

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

**TUESDAY, 23 OCTOBER 2012
ROOM 578, CITY HALL
DOMINIQUE HAWKINS, CHAIR**

PRESENT

Dominique Hawkins, Chair
John Cluver
Rudy D'Alessandro
Nan Gutterman
Amy Stein

Jonathan Farnham, Executive Director
Randal Baron, Historic Preservation Planner III
Erin Cote, Historic Preservation Planner II
Jorge Danta, Historic Preservation Planner II
Rebecca Sell, Historic Preservation Planner II

ALSO PRESENT

John Connors, Brickstone
Mark Merlini, Brickstone
Armen Chowdhury, Stantec
Robert Powers, Powers & Co.
John Gallery, Preservation Alliance
Dane Wells, Center City Residents Association
Darwin Beauvais, Esq., Zarwin Baum, P.C.
Mary Tracy, Society Hill Civic Association and Scenic America
Alex Walker, Stonehenge Advisors, Inc.
Nancy Hughes, Stonehenge Advisors, Inc.
Lawrence Meehan, Hopkinson House
Jim Campbell, Campbell-Thomas & Co. Architects
David Hess, Posel Enterprises
Frank Rapisarda, Tackett & Co.
Joe Polisano, Polisano Construction Services
Jeff Davidson, Versailles
William Schwartz

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Hawkins called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Meses. Gutterman and Stein and Messrs. Cluver and D'Alessandro joined her.

ADDRESS: 701-39 MARKET ST

Project: Install signage

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Independence Center Realty, LP

Applicant: Mark Merlini, Independence Center Realty LP

History: 1859; Lit Brothers Store; various buildings, 1859-1906

Individual Designation: 5/26/1970, 6/30/1970

District Designation: None

Staff Contact: Jon Farnham, jon.farnham@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

OVERVIEW: This application for final approval proposes the installation of signage and lighting on the Lit Brothers Building on the 700-block of Market Street. It follows up on an in-concept application, which the Commission approved with conditions in September 2012.

The Lit Brothers Department Store was one of Philadelphia's most important department stores and, with Gimbel's, Snellenberg's, Wanamaker's, and Strawbridge & Clothier, anchored one of the most significant retail districts in the country. The Lit Brothers Building is not one building, but is a conglomeration of mid nineteenth-century to early twentieth-century buildings consolidated into one structure. The architectural firm of Collins & Authenreith constructed the building at the northeast corner of 8th and Market Streets for Lit's in 1893. The complex grew eastward, annexing earlier buildings dating to the mid and late nineteenth century. By 1907, when architect Charles Authenreith constructed the corner building at 7th and Market, the department store occupied the entire north side of the 700-block of Market Street. The last additions were completed during World War I by architects Simon & Bassett along N. 7th Street. The sprawling building faced with brick, stone, terra cotta, and cast iron is one of the most significant examples of commercial architecture in the country.

The application proposes the reconstruction of an enormous historic sign along the roof line on Market, 7th, and 8th Streets. The historic sign underwent many alterations over the years, but stood on the building in one form or another from the 1890s to the 1980s. Originally, the sign was painted wood. By 1910, it had been replaced with a metal screen with painted metal letters attached. This metal-screen sign remained in place until the building was rehabilitated in the mid 1980s.

The reconstructed sign would replicate the material, size, location, and appearance of the historic sign in most, but not all, regards. Unlike the earlier sign, the letters themselves would be lighted, employing an array of LEDs on the metal screen that would recreate the Lit's sign. Moreover, the sign would have the capacity to produce programmable, high-resolution, moving images at the two corners of the building. The sign is designed to take advantage of a recent City ordinance allowing large format signage on this section of East Market Street. The ordinance was designed to encourage investment in and activity on this stretch of Market, which has suffered in recent decades. To qualify for such a sign, a building owner must make at least \$10 million in investments in capital improvements.

The ordinance prohibits such signs on buildings designated as historic under the City's preservation ordinance unless the Historical Commission "determines that the placement of the sign is consistent with historic precedent with respect to such building and the sign does not materially obscure the view of the building's key architectural, historic or character-defining features." The sign appears to comply with the requirements of the ordinance. The placement of the sign would be consistent with the historic precedent. The proposed sign would stand where

the historic sign stood. The sign would not materially obscure the view of the building's key architectural, historic or character-defining features. It would wrap around the balustrades at the tops of the corner towers, but would do so in the same way that the original sign did.

The application also proposes adding facade lighting on Market, 7th, and 8th Streets. The fixtures would be installed on sills at the second and top floors to provide washes of light on the building. The fixtures would not be visible from the street. During the in-concept review, the Architectural Committee and Commission expressed a preference for Option 1A of the lighting among several options. The applicant has agreed to limit his request to that option.

At its September 2012 meeting, the Historical Commission approved the application in concept, with final approval contingent on the approval of an in situ mock-up of the rooftop sign and on the approval of the timing of static and moving displays. A mock up of the signage will be installed on the building for review by the Commission, Architectural Committee, staff, and interested parties on 17 October 2012. Documentation of the mock up will be presented to the Architectural Committee and Commission at their respective meetings.

In addition to the materials submitted for the first review, the current application includes a new cover letter as well as an updated video representation of the building with the sign.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff offers no recommendation, owing to the standard set by the earlier Commission action.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Farnham presented the application to the Architectural Committee. Property owners John Connors and Mark Merlini, architect Armen Chowdhury, and preservation consultant Robert Powers represented the application.

Mr. Connors stated that his team had presented the overall project to the Architectural Committee and Commission at earlier meetings and would therefore concentrate on the open issues, the mock up and animation, during the current reviews. He asserted that the mock up demonstrates that the media mesh is as transparent as they had claimed during the earlier reviews. He also noted that they had reconsidered the animation of the signs. He observed that the Commission had primarily objected to the vertical motion seen in the first video they had presented. He explained that they had prepared a second video, which proposes an animation scheme with less vertical motion. He concluded that they have addressed the two conditions placed on the approval in concept. Ms. Hawkins asked the applicants to show the second video.

Mr. Chowdhury showed photographs of the mock up and spoke about the transparency of the mesh. Mr. Cluver asked if the structure supporting the mock up is reflective of the final structure that would support the sign. Mr. Chowdhury stated that the structure of the mock up is not representative of the final structure. The mock up was designed to accurately represent the density and transparency of the high-resolution media mesh, but not to represent the final structural system. Ms. Gutterman asked about the spacing of the vertical members of the final structure. Mr. Chowdhury responded that the final structure would include vertical members spaced 10 feet on center. He added, however, that they had not completed the full structural design. Ms. Hawkins asked if the final structure would include diagonal struts like those on the mock up. Mr. Chowdhury responded that it would need to include some diagonal bracing. He explained that the final structure will be less bulky and dense than the structure for the mock up, which must stand alone. He added that the current structural module has an "H" shape; the final structural module will have a "T" shape, with one fewer member per module. He also noted that

some of the final structure will be constructed using wire with turn buckles in tension, which will be less bulky than heavier metal members. The final structural will be much less obtrusive than the structure of the mock up. Mr. Chowdhury showed several other photographs of the mock up as well as the video. He pointed out that the amount of motion and especially the amount of vertical motion in the animated images on the signs has been reduced from the earlier video.

