

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

**TUESDAY, 24 OCTOBER 2023
REMOTE MEETING ON ZOOM
DAN MCCOUBREY, CHAIR**

CALL TO ORDER

START TIME IN AUDIO RECORDING: 00:00:00

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. The following Committee members joined him:

Committee Member	Present	Absent	Comment
Dan McCoubrey, FAIA, LEED AP BD+C, Chair	X		
John Cluver, AIA, LEED AP	X		
Rudy D'Alessandro	X		
Justin Detwiler	X		
Nan Gutterman, FAIA	X		
Allison Lukachik		X	
Amy Stein, AIA, LEED AP	X		

The meeting was held remotely via Zoom video and audio-conferencing software.

The following staff members were present:

Jonathan Farnham, Executive Director
Kim Chantry, Historic Preservation Planner III
Laura DiPasquale, Historic Preservation Planner III
Ted Maust, Historic Preservation Planner I
Allyson Mehley, Historic Preservation Planner II
Dan Shachar-Krasnoff, Historic Preservation Planner II
Alex Till, Historic Preservation Planner I

The following persons were present:

Alina Herzberg, Tier View Development
David Lo
Greg Voshell
Jake Blumgart
Jay Farrell
Paul Steinke, Preservation Alliance
Hanna Stark, Preservation Alliance
Richard Gliniak
Sam Katovitch, Toner Architects
Zuoda He
Ian Toner, Toner Architects
Bill Strehse, Tier View Construction
Sara Pochedly, Toner Architects
Tim Lux, Tier View Development
Jenn Patrino, Tier View Development

Dennis Carlisle
Murray Spencer

AGENDA

ADDRESS: 1423 SPRUCE ST

Proposal: Demolish non-contributing building; construct seven-story building

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: K of C Federal Credit Union

Applicant: David Lo

History: 1980; K of C Federal Credit Union; Arthur Basciano, architect

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Rittenhouse Fitler Historic District, Non-contributing, 2/8/1995

Staff Contact: Dan Shachar-Krasnoff, daniel.shachar-krasnoff@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This application seeks final approval for the construction of a seven-story, mixed-use building with ground floor commercial space and apartments on floors 2 to 7. The existing two-story building was constructed in 1980 and is Non-contributing to the Rittenhouse Fitler Historic District. Demolition of the existing building can be approved without a finding of financial hardship or public necessity. The Historical Commission has full jurisdiction over the proposed construction.

The Architectural Committee reviewed a similar proposal at its September 2023 meeting, but the application was withdrawn prior to the Historical Commission review. The Architectural Committee had recommended denial, owing to the height, materials, and fenestration of the previous design. Following that meeting, the applicants revised the material and fenestration of the upper floors of the building, but no changes have been made to the massing or materials of the side or rear elevation.

The proposed building would stand 75 feet tall, plus a parapet and pilot house, in the middle of the 1400 block of Spruce Street (primary elevation) and the 1400 block of Bach Place (secondary elevation). The ground floor commercial storefront is mostly glass, with corrugated metal and red brick. Floors 2 to 7 of the Spruce Street façade feature four bays of one-over-one windows of unspecified material. The north, east, and west elevations will be clad in cementitious siding with 4" exposure and painted to match the brick on the Spruce Street facade.

All buildings on the north side of the 1400 block of Spruce Street and the south side of the 1400 block of Bach Place, except for the easternmost parcel, are within the Rittenhouse-Fitler Historic District and all but one is Contributing. These buildings are two and 3.5 stories tall, except the western-most structure, which is 19 stories tall. The contemporary Kimmel Center on the south side of Spruce Street is not within the district. There is little historically significant context fronting Bach Place; only one building's primary facade fronts this street.

SCOPE OF WORK:

- Construct seven-story building.

