

REPORT OF THE ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Arlene Matzkin, Chair
Commission Conference Room
Suite 1301, 1401 Arch Street
26 November 1996

Present

Arlene Matzkin, Chairperson
Tony Atkin
Penelope Batcheler
Herbert Levy
Suzanne Pentz

Richard Tyler, Historic Preservation Officer
Randal Baron, Assistant Historic Preservation Officer
Laura Spina, Historic Preservation Specialist
Jeffrey Barr, Historical Research Technician

Also

Felipe Schwarz, City Planning Commission
Bob Van Dusen, Russell Roofing
Mike Dunn, KYW Radio
Tom Ferrick, Philadelphia Inquirer
Lenore Millhollen, Center City Residents Association (CCRA)
John Rawlins, WPVI-TV
Warren Huff, City Planning Commission
Samuel Fadullon, City Planning Commission
Douglas Cohen, Kitchen & Assoc.
Kevin Jennier, Hard Rock Cafe International
Ron Lieberman, Design Development Co.
Margaret MacLaren, CCRA Historic Preservation Committee
Bill McDowell, Redevelopment Authority
Suzanne Sataline, Philadelphia Inquirer
Thomas Schweiker, School District of Philadelphia
Kenneth Brinkley, School District of Philadelphia
Diane Perkolup, School District of Philadelphia
Bobbie Burke, Preservation Alliance
Cinthia Knight, School District of Philadelphia
Dmitri Chimes, 2227 Pine Street
John Staneil, School District of Philadelphia
John Fickenscher, BroRock Builders
Ben Miller, Alison Rittenhouse Association
David Polatnick, Polatnick Zacharjasz Architects
Dalia Houghes, 2001-2003 Walnut Street
Steve Oxenhorn, S & P Contractors
Walter Spiegel, Walter F. Spiegel Inc.
Amy Freitag, Fairmount Park Commission

Ms. Matzkin called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

321 Willing's Alley, Old St. Joseph's Church

Bob Van Dusen, Contractor/Applicant

DATE: 1838-1839

PROPOSAL: New roof

Bob Van Dusen of Russell Roofing described the roof and gutter work done on the cupola of the church. All of the gutter work was done with terne coated stainless steel. Ordinarily, the fascia board would have been wood, but the contractor installed a metal one for easier maintenance. Since the hanging gutter hides most of it, the Committee found the different material acceptable.

The Committee voted to recommend approval.

530 Spruce Street

Mr. & Mrs. Bombeck, Owners

Bob Van Dusen, Contractor/Applicant

DATE: 1797; 1842 - rebuilt front facade

PROPOSAL: New roof

Mr. Van Dusen explained that the extant roof has wood shingles. A photograph from the Commission's archives shows a standing-seam metal roof. The owner wants to install a slate-grey asphalt shingle roof. The Committee noted that wood shingles weather to a grey color.

The Committee voted to recommend approval.

1003-1005 Arch Street, The Trocadero

S&H Partnership, Owner

Joanna Pang, Applicant

DATE: 1870

PROPOSAL: Replace air-conditioning unit; repainting

The proposal has two parts. First, the owner wants to replace an existing roof air-conditioning unit which is not visible. Second, the owner wants to repaint the first floor, all window surrounds and the cornice with three colors: a yellow as the base with green trim and red accents. The Committee noted that the owner has selected colonial colors for a Victorian-era building. Ms. Batcheler asked if a color analysis had been performed. Mr. Baron stated that the proposed green is close to a green found on the building.

The Committee voted to recommend approval.

1909 Brandywine Street

John McCall, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1865

PROPOSAL: New windows, doors

Mr. Baron explained that the owner wants to restore the building's two-over-two wood windows and install a wood four-panel door. The Committee complimented the owner's efforts to restore the building.

The Committee voted to recommend approval.

1115-1141 Market Street, Reading Terminal Headhouse

Redevelopment Authority, Owner

Horace Dawson/Hard Rock Cafe, Applicant

DATE: 1891-1893

PROPOSAL: Facade alterations

Ron Lieberman, interior design consultant, Douglas Cohen, architect, and Kevin Jennier of Hard Rock Cafe presented the proposal for the Reading Terminal Headhouse. Mr. Lieberman explained that the owner, the Redevelopment Authority, will restore the masonry exterior of the building. The proposal for the Hard Rock Cafe has several aspects.