Mr. Cluver noted that only the section of the sign at the corner was animated in the video. The remainder of the sign to either side of the corner was not depicted as animated in the video. He asked if the remainder of the sign would be animated. Mr. Chowdhury explained that the sign ordinance limits the amount of signage that can be installed on a building. Therefore, they are proposing to install the high-resolution media mesh at the corners of the building at 7th and Market and 8th and Market. The remainder of the sign to the north of Market on 7th and 8th Streets and at the middle of the block on Market will be composed of a low-resolution mesh that will have the capacity to replicate the historic Lit Brothers signage, but not to create the high-resolution animated images. The video represents the total extent of the high-resolution signage at the corner of 8th and Market Streets. The mock up is the high-resolution mesh. The remainder of the sign will be lower resolution and more transparent.

Ms. Hawkins noted that the applicants have said during previous meetings that the sign is planned to be lighted from 6:00 a.m. to 2:00 a.m. She also noted that, if there is a demand, it could be animated for the remaining four hours of the early morning. Ms. Hawkins asserted that, even if the mesh is transparent, it will look like a solid wall when lighted. It will look like a television screen. The sign will appear like an additional story on the building. It will alter the architectural character of the building. She contended that the City would not be able to regulate the content or types of animation once the signs are installed. She stated that she appreciated the intentions behind the sign to ensure adequate funding for the maintenance of the building, but she opined that appearance of the sign would offset that positive impact.

Ms. Stein stated that she found the proposal “exciting.” She especially appreciated the recreation of the historic sign and asked how often the historic sign would be displayed. She stated that the more the historic sign is displayed, the better it would be for the building. She wondered if the Historical Commission had the authority and ability to regulate the amount of time that the historic sign would be displayed. She remarked that, if the sign is displaying animated advertisements 90% of the time, it will not be accomplishing the stated goal of recreating the historic sign. Mr. Connors responded that the Lit’s sign would be displayed whenever no advertising was being displayed. He stated that they want the sign to generate revenue, but also noted that the Lit’s sign has value to them because they are rebranding the building and will use the sign to imbue the building with a new identity. He stated that people will look forward to seeing the Lit’s sign and will positively associate it with the building. He explained that they are still working with the advertising agency that will market the sign regarding how it will be programmed, but he reported that they have decided that they would like to have the historic sign mark the hour, half hour, and quarter hour. He explained that these types of signs are programmed in 10-second increments and he cannot yet commit to particular time sequences for the historic sign. However, he again noted that the historic sign will be a key element of the building’s branding. He stated that he cannot commit to particular time percentages, but assured the Committee that the historic sign would be regularly displayed.

Ms. Gutterman stated that she is troubled by the proposed sign. She contended that it “is not appropriate for this building.” She objected to the “massiveness” and “opacity” of the sign.

Mr. Cluver stated that the animation is the key problem for him. He commented that the historic sign was made up of fixed letters. The proposed sign is a television screen. They are fundamentally different.

Mr. D'Alessandro stated that the use of the sign including the types of animation and timing of various modes should be better defined before any final approval is considered. He asserted that the historic sign and proposed sign may be similar in size, location, and materials, but will certainly differ in appearance. He added that it is difficult to address the proposal in architectural terms.

Mr. Connors responded to the Committee's comments. He stated that he has been planning for the sign's reinstallation since it was removed in the 1980s. He reported that, during the in-concept review, it was noted that the reinstallation of the sign was even considered during the National Park Service's tax credit review in the 1980s, when the building was rehabilitated. Federal historic preservation reviewers accepted the notion of a new sign when the 1980s rehabilitation project was certified for tax credits. At that time, the reviewers approved the removal of "the deteriorated roof sign" and stipulated that a "new sign similar in scale but contemporary in design may be installed." He stated that it was clearly anticipated that there would be another sign. He contended that the proposed sign would not violate the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and would not set an adverse precedent. He reminded the Committee that he restored this building to its current state. He claimed that he would never "desecrate" this building. He stated that he would not propose anything that would have an adverse effect on the building. He noted, however, that this building is not a museum, but is a "living, breathing" commercial building that must support itself. He stated that City Council has already determined that a large-format sign is appropriate on this building. The role of the Historical Commission is to review the details; the decision about the sign itself has already been made by the City Council. He acknowledged that the vertical motion in the animated sign had a detrimental effect on the architecture and he noted that they had removed such motion from their simulation of the proposed sign. He stated that they would not allow any content that was inappropriate for the building and site. He contended that they have a vested interest in protecting the building. He concluded that the sign would not have a detrimental effect on the architectural of the building, but would have a positive effect on East Market Street.

Ms. Stein sought a compromise. She suggested that, perhaps, the sections of the high-resolution signs at the corner turrets or towers could always display the historic Lit's sign, while the panels on both sides of them could display the animated advertisements. She contended that that would give both property owners and the opponents something.

John Gallery of the Preservation Alliance advocated against a recommendation of approval. He stated that he had several concerns. He asked if the mock up is the same height as the historic sign. He claimed that it looks substantially taller than the historic sign. Mr. Powers responded that he initially thought that it was taller, but then, after measuring it from the cornice line and comparing the measurements to the historic photographs, he verified that it is the height of the historic sign. Mr. Gallery contended that the letters on the historic sign did not extend to the top of the chain link fence backing for the sign. The proposed sign, however, would be lighted to the very top of the media mesh, making it look much taller than the historic sign. Mr. Gallery then asserted that the mock up does not accurately reflect the high-resolution sign. He contended that the sample of the media mesh shown at the last reviews indicated that the LED sections were bulkier and less transparent than the sections without LEDs. He claimed that the mock up represents the sections without LEDs. Therefore, he argued, the sections with LEDs would be

less transparent than the mock up. Mr. Gallery submitted a photograph of the mock up that he claimed demonstrated that the sign, even when not lighted, would be “an opaque wall of glare.” Mr. Connors asked when the photograph with the glare was taken. Mr. Gallery responded that it was taken at about 11:00 a.m. Mr. Gallery stated that the sign will appear like a solid wall when illuminated. He stated that he is also concerned about the final appearance of the structure, which is currently unknown. He noted that the application includes no structural drawings. He noted that the applicants have provided very little information about programming and control of the sign. He contended that recreating the historic sign for a few seconds every quarter hour was not sufficient. Mr. Gallery claimed that the Art Commission had entered into an agreement with the Center City District regarding the programming and timing of the colored lights on S. Broad Street. He suggested that the agreement could serve as a model for an agreement between this property owner and the Commission. He asserted that the Art Commission agreement demonstrated that there is absolutely no reason why the Historical Commission could not enter into a similar agreement with this property owner. He stated that the agreement should ensure that the recreated historic sign is displayed for a significant percentage of the total time. He concluded that a recommendation of approval would not be appropriate at this time.

