

**THE MINUTES OF THE 428th STATED MEETING OF THE
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION
8 April 1998**

**Conversation Hall, Room 201, City Hall
Wayne S. Spilove, Chair**

Present

Wayne S. Spilove, Chair
David Brownlee, Ph.D.
Joseph James, Deputy Director, Department of Public Property
Carol Lawrence
Edward McLaughlin, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Licenses
and Inspections
Shelly Merhige, Office of City Council President
Stephen Mullin, Director and City Representative, Department of
Commerce
Michael Sklaroff, Esq.
Robert Thomas
Dennis P. Ward III
Caroline Wischmann
Scott Wilds, Assistant Director for Housing, Office of Housing
and Community Development
Stephanie G. Wolf, Ph.D., Vice Chair

Richard Tyler, Historic Preservation Officer
Randal Baron, Assistant Historic Preservation Officer
R. Scott Jacob, Executive Secretary to the Commission
Kristin Fetzner, Historic Preservation Planner
Elizabeth Harvey, Historic Preservation Planner

Mark Zecca, Esq., Deputy City Solicitor

Also

Edward Lane, DataFac, Inc., Architects
Brion Lipshutz, Gould Evans Architects
Allison Kelsey, Preservation Alliance
Lenore Millhollen, Center City Residents Association (CCRA)
Judith Eden, CCRA
Margaret MacLaren-Ulrich, CCRA
Warren E. Huff, City Planning Commission

Stephanie G. Wolf, Vice Chair, recognized the presence of a quorum and called the 428th Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission to order at 10:10 A.M.

MINUTES of the 427th 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 427th Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission

held on 11 March 1998, Wayne S. Spilove, Chair.

Mr. Sklaroff requested clarification regarding the minute for the proposed rear addition and alterations to 310 Delancey Street. Commission members and staff confirmed that the minute accurately details the Commission's action concerning that application.

Architectural Committee Report, 31 March 1998, Robert Thomas, Chair.

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

401 North Broad Street

Nathan Jacobs, Owner

Edward Lane, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1929-31

PROPOSAL: Ground and 3rd floor vents, rooftop HVAC

Architectural Committee Recommendation: approval of rooftop HVAC units, the third-floor louvers, and removal of the post office storefront and installation of dark-painted louvers behind a dark-painted mesh grill to match the grills on neighboring windows, with staff to review and approve the paint color.

Mr. Thomas explained that this proposal calls for installing large grills in place of a modern storefront on the Callowhill Street facade of this industrial building, and inserting vents into the third-floor windows. In addition, the applicant wishes to mount five, eleven feet high HVAC units on the roof.

Mr. Thomas stated that the applicant intends to remove the large, 1950s post office storefront window and fill the void entirely with louvers. The plan involves covering the louvers with a metal grill similar to the mesh grills that cover the other first-floor windows on this facade. Mr. Thomas stated that Committee members thought the applicant could install metal grills to match those on the other first-floor windows, but asked that he paint the louvers and grill a dark color. Mr. Thomas added that mechanical equipment on the third floor of the building requires louvered vents and that Committee members thought the proposed vents appeared appropriate for this side of the building, in that they will use the existing 1950s frame.

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

Mr. Tyler stated that staff does not agree with the Committee's recommendation regarding the proposed first-floor vents and metal grill, which he cited as not in conformance with the guidelines for storefronts as set forth in *The Secretary of*

the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. Ms. Wolf acknowledged Mr. Tyler's statement, and reminded him that he should make his comments prior to the vote.

200 North 9th Street, a.k.a. 901 Race Street

Yu Man Chiu, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1855

PROPOSAL: Partitions visible from exterior

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval.

This proposal involves installing walls within a second-floor glass greenhouse that wraps the second floor of the building. The walls will have visibility from the exterior. A former owner of the property attached the greenhouse to the building without review and approval by the Historical Commission. The Department of Licenses and Inspections issued a permit for the work probably owing to confusion over the correct corner address. Committee members agreed that the proposal will not harm the building's exterior any more than the greenhouse already has. New plans show the partitions matching up with the mullions of the greenhouse addition.

Mr. Tyler said that because the former owner appeared to have acted in good faith in applying for and receiving a permit that it would not make sense to penalize the current owner. Sklaroff questioned whether in fact the former owner and Licenses and Inspections acted in good faith in issuing the permit. Scott Wild's thought that the honesty of a City employee should not be questioned without some evidence of lack of good faith in this case.

Judith Eden of the Center City Residents Association said that a projection of this nature probably requires an ordinance of city council and that the plans could be checked to see if the structure follows an approved plan. Mr McLaughlin offered to check into the history of the permits for the greenhouse project.