On the first floor the entrance to the restaurant will occur at the corner. A brass and copper canopy will project from the corner and a terrazzo sidewalk will be installed. A twenty-five foot guitar will rest on the canopy and occupy the extant niche. All of the windows on the first floor have been compromised by previous renovations. The Hard Rock Cafe wishes to install black glass arched transoms within brass frames and brass and copper eyebrow-type awnings. The Committee asked the architect to study historic photographs to determine the correct position and design for the transom and the placement of the eyebrows. Also, the eyebrows should return into the openings of the windows and not be attached to the facade. Mr. Lieberman agreed. Mr. Tyler noted that the guitar serves as a sign.

On the 12th Street facade new doors will be added in the two southernmost bays and a tile mosaic will be added in a third bay. The service doors are extant. Mr. Levy stated that all of the bays should be consistent and glass should be installed instead of a solid mosaic tile. Mr. Jennier stated that the glass was acceptable and the bay can be used to advertise the merchandise. The Committee also stated that the door in the southernmost bay should be centered.

On the second floor the Redevelopment Authority will restore the wood transoms, frames and windows. The proposal does not include exterior changes for this floor.

The Committee asked about lighting for the restaurant. Mr. Lieberman stated that the recessed lighting in the eyebrows on the first floor will have downlights to illuminate the sidewalk and uplights to highlight the building. The guitar will also have neon lighting. The Committee noted that the historic clock will be restored and reinstalled on the sidewalk. Mr. Levy stated that it will be good to have this corner active again.

The Committee voted to recommend approval in concept. The Committee asked the architect to restudy the transom bars of the first floor windows and the placement of the eyebrow canopies.

129 Elfreth's Alley

Michael Popielarski, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1795

PROPOSAL: Legalize cleaning, pointing

Mr. Baron explained that the applicant had cleaned the facade and repointed the mortar joints without a building permit or the Commission's approval. He noted that some efflorescence occurred between the corbeled beltcourse. The Committee noted that the beltcourse should be rinsed and cleaned of any chemical residue. The mortar compound is appropriate. The Committee noted in photographs that the owner installed plastic over the front door surround. Mr. Baron explained that the plastic is temporary until the owner can install flashing. The Committee approved the installation of flashing and Ms. Matzkin noted that the flashing should be copper.

The Committee voted to recommend approval on the condition that the chemical residue in the beltcourse is removed.

5201 Vicaris Street

Jim Burton, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1869

PROPOSAL: Rear addition

Mr. Baron explained that the Committee and Commission had approved the rear addition of this house. The owner has now changed the plans for the addition and the fenestration on the south and north facades. At the suggestion of the Committee, the owner now wants to enclose the rear porch and have a cantilevered balcony on the second floor. On the south facade the bottom floor will have a door on the first floor and doors on the second floor with a french balcony. The north facade will have french doors on the first floor and a fixed fifteen-light window on the second floor. The Committee agreed that the enclosed porch on the first floor was compatible with the historic building; however, the Committee expressed concern about the pressure of the cantilever on the historic rear wall. The Committee approved the fenestration for the side facades except the fifteen-light window on the north facade. The walls of the historic farmhouse were blank and the large window is inappropriate. The Committee believed that the bareness of the side wall should be retained.

The Committee voted to recommend approval of the east and south facades. Approval of the doors on the north facade but denial of the window on the north facade.

1625-1645 Spring Garden Street, Masterman Public School

School District of Philadelphia, Owner

Thomas Schweiker, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1932

PROPOSAL: New doors

Diane Perkolup, counsel for the School District, and Thomas Schweiker and Kenneth Brinkley, architects for the School District, explained the position of the School District and its proposal for the building. Ms. Perkolup asked the Committee to consider the following when making its decision: that the school does not have historic significance of its own, but happens to be in an historic district; according to the Philadelphia Code the affect of the work must be compatible to the historic fabric except in special cases when literal enforcement of the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards* may be a hardship, and that serious vandalism suffered by the school constitutes a special case. Security of the building and its students is the primary concern of the School District.

