University Museum

University of Pennsylvania, Owner
Samuel Olshin, Architect/Applicant
DATE: 1896-1898
PROPOSAL: Storage wing addition

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval.

Mr. Thomas explained that this proposal consists of an addition to the University Museum for storage and offices. The wing attaches to a recent addition and visually completes the east side of a courtyard. The structure takes design cues and massing from the historic building, but avoids becoming a copy. Mr. Thomas stated that the proposed exterior building materials respect and complement Wilson Eyre's original museum building. The new addition will incorporate jack arches and Mercer tiles. The brick color, white marble sills, and the roofing material will follow the historic structure. Committee members thought the addition design complemented the existing structure very well, while not creating a false sense of history. Mr. Tyler stated that the proposed addition conforms with the Standards.

Mr. Wilds made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Ms. Wolf seconded the motion which carried with nine votes. Mr. Brownlee and Mr. Sklaroff abstained.

268-270 South 2nd Street, Abercrombie House

Jon and Karen Sirlin, Owners
David Amburn, Architect/Applicant
DATE: 1758
PROPOSAL: Rear porch and rear alterations

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval of the facade alterations, and a slightly revised porch design, painted all one color, with staff to review and approve details.

Mr. Thomas described the proposal to make some alterations to the barely visible rear wall of the house, and cutting into areas of replacement brick. The architect redesigned the rear porch to respect the fenestration pattern of the rear windows. Mr. Thomas explained that Committee members expressed concern over the new porch design, which mixes the modern details of the new garage addition with Chinese Chippendale design details of the Georgian period. Committee members thought a modern adaptation of Chinese Chippendale design would suit the building better, and recommended that the porch railing and support columns correspond with the facia and fenestration. Mr. Tyler stated that the proposal meets the *Standards*.

*Mr. Wilds made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation.
Mr. Sklaroff seconded the motion which carried unanimously.*

1115-1131 Market Street, Reading Terminal Headhouse

Reading Terminal Headhouse Association, L.P., Owner
Robert DeHaven, Architect/Applicant
DATE: 1893
PROPOSAL: Sign at 12th and Filbert Streets

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval.

Mr. Thomas explained that this proposal revisits the issue of signage for this tenant. The proposal no longer includes the bands of neon bars wrapping around the sign and over the facade, thus minimizing the amount of drilling required for support bolts. The new sign will attach to the belt of smooth-faced stone between the rusticated blocks. The plan also includes a small, neon SEPTA sign.

*Mr. Wilds made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation.
Ms. Wolf seconded the motion which carried with eleven votes.
Mr. Sklaroff abstained.*

1829 (1827-31) Pine Street

1829 Pine Street, L.P., Owner
Louis DiGregorio, Architect/Applicant
DATE: c. 1850; altered c. 1950 for hospital
PROPOSAL: Facade rehabilitation

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval of the window openings, sash and shutter, removing the stone veneer and paint, and repairing or replacing the facade materials to match the originals, with staff to review details, and to recommend denial of the current door and water table proposals, but provided guidance for a re-submittal next month.

Mr. Thomas described the proposal involving three rowhouses that were combined into a medical facility sometime in the 1950s or 1960s. The applicant proposes converting them into an apartment building, retaining the central entrance. Mr. Thomas explained that the developer will restore the window openings, sash and shutters, and remove the stone veneer and paint. A developer built the entire block in the same style, so unaltered neighbors serve as guides for the rehabilitation. Mr. Baron pointed out that the proposed water table does not match the historic examples on neighboring houses. Mr. Thomas stated that Committee members questioned the appropriateness of the large, arched entry near the center of the three buildings. Mr. Tyler stated that window and facade repair and replacement conforms with the *Standards*.

Ms. Wolf made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Mr. Ward seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

219-229 South 18th Street

Rittenhouse Regency Affiliated, Owner
Richard Meinzer, Architect/Applicant
DATE: 1929
PROPOSAL: Hotel canopy

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval in concept.

Mr. Thomas explained that this proposal shows an alternate wrap-around canopy for this hotel at the corner of the 18th and Locust Streets. The Committee and Commission voted to deny the concept of a wrap-around canopy at the last meeting. This plan retains the box-type canopy design existing at another entrance to the building, but joins the two canopies with a discrete glass and metal section that wraps around the corner. He explained that the glass and metal link between the two canopies would serve the purpose of sheltering hotel guests at the corner, yet does not cut off or obscure the corner of the building. The plan also calls for the removal of the non-historic planter, which would create a sheltered walkway inside the existing corner. Mr. Tyler stated that the proposed canopy meets the *Standards*.

Ms. Merhige made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Ms. Wolf seconded the motion which carried with eleven votes. Mr. Sklaroff abstained.

2010-2012 Sansom Street

John Ciccone, Owner/Architect/Applicant
DATE: c. 1850; remodelled c. 1925 in Spanish Colonial
PROPOSAL: Signage

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval of the signage stepping out no more than five inches forward of the balcony, conditional upon its placement five inches away to either side of the balcony.

Mr. Thomas described the revised signage proposal for this building. The Committee and Commission recently voted that the signage should hold flush to the face of the existing balcony. Mr. Baron stated that placing the sign forward of the balcony hides it except from directly in front of the building. Mr. Thomas explained that the applicant wants to build the sign five inches out from the face of the balcony. Committee members agreed, on the condition that he pull the sign panels five inches away to either side of the balcony.