Mr. Farnham reported that he inquired with Bill Burke, the executive director of the Art Commission, about its agreement with the Center City District regarding the regulation of the lighting on S. Broad Street that Mr. Gallery has suggested several times could serve as a model for an agreement related to the currently proposed signage. Mr. Farnham explained that Mr. Burke stated that Art Commission has no such agreement and does not regulate the lighting changes on S. Broad. He showed an email to the Committee from Mr. Burke that stated that no such agreement exists. He added that, if such an agreement existed, he would provide it to the Committee as a model for an agreement with the current applicant.

Attorney Darwin Beauvais, representing the residents of the St. James Apartments at 8th and Walnut Streets, submitted a photograph showing the relationship of the St. James to the Lit Brothers Building. Ms. Hawkins noted that the Historical Commission protects the public’s interests in historic resources, not private interests. She suggested that he limit his comments to the impacts of this signage as seen from the public right-of-way, not from private apartments. Mr. Beauvais stated that he only wanted to comment on the preservation of the historic resource. He stated that the Committee has indicated that the structural details are insufficient for a recommendation of final approval. He asked the Committee to require such details. He stated that the wrapping of the sign around the balustrades at the corner towers is inappropriate. He asked the Committee to reject that aspect of the design. He stated that the signage ordinance prohibits signs that materially alter the character of the architecture. He concluded that the application is not ready for a final review and asked the Committee to recommend denial.

Dane Wells of the Center City Residents Association stated that members of the Association’s Historic Preservation Committee considered the question of the appropriateness of the sign. In general, they opined that the reconstruction of the historic sign was acceptable, but the introduction of moving images was not. He stated that the Board has not considered this question, but recently voted to oppose moving advertisements on newsstands. He reported that his organization will continue to study the proposal and comment at the Commission meeting.

Mary Tracy of the Zoning Committee of the Society Hill Civic Association and Scenic America stated that the flashing moving sign will have a negative impact of the Society Hill Historic

District. She reminded the Committee that the superintendent of Independence National Historic Park wrote a letter opposing the sign. She noted that Scenic America generally opposes signage of this type. She added that this would be non-accessory signage; it would not relate to the businesses in the building, but would advertise products unrelated to the building. She stated that she would not be opposed to an accurate recreation of the historic sign.

Mr. Cluver noted that Mr. Gallery had raised a question about the density of the mesh used for the mock up. He asked the applicants to clarify whether it was the high-density mesh, or a lower-density mesh as Mr. Gallery had claimed. Mr. Chowdhury stated that Mr. Gallery was incorrect; the mock up was made with the high-density mesh. He added that it is 55% transparent. Mr. Cluver remarked that the Historical Commission minute of the in-concept review includes a claim that the historic sign was used to advertise various products as well as the Lit Brothers store itself. He asked the applicants to elaborate. Mr. Connors stated that the historic sign was used to advertise particular products seasonally as well as the store itself. Mr. Merlini observed that the building included numerous signs, some of which advertised products in addition to the department store. Ms. Hawkins asked if the signs advertised products not sold in the department store, such as automobiles. Mr. Connors stated that the signs on the building historically advertised various products sold in the store as well as advertising the store itself. Mr. Chowdhury stated that the recreated historic sign would exactly follow the color, size, and configuration of the historic sign. Ms. Gutterman stated that the historic photographs show that the sign differed over time. She asked Mr. Chowdhury to identify which period they were proposing to recreate. He responded that they are proposing to recreate the sign as it appeared in 1936. He noted, however, that the contemporary sign that they are proposing has relevance now and will have relevance in the future as a historic object. He contended that this building, which is both a historic landmark and a vital commercial enterprise, must not be frozen in time, but must be allowed to participate actively in its own time. He contended that they should be permitted to develop contemporary signage that takes its cues from history, but is not needlessly bound by history.

Mr. D'Alessandro stated that he would make a motion to "reject" the video signage because it is "incompatible" with the historic building. Ms. Hawkins asked if he meant that he was going to move to recommend denial of the entire signage package as presented. Mr. D'Alessandro stated that he would make such a motion. He stated that he was opposed to a "movie screen" on the building. Ms. Gutterman asked if he would accept a static sign. Ms. Hawkins asked the Committee members to address the application as submitted and not try to separate out pieces that may or may not be acceptable. Mr. D'Alessandro stated that he "would like to reject the application before us including the video." Mr. Farnham observed that the Committee is free to make any recommendation, but he suggested to the Committee that it should bear in mind that the Historical Commission had approved this project in concept with two conditions. He suggested that it would be prudent for the Committee to address the two conditions, which relate to the acceptability of the mock up and the appropriateness of the timing, motion, and changes of the images on the sign. He stated that he perceived at least three issues related to the mock up that the Committee might address: transparency, glare, and relation to the size of the historic sign. He suggested that any recommendation should opine of those matters raised by the Commission during its review. He stated that, although the Committee is not technically limited in its scope, it would be prudent for it to show deference to the Commission and base its recommendation on the parameters already set by the Commission. Ms. Hawkins asked Mr. D'Alessandro if he wanted to restate a proposed motion in light of Mr. Farnham's comments. Mr. D'Alessandro replied that he did not and contended that the animated sign is not appropriate. He stated that the static sign might be acceptable, but he did not want to divide the application

into pieces. Ms. Gutterman stated that she agreed with Mr. D'Alessandro that the recommendation should be for denial, owing to the opacity and the motion of the images. She contended that the sign would be too big and not compatible with the building. Ms. Hawkins asserted that the sign would add "a visual story" to the building. Mr. Cluver suggested that the Committee should explicitly address the conditions placed by the Commission on its approval in concept. He contended that the Commission might ignore the Committee's recommendation of denial because it had already approved the sign in concept. He expressed concern that the Committee's recommendation might be perceived as irrelevant in light of the Commission's indication that the sign could be appropriate, provided the two conditions were adequately addressed. Ms. Hawkins stated that the Commission's approval in concept was intended to allow the applicants and Commission to additionally explore the issues; it did not indicate that the Commission was wholeheartedly in favor of the sign, provided some minor details were addressed. Mr. Cluver stated that he thought that Ms. Stein's compromise suggestion to maintain the historic Lit Brothers signs at the corners was a good one. If the Commission approves the sign, it should consider that suggestion. Ms. Stein stated that the applicants should provide structural section and elevation drawings of the proposed sign.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial.