The Committee thanked Ms. Perkolup for her statement but emphasized that the building was listed individually on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places in March 1974 because it was an architecturally and historically significant building. It is not part of a city-certified district.

Messrs. Schweiker and Brinkley initially provided drawings showing the replacement of eight double-leaf doors with new metal frames and flush metal doors with a slit type safety glass window. Ms. Matzkin and Mr. Baron had visited the school and inspected the doors with Mr. Brinkley. Ms. Matzkin acknowledged that one double-leaf door in the courtyard and the double-leaf door on the west facade were too deteriorated to repair. However, the other six double-leaf doors are in good condition and should be retained. The architects for the School District then proposed to replace the doors with new wood doors that have eight, small panels. They proposed doors with small panels so that a vandal could not crawl through the small opening if the panel is removed. Mr. Schweiker expressed the School District's concern for security, again stating that vandals may kick out the panels of the doors and crawl through. After some discussion, the Committee and Messrs. Schweiker and Brinkley compromised. The two doors that are beyond repair will be replaced with wood doors that match the existing. All of the doors will have metal plates rabbeted and installed on the interior. The Committee decided that solid metal panels would be more appropriate than perforated ones. Mr. Brinkley noted that solid panels would be cheaper as well. All of the doors will be rehung. Mr. Brinkley stated that the frames for the doors on the west and north facades were in disrepair and proposed to replace them with metal frames with any historic wood details applied on top. The Committee noted that the frames have elaborate Greek Key moldings with fluted pilasters on either side and stated that repair with a dutchman and interior reinforcement of the existing elements would be more appropriate and cheaper.

The proposal also includes covering the decorative leaded-glass transoms with polycarbonate and wire guard. The Committee agreed that the protection of the historic transoms was important and the details would be only partially obscured.

Mr. Baron noted that the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards* state that historic fabric should be repaired when possible instead of replaced and replacement should be in kind. Mr. Schweiker stated that since the doors were already ordered, the School District is going to lose \$60,000. The Committee apologized but stated that the doors should not have been ordered until the contractor had secured the building permit.

The Committee voted to recommend approval of new wood doors that match the existing to replace the double-leaf doors on the west facade and the one set of double-leaf doors in the west side of the courtyard. Approval of the installation of interior, rabbeted solid metal panels for all doors. Approval of polycarbonate panels and wire guards to cover all leaded-glass transoms. Approval of dutchman repairs and internal reinforcement on the three door frames on the west and north facades.

2227 Pine Street

Dmitri Chimes, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1970; c. 1960 - 1st floor alterations

PROPOSAL: Repaint facade

Mr. Chimes proposed two shades of green for the brick and trim for the building. The Committee and Commission has already approved a brick color for the building which presently is painted creme. Mr. Chimes stated that the green color will reflect the vegetarian menu of his restaurant.

Bobbie Burke asked the Committee for its position on paint colors. The Committee stated that it and the Commission have only discussed colors on a case-by-case basis. Ms. Spina noted that the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards* require that the color of a building be appropriate for the style of the building and the district. Since the Rittenhouse District is large and encompasses many styles and traditions, such as the vibrant colors of Panama Street and the more sedate colors of Delancey Street, only a case-by-case practice can be used.

The Committee voted to recommend approval.

343 South Hicks Street

Anna Silver, Owner

John Fickenschier, Contractor/Applicant

DATE: c. 1840

PROPOSAL: Alter front wall

Mr. Fickenschier, from BroRock, Inc., explained that the

corner of the building was damaged by a car accident. The insurance company hired him to patch the corner which he did with cement block. He then planned to stucco or install brick facing on the building below the first-floor windows. He also replaced the basement windows with wood single-light windows. Mr. Fickenscher, after speaking with staff, now proposes to remove the cement block and tooth-in matching brick.

The Committee noted that the paint on the facade is failing and peeling. Mr. Fickenscher stated that the brick will be damaged if the paint is removed and the surface is not in good condition to repaint. The Committee agreed.

