

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

Arlene Matzkin, Chairwoman

**Commission Conference Room
Suite 1301, 1401 Arch Street**

27 July 1992

Present

Arlene Matzkin, AIA, Chairperson
Herbert W. Levy, FAIA
William Cornell, P.E., Carpenters' Company of Philadelphia

Richard Tyler, Ph.D., Historic Preservation Officer
Randal Baron, Preservation Planner
Sally Elk, Historic Research Technician
Daniel W. Simcox, Executive Secretary

Also

Sherman Aronson, Dan Peter Kopple & Associates
Ken Kauffman, WJE
Bryce Turner, D.I. Design
Edward Bell, Phoenix Design
Lisa Armstrong, Armstrong Kaulbach Architects
Brook Gardner and James Ruckman, Gardner/Fox Associates
Joyce Halley and Barbara Auwarter, Frankford United Neighbors CDC, Frankford Preservation
Philip Ivory, Voith & Mactavish Architects
Deborah Rouse, Temple University

Approval in Concept

Vesper Boat Club, # 10 Boat House Row

Architect Lisa Armstrong presented plans to alter an unsympathetic 1950s addition to the Vesper Boat House and to construct a new, neo-Victorian addition. The success of Vesper, which has produced more Olympians than any other boathouse, has been accompanied by an increase in the number of women in the club. The proposed neo-Victorian addition will provide adequate facilities for the women of the club, including a locker room, as well as a new entrance for all Vesper members.

On the river side, the proposed addition features a gable which will double the facade by matching the size and shape of an existing gable. Together, the two balance a larger gable of the adjoining Malta Boat House. The new gable also will feature a clock, a desired amenity lacking along Boat House Row. The transition from the historic building to the new alteration will be marked by a subtle pattern change in the roof shingles. The north elevation will feature a three-story gable end covered with wooden shingles. The east elevation will gain a new entrance and an entrance stair capped by a metal and glass turret.

The Committee made several modest suggestions. It recommended changing a door to the porch from an unattractive, one-hour rated door to a simple wooden door. Though not highly visible because of the porch roof, the rated door is unattractive and undesirable if not required by Code. Next, Mr. Levy suggested revising the skylight design to make the ribs more visible. Ms. Matzkin also suggested consideration of the

use of copper for the ribs of the turret.

The Committee enthusiastically recommended approval in concept of this project and commended the architects for the design and renderings of the Vesper Boat House.

Approval

Thirtieth Street Station, 30th & Market Streets: Project architect Sherman Aronson presented plans of the proposed restoration of the interior of this landmark constructed for the Pennsylvania Railroad from 1929-1934. The plans have been approved by the National Park Service as part of an application through the federal tax credit program. They also have been examined by Richard Tyler during the design process. The plans entail restoration of the public spaces and the establishment of a market in the south concourse. A subway entrance in the western corridor will be filled with Tennessee marble to match the existing. Further, light fixtures designed with vents will be restored and re-fit for air conditioning. Throughout, the architects intend to highlight the subtle elegance of the station.

Following an overview of the general layout, Mr. Aronson focused on the south arcade and concourse, which will be used as a market of independent merchants. The architects have drafted tenant design criteria which will evoke the official Pennsylvania Railroad through the use of its official colors of burgundy and gold. The architects hope to maintain a certain consistency in design, in contrast a food court. The market is intended to provide fresh food for urban residents using public transportation as well as for the residents of West Philadelphia; short-term parking will be available. Individual merchants will use existing storefronts and sign boards which have been cleaned and restored. In front of stores, each merchant will have a refrigerated deli case. The cases will be uniform in design and leased to the vendors. Pylons with wooden signs will bookend the cases. Three kiosk frameworks within the south arcade have been designed using several types of marble and brass. Vendors will build stands within these kiosks.

Mr. Cornell expressed concern with the impact of the proposed use on the materials and questioned the plans for maintenance. Mr. Aronson noted that he will provide AMTRAK with thorough guidelines for maintaining the varied surfaces throughout the station. *Mr. Aronson indicated that he would provide a copy of these guidelines for the Historical Commission files.* The applicants also explained that most of the food preparation will occur behind the storefronts and that an existing service corridor will be used for garbage disposal. Any exhaust will connect to an existing vent system that discharges at the roof. Mr. Aronson stressed that the use of this area as a Market, instead of a food court with fast-food vendors, would limit considerably the need for exhaust.

The Committee recommended approval of this proposal.

Thirtieth Street Station - New Coffee Stand, 30th & Market Streets: Following the preceding presentation, the Committee reviewed plans for one specific merchant, the Bucks County Coffee and Nut Company. The coffee stand will be made of several colors of marble, granite and brass.

The Committee recommended approval of this specific proposal.

Approval (continued)

314 S. Tenth Street

Edward Bell presented plans to alter this 1837 rowhouse. His plans include cornice repairs and new shutters. This proposal also entails the construction of a new brick wall to provide some privacy at one end of a garden. The garden wall will incorporate an existing iron fence. The Washington Square West Project Area Committee has approved these plans.

The Committee recommended approval of this project.