818-20 CHESTNUT ST

Project: Alter storefront

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Posel Enterprises

Applicant: James Campbell, Campbell Thomas & Company

History: 1880; Horn & Hardart; alts for Horn & Hardart, Ralph Bencker, architect, 1930, 1936

Individual Designation: 4/30/1986

District Designation: None

Staff Contact: Jorge Danta, jorge.danta@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

OVERVIEW: This application proposes exterior alterations as part of the rehabilitation of the upper floors of this building into residential units. The alterations would include the replacement of front façade windows, the rehabilitation of the cornice, and the alteration of the storefront. The upper floors of the building have been vacant for decades. The ground floor, which was also vacant for many years, is currently occupied. The original date of construction of the structure is 1880; however, it was significantly modified in the 1930s for Horn & Hardart with an elaborate Art Deco style storefront and sign.

The application proposes to install new glass into the sides of the existing sign, as well as the restoration of façade elements, such as windows and cornice. The primary proposed alteration would take place at the storefront. The alteration is necessary in order to create a new entrance for residential apartments in the upper stories. The applicant proposes two alternatives. An alternative A, which would place the entrance in the recesses of the storefront, and an alternative B, which would place the door in the eastern-most bay of the storefront. Alternative B would have the most impact on the historic fabric, as well as visual impact.

The Historical Commission approved the alteration of this storefront in 2002 for the creation of a second entrance, much in the same manner than alternative B is proposed. The staff contends that alternative A is a more sympathetic option.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE, 23 OCTOBER 2012

PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

PHILADELPHIA'S PRINCIPAL PUBLIC STEWARD OF HISTORIC RESOURCES

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval of restoration work, and alternative A for the storefront alteration, pursuant to standard 9, but denial of the removal of panels flanking the marquee owing to incompleteness.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Danta presented the application. Architect Jim Campbell and developer David Hess represented the application.

Ms. Hawkins asked the applicant if they were in agreement with the staff's recommendation that Alternative A was the more appropriate option. Mr. Campbell answered that they agreed. Ms. Hawkins stated that she also felt that Alternative A was appropriate. She requested that they focus the discussion on the alterations to the marquee. Mr. Campbell distributed several photographs of the marquee and floor plans of the proposed residential units. He stated that the proposed rehabilitation would bring life back into a building that has been vacant for decades. He specified that the units would be small one-bedroom apartments. He noted that the existing signage niche on the front façade limits the interior floor plan for the residential units, since it only allows each unit to have a single window on Chestnut Street. He explained that it would be desirable to create a fixed window in the niche of the marquee in order to provide better light for the units. He stated that they have investigated the construction of the marquee and niche, and explained that the interior face of the niche is directly in front of interior plastered walls, which would allow for the creation of windows. Ms. Hawkins asked what types of materials are present at the niche. Mr. Campbell answered that the niche is made out of metal panels. He noted that the panels are held by mullions, which would allow for the removal of the outer most panels, without disturbing the decorative elements of the niche closest to the marquee. He specified that the glazing would be translucent so as not to disrupt the aesthetics of the sign. He clarified that the removal would only involve the outer most panels, not the panels with decoration closest to the marquee.

Mr. Cluver noted that the creation of windows in the niche would allow light into the units, but it would also allow light out at night, which would change the perception of the niche. Mr. Campbell agreed and noted that they would install external illumination to counterbalance the light from the interior. Mr. Campbell explained that the concept for the alteration would involve the installation of fixed translucent panes that would be curved to follow the contour of the niche; in other words the replacement of the existing metal panels with an opaque glass panel to match. Mr. D'Alessandro asked if the new panels would be the full width of the existing panels. Mr. Campbell answered that they would be, since it would be a logical breaking point given the presence of a mullion. Mr. D'Alessandro opined that the new glass panels should be smaller and not span the full width. Mr. Campbell explained that the construction appears to be a mullion system holding the panels in place. Ms. Hawkins asked how they intend to cover the floor heights. Mr. Campbell answered that they would use spandrel glass with opaque material to cover the floor breaks. Ms. Hawkins stated that she fears the alterations to the marquee would read as a checker board and disrupt the historic appearance of the niche and marquee. Mr. Campbell stressed that the result would be a unified design, in keeping with the original. He acknowledged that at night the perception would change slightly because of the interior lights from the residential units. He reiterated that they would balance that light with the use of exterior lights at night.

John Gallery of the Preservation Alliance stated that he believed an Alternative C would be more appropriate than the Alternatives A and B. He stated that neither of the proposed

alternatives is desirable. He distributed a hand-drawn plan that showed the creation of an entrance to the new residential lobby through the existing entrance doors. Mr. Campbell acknowledged that they had considered the alternative proposed by Mr. Gallery. He explained, however, that such an entrance would force the residential tenants to enter the building through the commercial space at ground floor. Mr. Gallery opined that his design was a better solution and one that created a more pleasant lobby for the residential tenants. Mr. Cluver stated that the apartment entrance could be located next to the existing commercial entrance, which would not necessitate the alteration of the storefront. Mr. Gallery noted that such a configuration would match the original design and would be a restoration. Mr. Campbell explained that they would like to restore the original entrance, but that it is not possible owing to the presence of an active tenant in the ground floor. He noted that the building has been vacant for decades and that the creation of a residential entrance in the recess of the storefront would reinvigorate the street façade and bring activity back to an underutilized section of Chestnut Street.

Mr. Hess explained that the current tenant at ground floor is a cardiologist's office and that it requires the existing entrance in order to accommodate wheelchairs and gurneys entering the space. He noted that the doctor has a long-term lease, which would prohibit an alteration of the entrance. He stated that the owners feel fortunate to have the tenant and fortunate that the tenant has agreed to Alternatives A and B. He asserted that the owner cannot unilaterally pursue Alternative C because the long-term lease holder would not allow it. Mr. Hess opined that Alternative A is the preferred option and that it would create a very pleasant residential lobby without disturbing the existing ground-floor tenant.

Mr. Danta stated that the Commission has already granted an approval for the alteration of the storefront in line with Alternative B. He explained that, although Alternative B has been approved, the staff contends that Alternative A is a much more appropriate alteration, and one which should be carefully considered. Mr. Gallery asked when the approval had been granted. Mr. Danta answered that the approval was granted in 2002 and that such an approval would not expire. Mr. Gallery stated that the replacement of the metal panels with glass in the niche area would have an adverse effect on the building. He described the niche and the sign as a character-defining feature of the façade. He stated that the light from the residential units would create a chaotic appearance. Mr. Danta asked about the existing finish on the sign. Mr. Campbell stated that the sign had a paint finish. Mr. D'Alessandro restated that the proposed windows in the niche would be too wide. He noted that, simply because there is a mullion system present, the new windows do not have to conform to it. He reiterated that the windows should be thinner. Ms. Stein asked if the reason for the creation of windows was for code compliance or aesthetics. Mr. Campbell answered that the windows are proposed to make the units more livable and appealing to prospect residential tenants.