Mr. Sklaroff made a motion to table the proposal for a period of one month to allow the Commission time to gather more information regarding the former permit for the greenhouse addition. Mr. Brownlee seconded the motion which carried with nine votes. Mr. Mullin and Mr. Thomas dissented.

858 South Front Street

Albert and Judi Pestrak, Owners

Lawrence Gilbert, Architect/Applicant

DATE: c. 1810

PROPOSAL: Rear addition, raise roof, roof deck and basement areaway and stair rail

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval of a gabled dormer addition, cedar clapboards on the new additions, roof deck with wood rail, two double-hung, true muntin windows in the

second-floor addition to match existing historic windows, and black metal stair rail all with staff to approve details.

Mr. Thomas explained that this proposal includes rear additions and a deck, both in highly visible locations on this corner property. He stated that the applicant originally planned to rebuild the rear roof slope for the third floor addition, but agreed to comply with the Committee's recommendation to redesign the third-floor addition to resemble a large dormer, with a shallow gable slope, with the dormer's cedar siding on a horizontal plane instead of sloping as in the proposal. Mr. Brownlee and other Commission members expressed concern that the gable-end dormer may still remove too much historic fabric and constitutes an inappropriate addition to the roof line. He suggested a much smaller dormer solution to provide access to the deck.

Mr. Thomas explained that the Committee also recommended using two double-hung, true muntin, wood windows in the addition instead of the proposed double casement window, and that the owners agreed to comply with this recommendation.

Although not proposed as part of the application, the drawing submitted for the proposal also shows a first-floor projecting greenhouse window that this owner installed without a permit. Mr. Thomas stated that Committee members thought the greenhouse window could remain, but that Mr. Baron suggested they at least recommend painting the greenhouse window to match the other windows. Mr. Thomas noted that the Committee disagreed because of the greenhouse's construction of anodized aluminum. Mr. Wilds suggested the Commission deny legalization of the greenhouse window, and asked for the installation of windows that match the historic photograph.

Mr. Thomas added that the proposal also includes the installation of an areaway with stairs to the basement and a plain, wrought iron railing. He explained that the width of the sidewalk will accommodate the new stairs. The scope of this work will correct several other illegal alterations, including HVAC and holes in the brick exterior.

Mr. Brownlee made a motion to approve the basement entry with a simple, black metal stair rail, with staff to review details. Mr. Mullin seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Mr. Brownlee made a motion to deny approval of any wide dormer addition in the roof, and to recommend that the applicant resubmit a much smaller dormer option for future Commission consideration. Mr. McLaughlin seconded the motion which carried with nine votes. Mr. Mullin and Ms. Merhige dissented.

Mr. Sklaroff made a motion to approve the legalization of the greenhouse window. Mr. Mullin seconded the motion which did not

carry. Mr. Brownlee made a motion to deny legalizing the greenhouse window. Mr. Wilds seconded the motion which carried with six votes. Mr. Sklaroff, Mr. Ward, Ms. Merhige, Mr. Mullin and Mr. Thomas dissented.

144 North 2nd Street

Borough Belsky, Owner
Brion Lipshutz, Architect/Applicant
DATE: c. 1810/1860
PROPOSAL: New facade

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval of restoring the facade to its circa 1860 appearance, with Flemish bond brickwork, with some subtle reference to the circa 1910 alterations, windows and cornice, with staff to review and approve details.

Mr. Thomas explained that this proposal entails erecting a new Flemish bond brick facade to restore the building to its appearance of c. 1860 when a Victorian storefront was introduced into this c. 1810 structure. The current facade dates from the turn-of-the-century, and has severe structural problems. The proposal also includes shortening the upper-level windows to match neighboring windows. The current, non-original window frames extend to the floor. Mr. Thomas stated that the architect has used the neighboring paired building as a model for this restoration. Mr. Wilds questioned the Committee's recommendation to draw reference to the later building phase of this facade to show that it has experienced alteration over the course of its existence, and suggested the Commission approve the restoration proposal as originally submitted. Mr. Tyler stated that the guidelines for restoration set forth in the *Standards* allow for the removal of features from historic periods other than the one chosen as the restoration period.

Mr. Sklaroff made a motion to reject the recommendation of its Committee, and to approve the restoration proposal as originally submitted, with staff to review details. Mr. Wilds seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Mr. Spilove assumed the Chair.

1300 Locust Street, Historical Society of Pennsylvania

Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Owner
Nathalie Peeters, Architect/Applicant
DATE: 1902
PROPOSAL: Install glass front doors

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval.