Mr. Brownlee made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Ms. Wolf seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

1833 Pine Street

George Barnes, Owner
John R. Caulk, Architect/Applicant
DATE: c. 1850 - base remodeled c. 1880
PROPOSAL: Alterations to rear

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval.

Mr. Thomas described the proposal to raise a rear brick wall and widen a single, first-floor window into a tripartite design.

The owners want to enlarge the window to bring more light into the recently renovated kitchen. Mr. Thomas explained that the applicant plans to build up the existing wall with matching brick.

Mr. Wilds made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Ms. Merhige seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

2101 South College Avenue, Girard College - Founders Hall

Board of Directors, City Trusts, Owner
Robert Behr, Applicant
DATE: 1848
PROPOSAL: Banners

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Five of the six Committee members present voted to recommend approval of the application, on the condition that the applicant return for approval of patching and repair methods. Mr. Thomas recused himself from the discussion and the vote owing to his firm's association with Girard College.

Ms. Brown recused herself from the discussion and the vote, owing to her position as the Mayor's representative to the Board of City Trusts, the administrative agency of the Girard Estate. Mr. Thomas also recused himself.

Mr. Baron explained that this proposal entails installing four banners to mark the 150th anniversary of Girard College. The banners, which will remain for a year, will attach to boards lag-bolted into the marble walls. Installation plans involve a special drill that cores out marble plugs, which they can replace after the banners come down. Commission members expressed concern over drilling holes into the marble. Mr. Brownlee recommended using small metal fasteners or another less damaging method. Mr. Sklaroff suggested the applicant look at installation methods of other large banners around the city.

Mr. Sklaroff made a motion to approve the proposal, with staff to review and approve possible alternative methods of fastening the banners to the marble wall behind the colonnade. Mr. Brownlee seconded the motion which carried with nine votes. Mr. James abstained, and Mr. Thomas and Ms. Brown recused themselves.

Ad-Hoc Telecommunications Committee Report, 29 January 1998,
Joseph James, Chair.

Mr. Tyler stated that the Ad-Hoc Telecommunications Committee met to discuss the Historical Commission's jurisdiction over the installation of personal satellite dishes on historically designated buildings. Mr. Zecca explained that the Federal Communications Commission's regulations relating to satellite dishes contain an historic preservation provision authorizing the lawful application of a state or local regulation of such dishes, conditional upon the property's entry on or eligibility for the National Register of Historic places.

The Report of the Activities of the Historical Commission Staff
January 1998, Richard Tyler.

Mr. Tyler noted a few highlights from the monthly staff report, including the appointment of two new Preservation Planners to the Commission staff. He stated that the number of permits approved in January rose more than twenty-five percent over the number approved in January last year.

Ms. Spilove thanked the Commission staff and Preservation Alliance for their work regarding the Royal Theater. Mr. Sklaroff thanked Mr. Spilove for his efforts with the Royal Theater.

Certified Local Government: National Register Comment.

Mr. Tyler described the nomination of the Carl Mackley Apartments in West Philadelphia for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. He explained the apartment complex's high architectural and social significance, and asked the Commission to recommend the nomination.

Mr. Brownlee made a motion to recommend the nomination. Ms. Wolf seconded the motion which carried with eleven votes. Mr. Sklaroff abstained.

Old Business

255 South 17th Street, Medical Arts Tower

GMH Management, Owner

William Simon, Applicant

DATE: 1930

PROPOSAL: Satellite dish on window sill

Architectural Committee recommendation: Denial.

After reviewing the reports of the Ad-Hoc Telecommunications Committee and the Architectural Committee, the Commission voted to deny the application to install the satellite dish.

Mr. James made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Mr. Brownlee seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

509 Pine Street, Vilna Shul Synagogue

Sons of Abraham Aba Shapiro, Congregation of Vilna, Owner

Barry Dubrow, Applicant

DATE: 1922

PROPOSAL: Replace glass and repair window frame in front oculus window.

Architectural Committee recommendation: Denial of the original proposal, and approval of repairing the wood frame and installing new glass within the confines of the original wood frame, without introducing new lead lines.

Mr. Baron explained that the Commission voted to table this proposal for one month at the January Commission Meeting, and that the applicant notified him of the Synagogue's decision to follow the recommendation of the Architectural Committee.

Mr. Brownlee made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Ms. Merhige seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Mr. Tyler asked the Commission for approval to purchase a gift from the Commission and staff members for Arlene Matzkin, thanking her for her six years of service as Chair of the

Architectural Committee and Commission member. He could not quote the exact price of the chosen gift, but stated he would notify the Commission members of the cost. Ms. Wolf also thanked Ms. Matzkin and acknowledged the time and work involved Chairing the Architectural Committee and reporting its recommendations to the Commission.

Mr. Ward made a motion to accept the purchase of a gift for Ms. Matzkin. Ms. Merhige seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Mr. James expressed concern that Commission members' home telephone numbers appear on a list sent around to all the Commission members. He suggested that, before distributing such lists, staff ask each Commission member whether they mind sharing their home telephone numbers.

Mr. Ward made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Merhige seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

The Meeting adjourned at 12:15 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

R. Scott Jacob
Executive Secretary