Mr. Cluver asked about the material of the proposed new door within the storefront system. Mr. Campbell answered that the new storefront would not be a standard aluminum system, but instead a system that would approximate the detailing and finishes of the historic storefront. Ms. Hawkins stated that there were too many unknowns. She noted that the drawings of the storefront alterations were too simple, and did not show enough detail. Mr. Campbell stated that they would hope to be able to review those details with the staff. Ms. Hawkins opined that Alternative A was better than Alternative B, but that an Alternative C had merit and should be considered. She added that the plans of the proposed changes to the niche do not provide sufficient details to understand the ramifications of the alteration. She noted that at night the alterations to the marquee would disrupt the aesthetics of the sign and create a checker board. Ms. Gutterman agreed with Ms. Hawkins that Alternative A is more sympathetic than Alternative

B, but felt that more details were necessary to fully understand the alterations. She stated that the applicant should further develop Alternative A over Alternative B. Mr. Cluver asked Ms. Gutterman if she felt the same way about the alterations to the niche of the marquee. Ms. Gutterman answered that at the moment she would recommend denial based on incomplete information. She stated that, once the details are presented, a more educated decision could be made, but that conceptually it is worthy of additional investigation. The Committee suggested consideration of Alternative A over B for the storefront alteration. The Committee suggested additional study of the alterations to the marquee.

Mr. Danta noted that the application also included the restoration of the cornice and windows on the front façade.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval of the restoration of the windows and cornice, with the staff to review the details, but denial of the storefront and marquee alterations, owing to incompleteness.

1701-15 LOCUST ST, UNIT HOTEL

Project: Replace ramp, stairs, awnings, and canopy

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: AP Rad Venture, LP

Applicant: Frank Rapisarda, Tackett & Co., Inc.

History: 1925; Warwick Hotel; Frank Hahn and S. Brian Baylinson, architects

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Rittenhouse Fidler Residential Historic District, Significant, 2/8/1995

Staff Contact: Jorge Danta, jorge.danta@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to alter the main entrance to the Warwick Hotel. The entrance does not retain its original configuration; it was modified sometime in the mid 20th century. The application proposes a similar configuration to what is currently found at the building. The canopy over the main entrance would be replaced with a new stainless steel canopy. The awnings in the transom area of the windows flanking the main entrance would be removed and canopies installed. The alterations at grade would include modifications to an existing ramp, and the replacement of a ramp on the south side of the entrance with a terrace. The proposed materials are inappropriate to the style of this building. Furthermore, the proposed canopies obscure character defining features of the façade, such as pilasters, transoms, etc.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Denial, pursuant to Standard 9.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Danta presented the application. Architect Frank Rapisarda represented the application.

Mr. Rapisarda stated that the Radisson Hotel chain has redesigned its brand to be in line with its European chain, Radisson Blue. He noted that the existing canopy is not original. He explained that the design concept is to create a contemporary and sleek design that would be clearly different from the historic building. He noted that the proposed canopy is smaller than the existing, and the changes to the ramp would create a more pleasant entrance to the hotel. Ms. Hawkins asked for clarification on the proposed canopies over the windows. Mr. Rapisarda explained that the canopies would be there to provide some light protection. Mr. Cluver noted

that the removal of the existing canopies, which cover the entire transom, would allow more light into the space, not block it. Mr. Rapisarda agreed. Ms. Gutterman asked about the light boxes in the front. Mr. Rapisarda distributed updated renderings of the proposal, which showed a glass railing and several internally-illuminated light boxes of various heights. Ms. Hawkins asked where the railing would be located. Mr. Rapisarda answered that the railing would be located along the outer edge of the ramp. Ms. Gutterman asked about the changes to the canopies at the windows. Mr. Rapisarda explained that the design had changed, and that the proposed canopies were now smaller and thinner than previously proposed.

Mr. Cluver asked if the existing canopy was present at the time of designation. Mr. Danta answered that the canopy was present at the time of designation with the creation of the Rittenhouse Fidler Historic District in 1995. Ms. Gutterman asked how the new canopy would be attached. Mr. Rapisarda answered that it would be attached with tie-backs into the masonry of the facade. Ms. Hawkins opined that the proposed canopies at the windows are too heavy and thick, and that they should not attach via tie-backs, but rather through the sides of the masonry opening. She mentioned the approved Philadelphia Inquirer canopy as a good example to follow. She described the proposal as an extraordinarily heavy-handed alteration to a very handsome historic façade. She noted that sun-shading can be achieved in many ways without altering the façade in such manner. Ms. Hawkins also noted that, although she understands the desire for branding consistency, it could be achieved in such a manner that is more sympathetic to the façade of this historic building, especially when the new elements attach to the façade of the building. Mr. Cluver noted that it is wonderful that the arched-top transoms would be exposed, but that the proposed canopies in front would take away from the beauty of these transoms. He asked if signage was proposed for the window canopies. Mr. Rapisarda answered that originally they proposed signage, but that it is no longer part of the application.

John Gallery of the Preservation Alliance stated that he supports the staff's recommendation, and described the proposed alterations as very inappropriate. He stated that sun-shading can be achieved with drapes, which would not require altering the façade in such an unsympathetic manner. He noted that the projection of the canopy is unnecessary. Mr. Gallery stated that the illumination of the façade had not been discussed, but that he found it to be inappropriate, specifically because no details had been submitted. Mr. Cluver asked if lighting was part of the application. Mr. Rapisarda answered that they propose to install up lighting at the beltcourse on the front façade, which would be white light, not blue. He also added that the installation of the new canopy would include the restoration of the pilasters around the entrance.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial, pursuant to Standard 9.

ADDRESS: 1530-34 LOCUST ST

Project: Legalize repainting of ground floor

Type of Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Versailles Affiliates

Applicant: William Schwartz, Obermayer Rebman Maxwell & Hippel LLP

History: 1921, Frederick Webber, architect, The Versailles

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Rittenhouse Fidler Residential Historic District, Significant, 2/8/1995

Staff Contact: Randal Baron, randal.baron@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

OVERVIEW: The owner recently repainted a portion of the facades of this cream-colored terracotta apartment building. The base was repainted black and the first floor was repainted a lavender-grey color. The application includes a series of paint chips intending to demonstrate that the building was repainted with similar colors.

Generally, masonry buildings should not be painted because the paint traps moisture in the walls, leading to deterioration. In the case of glazed terracotta, moisture can escape through unpainted mortar joints. In addition to the potential moisture problem, the paint colors are not good matches for the underlying terracotta. A possible compromise might include removing the paint from the black-painted base of the building. This would remove the most inappropriate color, but, more importantly, would re-expose the mortar joints of the base, to allowing water vapor to escape from the building.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Denial, pursuant to Standards 5, 7, and 9.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Baron presented the application to the Architectural Committee. Attorney William Schwartz and Jeff Davidson, the owner's representative, represented the application.

Mr. Baron displayed photographs that were taken at the building to show the differences between the lavender grey color of the recent repainting, the original cream color of the terracotta, and an earlier paint coating. He also showed a photograph of the white terracotta underneath the black paint at the base. He showed an earlier photograph of the building, before it was painted prior to designation.