STANDARDS FOR REVIEW:

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and Guidelines include:

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE, 24 OCTOBER 2023

PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION, PRESERVATION@PHILA.GOV

PHILADELPHIA'S PRINCIPAL PUBLIC STEWARD OF HISTORIC RESOURCES

- *Standard 9: New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.*
 - o The proposed building's height and cementitious material on the highly visible east and west facades are incompatible with the historic context and therefore the application does not meet Standard 9.
- *Standard 10: New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall 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.*
 - o The proposed building could be removed from the historic site in the future, leaving all surrounding contributing structures intact; therefore, the proposal meets Standard 10.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Denial, pursuant to Standard 9.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:03:30

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Shachar-Krasnoff presented the application to the Architectural Committee.
- Property owner David Lo and architect Zuoda He represented the application.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Gutterman opined that the height of the Academy House apartments does not justify the height of the proposed building for 1423 Spruce Street.
- Mr. Farnham noted that most of Academy House is not within the boundary of the Rittenhouse-Fitler Historic District.
 - o Mr. Lo reiterated that he could see the Academy House from 1423 Spruce Street.
- Ms. Gutterman intoned that the roof deck is not identified on the drawings even though Mr. Lo said a roof deck is planned for the project at the September meeting of the Architecture Committee.
- Mr. Detwiler requested that future drawings include the neighboring buildings on Spruce Street to better understand their relationships with the proposed building. He suggested that the first floor might align well with the neighboring properties, but that that alignment cannot be determined from submitted drawings.
- Mr. Detwiler further suggested that a livelier design, perhaps by adding a cornice at the top of the building, would improve the design.
- Mr. Detwiler stated that the windows occupy too much of the façade and should be "squeezed" so there is more brick, especially at the party walls.
 - o Mr. He responded that the design can be revised to better reflect the Committee's concerns. He noted that a new streetscape drawing can be created explicating the relationship of the proposed and existing buildings.
- Mr. McCoubrey intoned that there are concerns besides the massing, including fenestration and window sizes.
- Mr. Detwiler expressed concern that the proposed building's height disrupts the continuity of the streetscape. Two strategies could create greater harmony between the proposed building and the existing context: Construct an intermediate cornice across the front facade of the proposed building that aligns with existing cornices and/or set back the upper stories of the new building.

- o Mr. He responded that the revised design would include an intermediate cornice at the height of the block's existing buildings and stepped back upper stories.
- Mr. McCoubrey asked how the windowsill heights would work with kitchen counters behind them. The counters would be higher than the sills, blocking the lower sections of the windows.
- Ms. Stein opined that the proposal does not sufficiently reference the design vocabulary of the Rittenhouse Fittler Historic District. Additionally, the glass and metal storefront does not have a design relationship to adjacent buildings.
 - o Mr. He responded that these concerns will be considered in the revised proposal.
- Mr. McCoubrey noted that stucco or a paneled system is more appropriate for the east and west facades than what is proposed.
 - o Mr. He replied that a paneled system will be used on the east and west facades.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Paul Steinke, representing the Preservation Alliance, opined that the infill building at 262 S. 16th Street has a stepped back design and could be a model for the proposed project.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Architectural Committee found that:

- The revised design is seven stories tall.
- The revised design has only red brick on the front façade.
- The revised design has narrow, vertical windows instead of wide, horizontal windows.
- The revised design has little to no ornamentation.
- The revised design leaves the commercial base unchanged.

The Architectural Committee concluded that:

- The proposed building fails to satisfy Standard 9, as it is too tall and some of its design elements are incompatible with the historic context.

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

ITEM: 1423 SPRUCE ST MOTION: Denial MOVED BY: SECONDED BY:					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Dan McCoubrey	X				
John Cluver	X				
Rudy D'Alessandro	X				
Justin Detwiler	X				
Nan Gutterman	X				
Allison Lukachik					X
Amy Stein	X				
Total	6				1

ADDRESS: 2030-38 AND 2040 CHRISTIAN ST

Proposal: Add dormers, skylights, and ADA ramp; replace windows

Review Requested: Review In Concept

Owner: 2040 Christian St LLC

Applicant: Ian Toner, Toner Architects

History: 2030-38 Christian Street: 1903; Richard Newton Memorial Building; Duhring, Okie & Ziegler; 2040 Christian Street: 1870; Church of the Holy Apostles, Shiloh Baptist Church; Frazer, Furness & Hewitt; tower added, 1901, G.W. & W.D. Hewitt

Individual Designation: 11/6/1980

District Designation: None

Staff Contact: Kim Chantry, kim.chantry@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This in-concept application proposes to convert the former Church of the Holy Apostles, later Shiloh Baptist Church, and associated buildings to multi-unit residential use. Of the five buildings on the site, four are designated as historic, having been constructed and altered between 1868 and 1903. Fronting onto Montrose Street at the rear, the Phillips Brooks Memorial Building, to be known as the Boy Scout Building, is not part of the 1980 historic designation.

