

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE OF THE
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

21 April 1982

Herbert W. Levy, A.I.A., Chairman

Present: Herbert W. Levy, A.I.A., Chairman, Architectural Advisor to the
Commission
Theodore T. Bartley, Jr., A.I.A., Preservation Committee, American
Institute of Architects, Philadelphia Chapter
Richard Tyler, Historian
Patricia Siemiontkowski, Architectural Historian

Also: Father Getz, Pastor of St. Augustine's R. C. Church, and Paul W.
Getz, Architect, to request permission to remove the steeple
from St. Augustine's Church.
Steve and Nancy Silber, Owners, and Arlene Matskin, Architect,
to present plans for the restoration of 600 Spruce Street
and the construction of a rear addition.
Angelo Koutsoubas, Owner, to request an approval of the illegal
alterations undertaken at 121 North 21st Street.
Linda Unland, Owner, and Ted Brown, Contractor, to present
plans for the rehabilitation of 507 North 21st Street.
Irv Shapiro, Architect, to present plans for alterations
to the rear of 707 Pine Street.
Claude Rosse, Architect, to present his proposal for the
restoration of 616 South Front Street.
Linda Harris, St. Peter's School, and Jay Pattison, Architect,
to request permission to demolish the historically certified
building at 325 Lombard Street.

SUBMISSIONS FOR ALTERATIONS

St. Augustine's R. C. Church, 4th and New Streets. Father
Getz, Pastor of St. Augustine's R. C. Church, and Paul W.
Getz, Architect, appeared before the Architectural Committee
to request permission to remove the badly deteriorated
steeple from atop St. Augustine's Church.

Built in 1847-1848 from the designs of Napoleon LeBrun,
the present church building replaced an older structure
destroyed by fire a few years earlier. The existing
steeple was added to the LeBrun design by Edwin F. Durang
in 1867.

Constructed of wood, the tower had deteriorated significantly
over the years. Demolition and reconstruction of the
steeple would cost approximately \$325,000. Demolition, alone,
is estimated at \$75,000. To stabilize the existing steeple
by cladding it with metal would cost approximately \$250,000.

Owing to considerable expense involved in stabilization of the existing fabric or reconstruction of the steeple, the Committee agreed that its removal appeared to be necessary. The Committee suggested, however, that Mr. Getz, before proceeding with demolition, examine the building and document it with photographs and/or drawings. In addition, the Committee recommended that Mr. Getz conduct a search in the Office of the City Archives, the Library Company of Philadelphia, the Free Library of Philadelphia and other repositories for a photograph or print of the original LeBrun design for the church. If found, the church could then undertake to restore the structure to its original appearance. Mr. Getz agreed to conduct such a search and report his findings to the Committee.

Following considerable discussion, the Committee agreed to recommend to the Commission that demolition of the steeple be permitted following a structural investigation and documentation of the existing fabric. The roof area could then be stabilized and covered, temporarily, until a restoration program can be prepared based on the architect's research findings.

600 Spruce Street, Machinist Associates, Architects. Steve and Nancy Silber appeared before the Architectural Committee with their architect, Arlene Matskin, to present plans for the restoration of the Joseph Jefferson House and the construction of a new rear addition to the building.

Erected in 1805, the house underwent some rehabilitation work during the 1960's. Although the project was never certified complete by the Redevelopment Authority, the present owners have elected to sell the house in its present, unfinished condition. Since the building falls within the boundaries of the Washington Square East Urban Renewal Area, the Silbers were advised to contact Ned Mitinger of the Redevelopment Authority staff to ascertain what controls and requirements might be imposed upon them as new owners under the Urban Renewal Plan.

Following a discussion of possible zoning and redevelopment requirements, the Committee examined the architect's plans in detail. Subject to the submission of shutter details and a revision of the elevation drawing to indicate existing fabric on the building, the Architectural Committee agreed to recommend an approval of the proposed restoration of 600 Spruce Street and the construction of a new addition, in concept. The Committee did suggest, however, that the rainwater conductor on the rear be recessed within the reveal between the new addition and the original building.

Unless major changes to the building are required by zoning or redevelopment constraints, the Committee directed that the revised drawings and details be submitted to the staff for a final review and approval.

121 North 21st Street (illegal work), Angelo Koutsoubas, Owner. Mr. Koutsoubas appeared before the members of the Architectural Committee to request an approval of illegal alterations undertaken at 121 North 21st Street.