Mr. Thomas, Mr. Sklaroff, Ms. Wolf and Mr. Mullin recused

themselves from the discussion and vote owing to their association with the Historical Society.

Mr. Baron described the proposal to install new clear glass doors in front of the existing metal front doors. The metal doors will remain open during public operating hours. He noted that the Committee and the Commission have discouraged this proposal before. Mr. Baron explained that the Historical Society needs to have out-swinging doors to meet code, and that the current, in-swinging, solid doors do not meet this requirement. Although the applicants could simply reverse the swing on the existing doors without the clear doors, exiting patrons would run the risk of pushing someone down the steps. Mr. Tyler stated that installing out-swinging doors to comply with health and safety codes in such a manner that character-defining features are preserved conforms with the *Standards*. Mr. Baron was asked whether this door constitutes one of the designated fire exits. He stated that the building has two other fire exits.

Mr. James made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Mr. Ward seconded the motion which carried with six votes. Mr. Brownlee dissented. Mr. Thomas, Mr. Sklaroff, Ms. Wolf and Mr. Mullin recused themselves.

1426-1434 Pine Street, Peirce College

Peirce College, Owner

Anthony Miksitz, Architect/Applicant

DATE: c. 1840

PROPOSAL: Addition to rear; ramp from rear leading to 15th Street; new door and gate on 15th Street

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Denial of the proposed stairs and raised door on 15th Street. The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the additions to rear, the handicap accessible ramp leading from the rear to 15th Street, a new door at grade-level on 15th Street if the Department of Licenses and Inspections will not permit a second means of egress from the atrium, and the fence with non-illuminated signage.

This scheme involves constructing a new rear addition, roofing over the spaces in between the rear ells of the several rowhouses, and a handicap accessible ramp leading onto 15th Street. The installation of the ramp necessitates demolishing a portion of the rear of the corner building. A metal picket fence containing non-illuminating metal signage will shield the ramp.

The architect also proposes a second means of egress on 15th Street. Committee members expressed concern over the proposed new door and stairs on 15th Street, and recommended either locating the exit at the rear of the building, or placing the stairs inside and lowering the door to grade-level. Anthony Miksitz, architect for the project, stated that the Streets Department has already approved the stairs. Committee members

explained that exterior stairs often attract vagrants.

Mr. Miksitz described the proposed gate that will serve as the main entrance to the Admission Center of the College. He plans to construct the gate, fence and sign in steel, painted black. The fence and sign will sit at the front edge of a low wall.

Mr. Wilds made a motion to deny approval of the proposal for more windows on the 15th Street facade submitted in response to comments made by a Committee member, but to approve the new location of a door at grade level along 15th Street closer to the rear end of the facade as shown in the new proposal, and approval of the additions to the rear, the handicap accessible ramp leading from the rear to 15th Street and the fence with non-illuminated signage with staff to review the design. Mr. Brownlee seconded the motion. Mr. Sklaroff made an amendment to Mr. Wilds' motion, to allow the applicant the option of placing the door either at the new location, or the originally proposed location with the exterior steps. Mr. Mullin seconded the motion as amended which did not carry. Mr. Wilds restated his motion. Mr. Brownlee seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

1829 (1827-1831) Pine Street

Michael Carosella, Owner/Applicant/Contractor

DATE: c. 1850; altered c. 1950 for hospital

PROPOSAL: New entrance and watertable

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval of the proposal, including the expansion of the entrance by two feet, and incorporating sidelights, with staff to review the design.

Mr. Thomas described the proposal for rehabilitation work to the front facade of the building, including a new main entrance, the watertable and basement grates. The Committee and Commission reviewed this project two months ago, but asked the applicant to come back with more appropriate designs for the entrance and watertable, with help from Commission staff. Mr. Thomas explained that Louis DiGregorio, architect for the project, showed the Committee photographs of the neighboring basement grates he intends to have copied for this building, and that the Committee did not object to the watertable and basement grates, but asked the applicant to adjust the plans to incorporate the historic window placement after the stucco removal.

Mr. Thomas also explained that Michael Carosella, the contractor for the project and owner of the buildings, asked the Committee to consider recommending approval to expand the new door proposal to eight or eight-and-one-half feet in width, with the incorporation of sidelights to fill the added space. He explained that the current entrance proposal appears too small for the triple facade.

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

2004 Sansom Street

John Ciccone, Owner/Architect/Applicant
DATE: c. 1850; glass storefront c. 1935
PROPOSAL: Neon Sign

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval.

Mr. Thomas explained that this proposal involves installing neon signage for the glass storefront.