The proposed exterior scope includes masonry repair and replacement, construction of an ADA ramp, insertion of skylights and dormers, and replacement of windows. New clear glazed aluminum windows are proposed in all locations where apartment units are located, including the church and Richard Newton Memorial Building. The main entryway of the complex adjacent to the Richard Newton Memorial Building is proposed to retain its existing leaded glass, as is the existing rose window at the narthex of the church.

SCOPE OF WORK:

- Convert church complex buildings to residential use.
- Replace windows.
- Insert skylights and dormers.
- Replace asphalt shingles with Slateline asphalt shingles.
- Repair and replace masonry.
- Construct ADA ramp.
- Demolish non-historic one-story addition at rear of church.

STANDARDS FOR REVIEW:

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and Guidelines include:

- *Standard 2: The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.*
 - o The proposed scope retains and preserves the overall historic character of the church complex.
- *Standard 9: New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.*
 - o The exterior scope proposed to convert the buildings to residential use is minimal. Every effort should be made to retain stained glass windows where feasible. Stained

- glass windows which must be removed should be salvaged and stored in a safe location, preferably within the building complex.
- *Accessibility Guideline | Recommended: Complying with barrier-free access requirements in such a manner that the historic building's character-defining exterior features, interior spaces, features, and finishes, and features of the site and setting are preserved or impacted as little as possible.*
 - o The proposed ADA ramp allows for retention of and access through historic entrance doors.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval in-concept, provided a plan is developed for stained glass window salvage and storage, pursuant to Standards 2, 9, and the Accessibility Guideline recommendation.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:28:15

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Chantry presented the application to the Architectural Committee.
- Architect Sam Katovitch represented the application.

DISCUSSION:

- Mr. Katovitch introduced the project and noted that the wall of the former Sunday School building fronting Montrose Street is bowing significantly and may need to be taken down and reconstructed.
- Mr. Detwiler thanked the applicant for a thorough application with clear drawings of existing and proposed elevations.
- Mr. Detwiler suggested that the proposed shed dormer on the former Sunday School building be split into smaller dormers and pulled in from the sides.
- Mr. Detwiler asked about the material of the new windows and suggested that aluminum-clad wood could be more successful at replicating historic details compared to aluminum windows.
 - o Mr. Katovitch responded that the proposed windows are aluminum, owing in part to the large sizes required.
 - o Mr. Cluver suggested that an extruded aluminum window may be able to replicate historic profiles, and that different windows could be used on different buildings. He noted that window details would need to be provided for final review.
- Mr. Detwiler asked about the removal of leaded and stained glass, and questioned if more could be retained rather than replaced with clear glass. He asked about the potential use of insulated storm panels to allow for retention of more historic windows.
 - o Mr. Katovitch explained that stained glass windows with religious iconography are to be removed per an agreement at the time of sale of the building. He explained that the stained glass is to be returned to the original owners of the property, the Church of the Holy Apostles. He noted that the existing windows are single pane, which is not preferable for the new use. He stated that operability is also a factor, as storm windows could prevent operability and natural ventilation.
 - o Mr. Cluver noted that some models which allow for operability are available but are limited in size. He suggested that the existing window color is distinctive and should be replicated with the new windows.