Erected c. 1855, this three-story, Victorian row house was altered significantly by Mr. Koutsoubas without his having applied for a building permit from the Department of Licenses and Inspections. In particular, the building's tall window openings were shortened detracting considerably from the integrity of the original design of the building and the streetscape.

Following a brief discussion with the owner, the Committee members voted to recommend that the Historical Commission not sanction the illegal alterations undertaken at 121 North 21st Street.

507 North 21st Street, The J/S Partnership. The Architectural Committee reviewed plans for the rehabilitation of 507 North 21st Street presented by Linda Unland and her contractor, Ted Brown. The plans, as drawn, call for the construction of a second floor addition at the rear of the property and some minor repairs and painting on the original portion of the house.

Following a brief discussion of the project, the Committee agreed to recommend to the Commission that an approval be granted.

707 Pine Street, Irv Shapiro, Architect. Mr. Shapiro presented to the Architectural Committee his proposal for alterations to the rear of 707 Pine Street.

Owing to significant deterioration of the brickwork, Mr. Shapiro proposes to demolish and reconstruct as it exists a portion of the original, back building. The plans, as presented, also call for the construction of a new greenhouse type structure on the rear of the property. Since the rear wall of the back building cannot be easily seen from the street, the Committee also agreed to allow a complete redesign of this end wall.

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An approval, in concept, is recommended by the Committee. Since the building falls within the boundaries of an urban renewal area, the Committee directed the architect to the offices of the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority for its concurrence as well.

616 South Front Street, Rosse-Blist, Associates. Mr. Rosse appeared before the Architectural Committee to present his plans for the proposed restoration of 616 South Front Street, a two-and-a-half story, Greek Revival row house.

Following a review of the architect's plans, the Committee agreed to recommend their approval, in concept. The staff was directed to provide the architect with appropriate door and shutter details and to advise him on the restoration of the entrance transom.

Upon the receipt of a revised elevation drawing and the submission of details, a final review of the project will be undertaken by the Commission staff.

902 Spruce Street, Gardner Cadwalader, Architect. The Architectural Committee reviewed the proposed rehabilitation of the rear of 902 Spruce Street and agreed to recommend its approval to the Commission. As drawn, the plans call for the retention and repair of an existing greenhouse structure at the rear of the property.

PSFS Building, 12 South 12th Street, Nikita Zukov, Architect. The members of the Architectural Committee reviewed the revised plans for alterations to the ground floor of the PSFS Building as drawn by Nikita Zukov for Lerner Shops. The revision presented by the architect attempted to follow, in spirit, the original design of the corner entrance as it appeared on an early shop drawing dated 25 September 1933.

While Mr. Bartley found the revised plan to be acceptable, Mr. Levy did not. Owing to a lack of consensus, the Committee agreed to refer the matter back to the Commission without a recommendation.

DEMOLITIONS

325 Lombard Street. Linda Harris of St. Peter's School and Jay Pattison, Architect, appeared before the Architectural Committee to request permission to demolish the historically certified building at 325 Lombard Street to allow for the construction of a new addition to the adjoining school building.

While 325 Lombard Street has been employed by the school for classroom use, it does not meet code requirements been declared unsafe for continued use.

Built c. 1826 and certified as part of a cluster of four houses, 325 Lombard Street now stands alone, its residential neighbors having been demolished.

Owing to the building's lack of street context, its unsafe condition and the school's need for additional classroom space, the Committee agreed to recommend that the Commission allow its demolition.

PLAQUES

239 Christian Street. The Committee reviewed the owner's application for a plaque for 239 Christian Street and agreed to recommend that a plaque not be issued for display on this building. Plans for the rehabilitation of the building were not submitted to the Commission for review before work on the property was begun. As a result, several inappropriate changes appear to the house. These include the following:

1. the installation of a new, inappropriate wood door;
2. the installation of large light window sash;
3. repointing of the brick with Portland cement;
4. the introduction of a new door and door frame at the entrance to the alley.

In addition, the building appears to have originally had shutters on all three floors as evidenced by hardware on the building facade.

227 Pine Street. The Committee recommends that the Commission not award a plaque to 227 Pine Street at this time. In addition to the inappropriate louvered shutters hung at all three floors and projecting window air conditioners, the Committee noted that the transom light over the entrance door had not been restored and that an inappropriate iron railing had been installed. For these reasons, a plaque cannot be awarded to 227 Pine Street.

214 Spruce Street. Mr. Bartley agreed to inspect 214 Spruce Street to determine its eligibility for a Certified Restored plaque.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:00 P. M.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Siemiontkowski
Architectural Historian