Mr. Brownlee made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Ms. Merhige seconded the motion which carried with nine votes. Mr. James dissented.

1600 Spruce Street

Patrick Hobson, Owner/Applicant
DATE: c. 1855
PROPOSAL: Convert blocked-up door to a window

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Denial of the proposal as submitted, but approval of a simple door frame around the new window and panel below it.

Mr. Thomas explained that this proposal entails reopening a blocked-up doorway and creating a new window based on the design of the building's main shop window. The applicant plans to build frames around window and another window on the same facade to match a large storefront window that sits between them. Mr. Thomas stated that Committee members recommended eliminating the two new ornate frames around the two windows and the proposed panel below the existing window, and recommended designing the new window to match the old door without a frame, but with the proposed panel to hide the remnants of the old steps.

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

2417 Delancey Street

Milton Steele, Owner
Peter Miller, Architect/Applicant
DATE: c. 1970
PROPOSAL: Enlarge opening in masonry wall; new front gate and door

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval to widen the opening and install a simplified gate and flush door.

Mr. Thomas explained that the owner wishes to alter the masonry garden wall, gate and front door of this Bauhaus modern rowhouse. Although called non-contributing to the district, this building falls within a unique row of buildings with a distinct pattern of solids to voids. Mr. Thomas described the proposal to widen the front gate to allow for more light into the garden, and for moving furniture in and out and to fill the extended opening with a second, smaller gate leaf. He added that the owner would replace the current, non-original, and highly decorative gate with a simple, modern gate, more in keeping with the style of the rowhouse. Mr. Thomas explained that the proposal also entails replacing the current front door with a paneled door, which the Committee rejected in favor of a flush door.

Mr. Tyler stated that the Commission staff disagrees with the Committee's recommendation in that introducing a new entrance that is incompatible in size or scale does not follow the guidelines set forth in the *Standards*. Commission members thought that the small size of the alteration on a non-contributing building warranted approval.

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

1642 Pine Street

Deborah Fleischman, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1830

PROPOSAL: Rear addition; deck

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval of painting the existing third-floor tin wall and stuccoing the side wall of the addition and installing siding only on the rear face of the addition, with staff to review and approve the color of the paint and siding. The Committee also voted unanimously to recommend approval of the proposed vinyl windows without the snap-on muntins, finished to look like wood, or installing true muntin, wood windows on the addition. It also voted to recommend approval of the garage alteration and the wood deck.

Mr. Thomas described the proposal for an addition and alterations to the rear of the rowhouse on Pine Street and its brick carriage house on Waverly Street. The proposal calls for building an addition with vinyl siding and vinyl windows with snap-on muntins. The location faces a block of Waverly Street that contains the fronts of many rowhouses.

Mr. Thomas stated that the applicant and the Committee reached a compromise to stucco the side wall of the addition, paint the existing metal wall of the third floor rear and leave the vinyl siding only on the rear face of the addition, owing to its obscure location behind the proposed deck. The architect intends to wrap the stucco around the corner of the addition to

meet with vinyl trim, with staff to review and approve the color of the paint and siding. Mr. Thomas stated that the Committee recommended installing the proposed vinyl windows without the snap-on muntins and painted to look like wood, or installing true muntin, wood windows on the new addition. The Commission expressed no objections to the proposed addition, deck, or garage opening.

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

2056 Locust Street

William and Patricia Solvibile, Owners/Applicants

DATE: 1930

PROPOSAL: Legalize new windows

Architectural Committee Recommendation: denial of legalization and to request a replacement of the wood, six-light, casement windows.

The applicants asked by letter that the Commission table their proposal until the May Commission meeting so they can present their case to the full Commission in person.

Ms. Wolf made a motion to table the proposal for a period of one month. Mr. Sklaroff seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

1914-1916 Rittenhouse Square Street

Dr. James Fox, Owner

Henry McNeil, Prospective Buyer

Carl Zucker, Applicant

DATE: c. 1957 - Pavilion addition

PROPOSAL: Demolition of entrance pavilion; construction of a four-story addition

For comment only - not for permit

This came to the Committee for comment only and not for permit purposes. The prospective buyer of the property sought a sense from the Committee of the likelihood of subsequent approval of building a four-story addition in place of the domed entry pavilion. Committee members discussed the possibility of demolishing the circa 1957 entry pavilion if replaced with a sympathetic design, which conforms with the *Standards'* guidelines pertaining to additions.

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

Mr. Tyler presented the Staff Report for March 1998.

Respectfully submitted,

R. Scott Jacob
Executive Secretary