Harvey Rowland House, 4501 Fisher's Lane

Randal Baron provided background information for this proposal. In 1990, the Historical Commission designated this 18th century residence with later additions and Gothic Revival ornamentation. The owner consented in writing. Within the following year, however, he undertook considerable alterations without a permit, including: the removal of a decorative bargeboard, the installation of pale blue vinyl siding, red vinyl shutters and vinyl cladding of the dormers. In response to the owner's application to approve this work undertaken without a permit, the Architectural Committee and Historical Commission disapproved his request and insisted on the restoration of the features. The alterations significantly detracted from the character of the building. The owner appealed this decision to the Board of Licenses and Inspections Review. That hearing has been postponed at the owner's request, because a third party has expressed interest in purchasing the property and working out a compromise with the Historical Commission. Gardner/Fox Architects have been retained by this third party to explore the possibility of its reuse as a group-care facility for mentally handicapped children. Lawyers representing the various parties have explained that the sale is contingent upon approval of a compromise design.

Gardner/Fox submitted plans to restore the Rowland House, with the exception of the roof, and to construct a large new addition. The blue siding, red vinyl shutters and cladding would be removed. Wooden shutters and the bargeboard would be restored. The asphalt shingle roof will remain. The proposed addition will extend from the rear of the house. Somewhat narrower than the house it will not be visible from the primary elevation; it will, however, be visible from Ramona Avenue though partially hidden by existing vegetation and a fence.

The Committee expressed its general approval of this proposal, which will restore an uncommon historic resource that had been severely compromised. Mr. Levy objected to the proposed 6/6 windows with snap-in muntins in the new addition. He recommended a contemporary window, perhaps a 1/1. Ms. Matzkin recommended that the architect revise the design of the railing proposed for the stair tower.

Joyce Halley, representing Frankford United Neighbors CDC and the Frankford Preservation Fund, expressed the community's opposition to the earlier, unsympathetic alterations to this important neighborhood landmark. She asked several questions to confirm that the Rowland House will be restored. The Committee confirmed that the only feature that will not be restored is the roof; the recently installed asphalt shingle roof may last only 25 years.

Mr. Baron noted that the ruin of the barn to the rear of the property will be incorporated into a recreation area for the children. He stressed that this proposal represented a great improvement over the present conditions.

Disapproval

College Hall at Temple University, 1801-1835 N. Broad Street

Temple University has submitted plans for final approval for the rehabilitation of the exterior of College Hall. Recently, the University installed a chiller system in the basement that will serve much of the campus. The Committee and Commission previously approved in concept plans that included construction of an entrance addition to the rear of the building, removal of a fire escape and the installation of new windows. The conceptual approval included aluminum replacement windows on the sides and rear with wooden windows on the front.

Temple has submitted plans which depict aluminum, awning-type windows on the front with an applied muntin. The architect has achieved a good match of molding detail for the panning. However, the weight of the double-glazing has led him to propose an awning type window, instead of double hung.

Mr. Baron informed the Committee that, owing to the funding of this project by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the project is subject to review by the Bureau for Historic Preservation. The BHP sent a letter to the University requiring either restoration of the existing wood windows or replacement in kind in wood for the whole building. It asked the University to survey existing window conditions.

Mr. Levy suggested the Committee defer to the BHP on this state project. The applicants, however, pressed for the Committee's independent judgement. They expressed concern that if the Committee did not offer clear direction, one way or the other, that this project could spin endlessly and eventually die of its own weight. Mr. Ivory asked whether the Committee specifically objected to the proposed replacement of wood with metal or if the problem is the replacement window's profile.

Though Mr. Cornell maintained that all of the windows should remain wood, the other two members acceded to a compromise of allowing metal replacements on the side and rear of the building. While Mr. Levy urged the retention of wood windows on the Broad Street elevation, particularly noting the significant proportional difference between the existing and the proposed replacement windows. Ms. Matzkin noted that the profile was not bad and that only the sill proportion was off. Mr. Levy suggested opening the sash box to add weight; he recommended the applicants ask Pennsylvania Department of General Services for details of Governor's Office project in Harrisburg, where larger windows remain operable following a similar weight adjustment. *Though reluctant, the Committee recommended approval of metal replacements on the side and rear, with wood windows remaining on the Broad Street facade.*

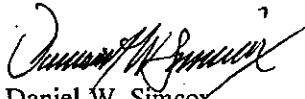
The Committee also discussed a proposal to install window bars for security. The drawings depicted thin, decorative iron bars. Mr. Tyler suggested simpler, straight bars on the inside of the windows. Ms. Rouse expressed the University's preference for exterior bars as a more effective deterrent. Mr. Levy suggested installing bars on the exterior until the building is occupied, then moving them to the interior. Ms. Rouse cast doubt on the likelihood that the University would want to pay for two installations; she also questioned the idea of fabricating decorative bars, then moving them inside where they would not be visible. She requested approval of the original design. *The Committee recommended approval of the original window bar design.*

As a general remark, Mr. Baron suggested that this building, along with the Baptist Temple, are the original buildings of Temple University. College Hall is the "Old Main" of the University. Given the significance of this image on Broad Street, it is important to retain the integrity of this street frontage.

The Committee recommended disapproval of the proposal as submitted. The Committee consensus remained to approve a proposal for metal replacements on the side with wood restored or replaced in the front. Regarding the proposed window bars, the Committee recommended approval of the decorative iron bars.

The Committee adjourned at 4:30 p.m. The next meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission is scheduled for 12 August 1992, in Room 401 City Hall, the City Council Caucus Room.

Respectfully submitted,



Daniel W. Simcox,
Executive Secretary