- Mr. Detwiler commented on the proposed triangular dormers and suggested that the shape detracts from the historic dormers of the same shape. He suggested skylights in lieu of dormers for the church building.
- Mr. Cluver agreed that low-profile skylights are preferable in this particular case over dormers, as the proposed additional dormers clutter the roof and compete with the historic dormers.
- Mr. McCoubrey agreed with the suggestion of skylights instead of new dormers in the church roof. He stated that this is a terrific project.
 - o Mr. Katovitch responded that the new dormers are to introduce light into the new third floor being inserted into the church building. He stated that shed dormers had been considered but there is difficulty with the structure of the existing trusses in the church building. He stated that low-profile skylights are already proposed for the Richard Newton Memorial building, so they will look into those as a potential option for the church building as well.
- Mr. Cluver asked about the small section of railing being removed near the proposed accessible entrance on Christian Street. He stated that the guardrail for the ramp does not need four-inch spacing by code, so the visual impact of that railing could be reduced.
- Mr. Detwiler recommended that sections of the railing being removed for restoration should be swiftly stored in a safe location, as they can otherwise get stolen if left unattended.
- Mr. Detwiler asked about the proposed skylights for the Richard Newton Memorial building. He suggested that they are fewer but larger, rather than many smaller openings into the roof, for constructability purposes.
 - o Mr. Katovitch explained that the existing parapet and cornice are high enough to block views of the proposed skylights, but they will consider this suggestion to make fewer openings into the roof.
- Mr. Cluver noted that the drawings call for GFRC replicas for parts of the tower. He questioned if cast stone would be a preferable material. He noted that these details will need to be included on an application for final review.
 - o Mr. Katovitch responded that the brownstone replication will be based on historic photographs, and that they are also working with Ascent Restoration on the tower restoration details.
- Mr. Cluver observed that the drawings call out the use of copper-colored aluminum where real copper cannot be retained. He stated that copper and aluminum cannot be mixed, so the copper should be replaced with new copper where needed.
- Mr. D'Alessandro asked about the historic door hardware and if it can be retained, even at the accessible entrance.
 - o Mr. Katovitch responded that the existing doors swing out, and they will likely need a closer-assist because the doors are heavy, but the iron strap hinges most other hardware can be retained as part of the retention of the historic doors.
- Mr. Detwiler commented that the Committee discussion has focused on many details, which speaks to the overall high quality of the submission.
- Mr. McCoubrey observed a small area of historic slate remaining on a cheek wall at the S. 21st and Montrose Streets corner of the church building. He recommended the retention of this slate if possible.
- Mr. Katovitch asked again about the bowing wall of the former Sunday School building on Montrose Street, and if permission would be given to rebuild that wall to match the historic appearance if it cannot structurally be retained.
 - o Committee members commented on the extreme bowing of the masonry.

- Ms. Stein expressed opposition to the shed dormer as proposed on the former Sunday School building roof. She suggested pulling it back from the end walls so that the corners of the building are visually maintained, resulting in a five-bay-wide shed dormer centered on the roof.
- Mr. Detwiler opined that the shed dormer is too big as proposed but making it smaller or into several dormers could improve its appearance.
 - o Mr. Katovitch explained that these changes to the proposed shed dormer will not work with the interior plan.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- None.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Architectural Committee found that:

- The application was submitted in-concept. An application for final review will need to be submitted and approved prior to the issuance of a building permit.

The Architectural Committee concluded that:

- The proposed scope retains and preserves the overall historic character of the church complex, satisfying Standard 2.
- The exterior scope proposed to convert the buildings to residential use is minimal. Every effort should be made to retain stained and leaded glass windows where feasible. Stained glass windows which must be removed are proposed to be salvaged and returned to the original property owner per an agreement at the time of sale to the current owner. The in-concept application satisfies Standard 9.
- The proposed ADA ramp allows for retention of and access through historic entrance doors, satisfying the Accessibility Guideline Recommendation.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval in-concept, provided a plan is developed for the stained-glass window salvage and storage, and the applicant considers the Committee's suggestions for minor design changes, pursuant to Standards 2 and 9, and the Accessibility Guideline Recommendation.

ITEM: 2030-38 and 2040 CHRISTIAN ST MOTION: Approval in-concept MOVED BY: Cluver SECONDED BY: Detwiler					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Dan McCoubrey	X				
John Cluver	X				
Rudy D'Alessandro	X				
Justin Detwiler	X				
Nan Gutterman	X				
Allison Lukachik					X
Amy Stein	X				
Total	6				1

ADJOURNMENT

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 01:10:05

ACTION: The Architectural Committee adjourned at 10:11 a.m.

PLEASE NOTE:

- Minutes of the Philadelphia Historical Commission and its advisory Committees are presented in action format. Additional information is available in the video recording for this meeting. The start time for each agenda item in the recording is noted.
- Application materials and staff overviews are available on the Historical Commission's website, www.phila.gov/historical.