Mr. Schwartz explained that his clients took a paint sample from the already painted base of the building to the paint store to have the color matched. He has provided paint chips from the building for the Committee to examine. He contended that the new paint color matches the previous one.

Ms. Hawkins explained that the Commission has an informal policy which was reaffirmed at the last Commission meeting: when a building is repainted, it should be painted to match the underlying color of the masonry, not a previous layer of paint.

Mr. Baron suggested a possible compromise that would require the removal of the black paint from the base of the building, exposing the cream terracotta and opening the joints at the base of the building to allow moisture to escape, in exchange for the legalization of the remainder of the new painting. The Committee members noted that the repainting extended the black paint higher on the façade than previously, but were not amenable to Mr. Baron's compromise. They were concerned about requiring the applicant to remove paint when the applicant had not

proposed doing so. They did not think that the new paint color was a good match for the cream colored terracotta.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial, pursuant to Standards 5, 7, and 9.

ADDRESS: 1229 SPRUCE ST

Project: Legalize storefront, windows, and signage

Type of Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: George and Valerie Anni

Applicant: Adam Montalbano, Moto Designshop, Inc.

History: 1825

Individual Designation: 2/27/1962

District Designation: None

Staff Contact: Randal Baron, randal.baron@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to legalize as well as correct a series of alterations undertaken to this building over many years without permits. The Historical Commission has, beginning in 1997, had violations and even a stop-work order issued for work without permits to this building. These changes include covering over the details of the dormer and installing incorrect one-over-one windows. As can be seen from the photograph of 1968, the building had six-over-six wood windows and a dormer with an arched top sash and frame at the time of designation. These were altered with vinyl windows and aluminum capping by a former owner, who received a violation in 1997. The current owner has remodeled the storefront and sign twice, both times without a valid permit. The first remodeling, in 1999, added a new stoop and wood storefront. The most recent alteration to the storefront, in 2008, clad the first floor with stone panels that project out from the façade and added café-type windows. The sign has been altered with a larger box, new faces, and large projecting channel letters with exposed bulbs, in effect a new sign. Although the applicant has submitted an approval for a “Street Advertising Device” from 1962, that sign is not the sign that exists on the building today.

The owner now proposes a compromise design that would restore the shape of the dormer, install new wood six-over-six windows in the upper floors and remove paint from portions of the façade. He would reduce the size of the sign back to the size approved in 1962. The proposed sign does not meet the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards because it is too large and aggressively illuminated for this residential building and streetscape. The owner proposes to retain the storefront alterations.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval of the restoration of the dormer and windows; denial of the alterations to the sign and storefront, pursuant to Standards 6, 9, and 10.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Baron presented the application to the Architectural Committee. Architect Adam Montalbano represented the application.

The Committee members considered the sign and the applicant’s claim that it had been approved prior to designation. They agreed that the current sign is a relatively new sign that is not the sign that is shown in the zoning document submitted by the applicant. The Committee members opined that the current sign does not satisfy the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards.

Mr. Montalbano said that he had been discussing a possible compromise with staff that would allow the retention of the storefront if the windows at the upper floors were restored. The Committee members agreed that there was not a great deal of significance to the storefront. They thought, however, that the current design is awkward and not compatible with the historic building in its present form. Ms Hawkins noted that the storefront has an awning that is not shown in the drawings. She noted that the storefront windows are awkward and that the door does not align with the transom.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval of the restoration of the upper floors, with the staff to review details, but denial of the alterations to the sign and storefront, pursuant to Standards 6, 9, and 10.

ADDRESS: 1921 DIAMOND ST

Project: Legalize alterations and undo illegal alterations

Type of Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: The Mansion Lofts LLC

Applicant: Shawn Bullard

History: 1889, Willis Hale, architect

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Diamond Street Historic District, Significant, 1/29/1986

Staff Contact: Randal Baron, randal.baron@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

OVERVIEW: This submission proposes to legalize and modify some of the work that was done to this corner building without a permit in 2006. Two staff members met with the owner at that time to discuss the plans and approve some interior fit out. Without any permits or approvals, the owner proceeded to remove three character-defining metal bays with balconies. The side two bay openings were infilled with stucco, while the bay on the front was rebuilt with a different shape and material. Small granite columns were removed. The windows throughout the house were replaced with vinyl windows with internal sandwiched "colonial" grids. The front first-floor bay window was replaced with a new vinyl bay of a different shape. The basement window and the transom above the first-floor window were infilled with and faced with tile. The brick facades were painted, doors were inappropriately replaced, and the rear yard was fenced in with a concrete block wall. The rear facade was stuccoed.

The owner proposes to restore the three bays in fiberglass with metal balcony railings. He proposes to remove the paint from the walls and repair some of the brownstone. He seeks to legalize all other work.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval of the restoration of the bays and brownstone and removal of the paint, with the staff to review details; denial of the remainder of the proposal, pursuant to Standards 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, and 10.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Baron presented the application to the Architectural Committee. No one represented the application.

Mr. Baron explained that he had examined the illegal vinyl windows and determined that it would not be possible to remove the muntins as the applicant has proposed. They are integral muntins sandwiched between the layers of glass.

The Committee members stated that the bays should be restored in their original materials. They contended that the work that had been done without approvals and permits, that it does not satisfy the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, and that it should be undone and the building restored to its original condition.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval of the restoration of the bays in their original materials, restoration of the brownstone, and removal of the paint, with the staff to review details, but denial of the remainder of the application, pursuant to Standards 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, and 10.

ADDRESS: 1616-26 WALNUT ST

Project: Alter exterior

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: 1616 Walnut Street

Applicant: Deidre Deascanis, JKR Partners

History: 1929; 1616 Walnut Street Building; Tilden, Register & Pepper, architects

Individual Designation: 1/7/1982

District Designation: None

Preservation Easement: Yes

Staff Contact: Rebecca Sell, rebecca.sell@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to convert this 26-story office building into a 210-unit apartment building with ground floor retail and parking and a rooftop deck and trellis, cooling tower replacement, and elevator extension. All original steel windows would be replaced with aluminum windows in the original configurations on all elevations above the second story. On the front façade, original revolving doors and an early double-leaf door would be replaced with single-leaf doors. On the sixth-story west and east elevations, ten windows would be cut into doors for access to ten terraces with mechanical equipment, privacy screens and metal railings. The rear of the building faces a service alley. At the rear, ground-floor elevation, two windows would be cut to create a new storefront entrance. On the rear elevation, seven windows would be in-filled with louvers and six windows with brick. Eighteen louvered and fire-glazed windows would be restored to their original appearances. A small addition of a 27th-floor water tank room is proposed to accommodate the extension of an existing elevator shaft. The masonry exterior of the building would be cleaned and repointed. The Preservation Alliance holds a façade easement on the building.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Denial of the front door replacement, but approval of all other aspects of the application, provided the window details match the existing exterior window details, with staff to review details, pursuant to Standards 2, 4, 5, 6, and 9 and incompleteness.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Sell presented the application to the Architectural Committee. Architects Jonathan Broh and Deidre Deascanis and owner's representative Claude Thomas represented the application.