The Committee voted to recommend approval of removing the cement block and tooth-in matching brick with staff to approve a brick match and pointing sample.

1801-1803 Walnut Street and 1805-1809 Walnut Street

Hal Wheeler, Owner

David Polatnick, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1896 for 1801-1803; c. 1910 for 1805-1809

PROPOSAL: Rear ramp and lift

David Polatnick explained that a delivery ramp will be installed behind the Allison building at 1805-1809 Walnut Street. A door will be cut in the wall of the one-story 1940s building, at the back of the yard facing 18th Street. The owner will install a lift between the Allison building and 1801-1803 Walnut Street for access to the lower floors of the Van Rensselaer Mansion.

The Committee voted to recommend approval.

2001-2003 Walnut Street

Dalia Houghes, Owner/Applicant

DATE: 1928

PROPOSAL: Roll-down gates

Ms. Houghes explained that she wishes to open a jewelry store and her insurance company will not provide insurance until gates are installed on the windows and door. The building is difficult to secure because the door for this store and the one next door are set in an alcove. The proposal is for one roll-down gate covering the front window and another, set on a diagonal, to cover the side window and door. The configuration matches the set of gates existing on the store next door.

The Committee discussed the gates and other configurations that would be feasible. Ms. Houghes stated that she did not want interior gates. Also, vagrants tend to sleep in the alcove and the diagonal gate will eliminate some of the space. The Committee noted, however, that her plan still left some space available for vagrants to sleep. The Committee asked Ms. Houghes

if she, along with the owner of the store next door, could install a gate that is straight across the entire alcove, eliminating the space altogether. She stated that the other owner is not in the area and she cannot reach him to discuss the idea.

The Committee discussed ideas to cover the housing of the gates. The store next door has a box awning which covers the housing for the front windows, but the housing for the diagonal gate is visible. The Committee voted to recommend approval of the exterior gates on the condition that an awning is installed and retained with staff approving the awning.

The Committee voted to recommend approval on the condition of the installation and retention of an awning. Staff is to approve awning details.

614 Spruce Street

Martha Levine, Owner/Applicant

DATE: 1804; c. 1825 - front facade rebuilt

PROPOSAL: Legalize new roof, cornice trim

The roof and gutters were replaced without a building permit and the Commission's approval. The roofer replaced the asphalt shingle roof with grey asphalt shingles, some trim on the dormer, and the pole gutter with a new one made of copper. The architect asked the Committee for suggestions for the cheeks of the dormer. The Committee studied historical photographs and stated that clapboarding would be appropriate. The architect will return with a formal application for the dormer repairs.

The Committee voted to recommend approval.

Rittenhouse Square Pool

Walter Spiegel, Engineer/Applicant

DATE: c. 1915

PROPOSAL: Restoration

Ms. Pentz recused herself.

Walter Spiegel described the aspects of the restoration. It involves no jets or lights. A new pump and circulation system will be installed with a chase through the pool to the Duck Girl. The movement of water will keep the pool cleaner and will make the stream from the Roman mask a little heavier. Engineers tested the floor of the pool and discovered that much of it has delaminated. The entire sheet will be replaced because patching would not be feasible. Also, a corner limestone piece, which is cracked, will be replaced.

The Committee asked about the color of the floor of the pool. Mr. Spiegel gave a synopsis of the history of the colors and stated that a medium grey would allow objects to be seen,

which may be a safety factor, as well as provide a background for reflection when the spill from the "Duck Girl" is turned off. The Committee noted that the color "medium grey" is very broad and asked to see actual color samples. Mr. Atkin stated that the present light blue clearly detracts from the beauty of the piece.

Mr. Spiegel explained that he is a consultant for the project and is being paid by the Friends of Rittenhouse Square. The Fairmount Park Commission is overseeing the work and Tom Kline is the project engineer. Bill Menke of Menke Architects and Planners is a consultant for Mr. Spiegel.

The Committee voted to recommend approval with the Committee to approve the stone match and the color of the pool.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura M. Spina

Laura M. Spina
Historic Preservation Specialist