

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE

OF THE

PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

14 May 1987

David Hollenberg, Chairman

Present: David Hollenberg, Chairman
Penelope H. Batcheler, Historical Architect, Independence
National Historical Park
David DeLong, University of Pennsylvania, Preservation
Program
John Dickey, F.A.I.A.
Richard Tyler, Historic Preservation Officer
Patricia Siemiontkowski, Assistant Historic Preservation
Officer
Randal Baron, Preservation Planner
Terri Koob, Executive Secretary
Maureen Heaney, Clerk Steno I

Also: Debra & Robert Bondy, owners and Robert J. Pisan, Architect and Mona Driscoll, Contractor, to present a proposal for the facade restoration of the building at 613 S. Hancock Street.
Thomas Hecht of Susan Maxman Architects to present a proposal for the addition of a small projection booth and chair storage area to the auditorium at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts at Broad and Cherry Streets.
Claude Reignier, applicant to discuss the recent installation of aluminum windows and a new door and door frame trim at 1233 Lombard Street.
Neil Schlosser of Schlosser/Rivera/Krumholz Architects to present a proposal for the roof replacement and facade restoration of the Beasley Building at 1125-1129 Walnut Street.
Frank Weise to present a proposal for the addition of a new two-story addition and smaller one-story link to the Morris House at 225 S. 8th Street.
Peter Moriarity and William Brennan of Burt Hill Kosar Rittleman Associates to present a proposal for the installation of canopies, signs and neon trim at Mellon Independence Center located at 8th & Market Streets.
Meryle Ostroff, Joe Abriola and Stan Elwell of Episcopal Hospital to request permission to demolish the Gill House located at Front Street and Lehigh Avenue.
Carolyn Fox, Architect to present a proposal for a substantial rehabilitation of the building at 1011 Pine Street.

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Ralph Heller, Applicant, and William Alesker, Architect, to present a preliminary development scheme to build a thirteen-story tower at the rear of 1912-1914 Rittenhouse Square (McIlhenny Mansion).

Robert Johnson, Jr., applicant to present a proposal for the substantial rehabilitation of 1714-1743 Diamond Street.

Martin Raeff, owner, and Tom Lee, Engineer, to present a proposal for the substantial rehabilitation of 730-732 S. Broad Street.

ALTERATIONS

613 S. Hancock Street, Debra and Robert Bondy, owners and Robert J. Pisani and Mona Driscoll of Kero Chi. Ms. Siemiontkowski informed the Committee that it was the intention of the applicants to restore the building. The scope of the work, as shown on the drawing, includes the following:

1. removing stucco at the first floor
2. repointing bricks
3. reopening door and windows to original size
4. rebuilding cellar bulkhead
5. adding alleyway door
6. rebuilding pent-eave
7. building new steps
8. restoring door and door frame
9. restoring true muntin wooden window sash
10. installing a stucco reveal at basement window

The Committee directed that the cellar window contain two lights of glass and that the top be infilled with a stucco reveal. They also asked that the detail of the window sills be revised and that flashing be added between the pent-eave and the brickwork.

The Committee unanimously agreed to recommend an approval of this project pending the submission and approval of revised drawings.

Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Broad and Cherry Streets, Thomas Hecht, Architect. Mr. Hecht presented drawings showing the proposed renovation to the auditorium of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. The changes include the installation of a chair storage area and a small projection booth. Other work proposed consists of new trim at the existing stage opening, a new picture rail, new carpet, new lighting, improvements to the existing ventilation system and painting of the interior of the building.

Penny Batcheler stated that modern materials should be used in the new work to be undertaken in the theatre to prevent an illusion of historic authenticity.

The Committee unanimously agreed to recommend an approval of this project. David Hollenberg abstained.

1233 Lombard Street, Claude Reignier, Applicant. Ms. Siemiontkowski informed the Committee that work on the building was done without a building permit or the approval of this office. Mr. Reignier stated that the existing aluminum windows were installed by a prior owner.

Mr. Reignier informed the Committee that it is his intention to install windows on the first floor to match the existing aluminum windows on the upper stories. He has already installed a new door and inappropriate door frame without the necessary permits. Mr. Reignier also stated that it is his intention to close and finish the upper wall on the east side of the building between the second and third floors. This area is presently open to the elements.

The Committee deferred a decision on the replacement of three original windows with new aluminum windows pending the results of an investigation on when the aluminum windows were installed. The Committee also deferred a decision on the door frame. The Committee informed Mr. Reignier that a drawing or annotated photograph showing his proposed treatment of the east side of the building will be needed before a recommendation can be made on this project.

The Beasley Building, 1125-1129 Walnut Street, Neil Schlosser, architect. Ms. Siemiontkowski informed the Committee that this building is not a designated building, and that this is a courtesy review.

Mr. Schlosser presented drawings for the proposed restoration of the building. Mr. Schlosser stated that the alterations include the reopening of masonry filled original openings. These openings will be restored with new window frames and sash to match the original design. Several existing ground floor storefronts will be replaced with new storefronts more compatible in design with the historic character of the building. The roof will be replaced with Buckingham slate.

The Committee thanked Mr. Schlosser for making this courtesy presentation and gave its support to this project. The Committee requested that it be informed of any changes in the plans for the restoration of the building.

225 S. 8th Street, Frank Weise, Architect. Mr. Weise arrived late for his appointment and for this reason did not make a presentation to the Committee. Ms. Siemiontkowski explained to the Committee this proposal which calls for the construction of a new two-story addition and a smaller one-story link to the Morris House at 225 S. 8th Street.