Mr. Broh explained that, at the main entrance, there are currently two revolving doors at the center, a double-leaf door leading to a basement retail space, and a single-leaf door leading to a ground-floor boutique. He explained that, owing to the occupancy load of the building, it would be preferable that the revolving doors be changed into single-leaf doors for accessibility and egress requirements.

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Ms. Hawkins asked the applicant where the HVAC equipment would be located. Ms. Deascanis stated that it would be situated on the east side of the sixth floor, where the building steps back. Ms. Hawkins asked if the equipment would be below the height of the parapet. Ms. Deascanis explained that there would be screened areas behind which the equipment would be located. Mr. Broh stated that the intent is to have the equipment and screens below the height of the parapet, which is about 42 inches tall.

Ms. Hawkins stated that she has concerns about the proposed removal of the revolving doors. She explained that she understands the need to maximize retail space, but she contended that removal is not appropriate. Mr. Broh clarified that the door proposal is not attributed to retail, but rather egress and accessibility. He explained that the current revolving doors would not satisfy the egress requirement. Ms. Hawkins suggested using the storefront entrance adjacent to the entrance lobby as egress. Mr. Broh explained that, owing to the way the space is configured, such a solution would not satisfy the accessibility requirement because there are stairs that cannot be relocated. Ms. Hawkins suggested that there are collapsible revolving doors that provide egress. Mr. Broh explained that the width of the revolving doors is significantly less than half the width of a single-leaf door. Mr. Cluver suggested changing the adjacent double-leaf door into a single-leaf door to provide an accessible entry. Ms. Sell noted that the existing double-leaf door to the east of the revolving doors is an early ornate door and the staff recommended denial of its removal. Ms. Gutterman suggested installing an ADA button to open the double doors as a means of accessibility. Mr. Broh explained that double doors pose an issue with the Fire Marshal, who prefers a single-leaf door. Ms. Hawkins argued that there are provisions in the code for historic buildings and asked if he researched those provisions. Mr. Broh agreed that Chapter 34 explains those provisions, but they are very general. He stated that he has worked on many historic properties and has confronted this issue in the past. Mr. Cluver added that there is a rear of the building that might also provide opportunities for egress and accessibility.

Mr. Cluver noted that the 24th floor will be converted into a loft and asked if that would require additional windows. Mr. Broh replied that it would not. He added that, on the 6th floor, existing windows would be cut down into doors and there would be no change to the head or width of the openings. He noted that those openings are not visible to the public.

John Gallery of the Preservation Alliance noted that the proposal includes the enlargement of two windows for a retail store on the Chancellor Street side of the building. Mr. Broh clarified that the storefront change will be used as a valet waiting area. Mr. Gallery asked why the alteration is necessary if it will be used as a valet waiting area. Mr. Thomas explained that the line of sight through the garage is inhibited by the existing wall. He continued that they would like to open the wall so the valet could see outside and an approaching car could see through to the garage ramp. Ms. Hawkins suggested the installation of a television monitor and camera to achieve that goal as well. Mr. Thomas acknowledged that that solution would work for those waiting for their cars, but not for the valet and moving vehicles' lines of sight from the street into the queue lane in the garage. He added that they would like to increase the glazed area to open up visibility. He explained that the wall was completely damaged several years ago, it is currently shored up, and would need to be fully rebuilt. Mr. Cluver opined that the existing configuration of the garage is no different from any other garage configuration in the city and that the proposal is not a typical configuration.

Mr. Gallery stated that the Alliance is not in favor of removal of the double-door at the main entrance and agree with the staff's recommendation. He added that it has not made a determination on the removal of the revolving doors.

Mr. Cluver noted that the elevator extension would expose itself on the exterior. Mr. Thomas added that the cooling tower will also be replaced by a new cooling tower with a profile that is four feet shorter. Mr. Cluver asked if the windows would be operable. Mr. Thomas explained the casements would be fixed, but the hoppers would be operable.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial of the front door replacement and rear ground-floor storefront installation, but approval of all other aspects of the application, provided the window details match the existing exterior window details and the mechanical equipment on the sixth floor is not visible from the public right-of-way, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standards 2, 4, 5, 6, and 9.

ADDRESS: 547, 549, 551, AND 553 N 23RD ST

Project: Construct residential building on vacant lot

Review Requested: Review and Comment

Owner: 23rd & Brandywine LP

Applicant: John Loonstyn, Wallace Street Construction LLC

History: vacant lot

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Spring Garden Historic District, Non-contributing, 10/11/2000

Staff Contact: Rebecca Sell, rebecca.sell@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to construct four four-story single-family houses with roof decks on vacant lots within the Spring Garden Historic District. The lots are considered to be undeveloped and the Commission's jurisdiction is Review-and-Comment only. The front elevations would be clad in brick with masonry block bases and would include two-over-two windows. No information has been provided regarding the material of the windows, lintels, or sills. The fourth-story would be a mansard with double dormer windows. No information has been provided regarding roofing material. The rear elevation would be clad with stucco and one-over-one windows. A garage entrance is proposed for the first-story rear. Decks are proposed at the second and forth stories.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff comments that the brick should be a single-tone red brick, the shingles should be a slate-line asphalt shingle, and that the blocks in the base should be larger and more substantial than the smaller blocks shown.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Sell presented the application to the Architectural Committee. John Loonstyn, the owner and developer, represented the application.

Mr. Loonstyn distributed a sample of the proposed synthetic slate shingle. He explained that it is a newer simulated slate that better replicates the appearance of slate. He stated that they propose to use a 52 DD brick, which is a deeper red brick that has been used on other new construction projects with the Spring Garden Historic District. He explained that they propose to use 12-by-24-inch cast stone blocks for the base construction up to the bottom of the window sill. He continued that the sills and lintels would be cast stone to match the base stone. He stated that they propose to use a Pella or Andersen clad window and a four-panel mahogany

door in a stained finish. He explained that the steps would be solid pieces of cast stone rather than cladding. Ms. Gutterman asked what type of railing would be used for the rear decks and if the rear is visible from the public right-of-way. Mr. Loonstyn explained that the side elevation of the corner property faces Brandywine Street, but the rears would face a private alley. He explained that the ornamental railing selection was a copy of a railing type that is has been used in the neighborhood. Ms. Hawkins suggested using a simple metal picket railing. Mr. Loonstyn agreed.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to comment that the proposed houses would be compatible with the historic district, provided the deck railings are simple, metal-picket railings.

ADDRESS: 343 N FRONT ST

Project: Construct residential building

Review Requested: Review and Comment

Owner: George Lovett

Applicant: Rustin Ohler, Harman Deutsch

History: vacant lot

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Old City Historic District, Non-contributing, 12/12/2003

Staff Contact: Rebecca Sell, rebecca.sell@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to construct a four-story, four-unit building with a pilot house and roof decks on a vacant lot in the Old City Historic District. The lot is considered to be undeveloped and the Commission's jurisdiction is Review-and-Comment only. The exterior would be clad in brick and have two projecting bays clad in vertical metal siding. The bays would have casement windows and Juliette balconies and would be topped with patios with a metal rails. The windows would be aluminum-clad casements.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff comments that the brick should be a single-tone red brick and that the first-story height and window openings should be in proportions compatible with the district.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Sell presented the application to the Architectural Committee. No one represented the application.

Mr. Cluver asked if the bays would project over the property line. Mr. Baron stated that they would project over the sidewalk. Ms. Gutterman stated that she has concerns with the varying window types and sizes. Mr. Cluver stated that the proposal does not appear to be in character with the streetscape. Ms. Hawkins stated that it does not appear to be a cohesive design. Ms. Gutterman stated that the streetscape has some variety, but the majority of the window patterns are stacked and in similar proportions; this proposal does not replicate those window characteristics.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to comment that the windows should be stacked and in similar proportions to windows found on the surrounding streetscape.

ADDRESS: 1411-19 WALNUT ST

Project: Replace awning with canopy

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: PMC Property Group, Inc.

Applicant: Joseph Polisano, Polisano Construction Services

History: 1912; Philadelphia Stock Exchange Building; Horace Trumbauer, architect

Individual Designation: 1/7/1982

District Designation: None

Staff Contact: Erin Cote, erin.cote@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to replace a fabric awning with an acrylic and metal canopy at an arched entrance at the Philadelphia Stock Exchange Building. The canopy would be black with push-through lettering and accented with polished aluminum bars along the edge. LED light fixtures are proposed for the underside of the canopy to light the entrance. The photographic rendering shows the canopy fitting within the masonry opening. However, the drawing indicates that the canopy would be notched allowing it fit within the masonry opening but widening once it clears the plane of the building. The two other entrances on this façade currently have fabric arched awnings.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Denial, pursuant to Standard 9.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Coté presented the application to the Architectural Committee. Joe Polisano represented the application.

Mr. Cluver asked if the proposed canopy is notched. Mr. Polisano stated that the canopy would be notched as shown in the drawing. He stated that the existing awning is notched. Mr. Cluver asked if the canopy could be made narrower without the notch so as not to obscure the masonry façade. Mr. Polisano responded if the signage lettering could fit then the canopy could possibly be narrower.

Ms. Gutterman asked why the owner was seeking to change the awning. Mr. Polisano responded that the proposal is the standard for Morton's national chain. Mr. Cluver asked how the canopy will be attached to the building and how power will run to it. Mr. Polisano replied that the existing power connection will be used and that he was unsure of the attachment specifics, but no new structural elements will be needed, such as posts or arms. Mr. Cluver stated that they want to make sure the building will not be damaged. Ms. Gutterman stated that the Committee would prefer that the installation of the canopy is reversible, meaning that it could be removed without any lasting impact on the building. Ms. Hawkins observed that the canopy will be substantially heavier than the awning and will most likely require larger and stronger fastening components. Mr. Cluver informed the applicant that the Committee is concerned with the canopy's physical effect on the building and whether change will be easily reversible in the future. Ms. Hawkins stated that there are probably several holes in the masonry associated the current awning. Ms. Gutterman concurred and suggested to the applicant that the existing holes should be used with the attachment of the canopy.

Ms. Hawkins stated that the applicant should submit attachment details. Mr. Cluver suggested that there will be some restoration required with the removal of the awning and that the plan for the restoration along with photographs of the existing conditions should be submitted. Ms. Stein suggested that the mounting height of the canopy be in line with the transom bar of the neighboring windows on either side and stated that an elevation drawing should show that.

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The Committee suggested that the canopy be reduced to fit within the opening and the attachment to the masonry be minimal.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial, pursuant to Standard 9.

ADDRESS: 2136-42 E DAUPHIN ST

Project: Install signage
Review Requested: Final Approval
Owner: Philadelphia Federal Credit Union
Applicant: Michael McCullin, Fourth River Signworks
History: 1896; 26th District Police Station; John T. Windrim, architect
Individual Designation: 7/5/1984
District Designation: None
Staff Contact: Rebecca Sell, rebecca.sell@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to install signage on the east elevation of this building. Built in 1896 as the 26th District Police Station, this historic building is undergoing an extensive rehabilitation for reuse as a bank on the first floor and residential apartments on the second and third floors.

In September 2012, the Architectural Committee reviewed an application for signage that included a banner sign and pin letters. The banner sign was proposed to be seven-feet-high and mounted flush against the wall and the pin letters were to be attached by three pins per letter into the faces of brick. The Committee voted to recommend denial. The applicant withdrew the application at the Historical Commission meeting in October 2012.

This revised application now proposes to mount an aluminum backer panel with aluminum letters on the east elevation above the second-story windows. An internally-illuminated aluminum and acrylic box sign with push-through letters on steel brackets and steel backer is proposed on the first-story adjacent to the carriage entrance. The total height of the sign now measures four feet. The first-story façade is articulated with a patterned banding of dentiled bricks that horizontally wrap the elevation. The sign is now proposed to be pulled away from this feature.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval, provided only the letters of the banner sign are illuminated, pursuant to Standard 9.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Sell presented the application to the Architectural Committee. No one represented the application.

Ms. Sell noted that the staff's recommendation is attributed to the rendering of the sign that shows the proposed lettering on the banner sign are black and that the face of the sign is a lighter blue. She continued that, if the sign is to illuminate only the letters, and not the box face, it seems difficult to light a black color and not the lighter colors simultaneously. Ms. Gutterman asked if the second-story sign would be illuminated. Ms. Sell responded that it would not be illuminated.

Ms. Hawkins recommended that the second-story sign be shortened to allow for a minimum of three inches between the back panel and the window heads below and the brick banding above and the letters be resized accordingly. She recommended that only the letters be illuminated in the projecting sign face. Ms. Gutterman added that the brackets of the projecting sign should be a minimum of one inch from the checkerboard banding and be attached within mortar joints.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval, provided that the second-story sign is shortened to allow for a minimum of three inches between the back panel and the window heads below and the brick banding above and the letters are resized accordingly; provided that only the letters of the banner sign are illuminated; provided that the brackets of the projecting sign are a minimum of one inch from the checkerboard banding; and provided that the brackets are attached within mortar joints; with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standard 9.

ADJOURNMENT

The Architectural Committee adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES CITED IN THE MINUTES

Standard 2: The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinct materials or alterations of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.

Standard 3: Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.

Standard 4: Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.

Standard 5: Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.

Standard 6: Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.

Standard 7: Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damages to historic materials will not be used.

Standard 9: New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new works shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

Standard 10: New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.