The Committee had numerous questions about this project and voted to defer its recommendation until the architect can return and make his presentation to the Committee members. Specifically, the Committee requested an additional elevation drawing of the rear facade of the Morris House and a brick sample for the new construction.

Mellon Independence Center, 8th & Market Streets, Peter Moriarity and William Brennan of Burt Hill Kosar Rittleman Associates. Messrs. Moriarity and Brennan presented a proposal for the addition of entrance canopies on the 7th, 8th and Market Street elevations of the Mellon Independence Center (formerly Lit Brothers Department Store). Indirect and neon lighting of the building was proposed as well as some signage.

Ms. Siemiontkowski informed the applicants that both the Streets Department and the Art Commission, as well as the Historical Commission, have jurisdiction over the proposed work.

Following considerable discussion, the Committee agreed to recommend approval of the following:

1. the proposed canopy design for 7th, 8th, and Market Streets;
2. the neon tracery which highlights and outlines the canopies;
3. the neon sign saying "Great Stores in a Great City" atop the building; and
4. neon stars behind the storefront transoms.

All neon tracery which outlines the building's corner bays, roofline and storefronts should be eliminated. The architect's intention to wash the front facade with indirect lighting was also approved provided a single color wash of white light be used and not a red, white and blue wash as proposed.

Finally, the Committee reviewed a sign for the 7th and Market Street storefront. The members rejected the use of a white plexiglass sign with four foot stencil cut letters. They recommend instead that a neon sign be hung within the corner storefront area. The Committee did not want a variety of sign types and materials. It was suggested that a consistent material and design be used for all tenant signage.

If any additional changes are required by either the Streets Department or the Art Commission revised drawings must be submitted for a final review. Mr. Hollenberg abstained from voting on this submission.

1011 Pine Street, Carolyn Fox, Architect. This submission involves a substantial rehabilitation of the building at 1011 Pine Street. Ms. Fox presented drawings showing the proposed alterations.

The Committee requested detailed drawings for the shutters as well as specifications for cleaning and paint removal.

University of Pennsylvania, Furness Library, David Marohn of Venturi, Rauch and Scott Brown Architects along with Nancy Trainer and Marianna Thomas of Thomas and Newswanger Architects. The applicants explained to the Committee the window replacement scheme which will be phased over a period of time and discussed also the stone restoration and proposed consolidation treatment.

The Committee recommend an approval of this project pending the review of the drawings by Mr. Hollenberg. If additional information is required Mr. Hollenberg will inform the applicant. The Committee also requested the final evaluation and report to be prepared by an expert at NYU with regard to the proposed use of a stone consolidant on the Furness Library. Until this report is received and reviewed by the Committee, application of the consolidant should not be undertaken.

1912-1914 Rittenhouse Square, William Alesker, Architect, and Ralph Heller, Developer. This proposed scheme calls for the demolition of the rear portions of three townhouses on Rittenhouse Square and construction of a thirteen-story residential tower.

The Committee discussed several of its concerns including the following:

1. Rittenhouse Square was historically a square of low rise mansions and these houses represent the rare remaining vestiges of that historical identity.
2. If the Commission allows a high rise building on this site they will greatly increase the sale price of this property and encourage highrise development over the townhouses throughout the historic neighborhood.
3. The tower would be highly visible to the public as viewed from the vantage point of Rittenhouse Square.

The Committee refrained from making a recommendation on this very preliminary proposal. They agreed that this issue should be considered with intense scrutiny and a policy position developed.

Diamond Street, Robert Johnson of Sullivan Arfaa. This proposal calls for the substantial rehabilitation of five buildings in the 1700 block of Diamond Street - 1714, 1722, 1734, 1737 and 1743. Alterations will include the replacement of doors, window frames and sash, and all deteriorated masonry. Mr. Johnson noted that the entire facade of 1722 Diamond Street may require replacement which will be done in kind. The Committee recommended that the condition of this facade be evaluated by an engineer to determine whether or not it could be stabilized with star bolts and preserved.

The Committee requested millwork details for this project and agreed to allow use of a single leaf entrance door provided it is designed to look like a pair of double doors.

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An approval, in concept, is recommended. Additional drawings and information are required before a final approval of this project can be granted.

730-732 S. Broad Street, Tom Lee, Engineer, and Martin Raeff, Owner. The owner, Mr. Raeff, proposes to rehabilitate this c. 1870 Second Empire, firehouse into apartments. The plans call for securing the marble facing to the front facade using epoxy and for replacing all of the windows with wooden replicas of the originals. The windows at the mansard level will be reconstructed to match the original design. On the rear facade existing windows will be infilled and new openings will be cut to accomodate a shift in floor levels.

The Committee recommended against using epoxy explaining that the epoxy is harder than the stone and does not allow for the expansion and contraction of the joints. This could result in the destruction of the facade. The Committee recommended repointing with a lime mortar. The Committee agreed to the fenestration change on the rear elevation. They cautioned the owner, however, that this would probably not be acceptable if he intends to apply for a tax credit. The plans for cleaning the building with steam were found acceptable by the Committee.

DEMOLITION

Episcopal Hospital, Gill House, Front Street and Lehigh Avenue, Meryle Ostroff, Joe Abriola and Stan Elwell fo Episcopal Hospital. This request first came to the Committee at its meeting of 12 March 1987. At that time the Committee requested documentation on the alternative uses that were considered for the Gill House along with the information, plans and uses of the Centennial building explaining why it was necessary to build the new structure on the north side of the building where the Gill House is located rather than on the south side of the building. This information was distributed to the Committee for their review prior to the meeting.

The Committee deferred a recommendation on this project pending a more intense review of the documentaion presented.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Heaney
Clerk Steno I

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