

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

**Vincent Rivera, Chair
Room 578, City Hall
20 December 2005**

Present

Vincent Rivera, AIA, Chair
Rudy D'Alessandro
Herbert Levy, FAIA
Robert Thomas, AIA
Daniela Voith

Randal Baron, Historic Preservation Specialist
Jorge Danta, Historic Preservation Planner
Karen Gonski, Administrative Technician
Jonathan Farnham, Acting Historic Preservation Officer
Laura M. Spina, Historic Preservation Planner

Also

Jim Nolen, Nolen Development
George Calomiris, William Calomiris Co.
Han Sine, Wm Calomiris Co
Tom O'Malley, Preservation Alliance
Liz Blazeovich, Preservation Alliance
Laura Siena, WMAN
Sean McDougall, Visionary Companies
Jarma Frish, West Mt. Airy Neighbors
Don Ventresca, Green Park Properties
Mike Rampone, Grayboyes
Heather Lutzker, Grayboyes
Robert Vosburg, Elfreth's Alley Assoc.
Robert Cole, Elfreth's Alley Assoc.
Craig Deutsch, Herman Deutsch Architects
Gerard J Fiore, CVM Design
Vic Barr, VLBUR Architects
Linda Simon, owner 244 S 22nd St.
Martin Simon, owner 244 S 22nd St
Nurit Nachum
Stephen Verner, Cecil Baker Assoc.
Robert Powers, Power and Group
Martha Coonley, owner 109 Church St
Alexander Taylor, BRP Development Corp.
Meredith Marshall, BRP Development Corp.
Geoff Flournay, BRP Development Group
Mark Wieland, Bower Lewis Thrower
John Bower, Bower Lewis Thrower

Acting Architectural Committee Chair Robert Thomas called the meeting to order at 9:15 a.m.
Committee members Daniela Voith and Rudy D'Alessandro completed the quorum.

101-21 and 221 West Johnson Street

Owner: Visionary Development Company

Applicant: George Calomiris, architect

History: Nugent Home - 1896; Presser Home - 1913; carriage house c. 1900

Project: Construct three new buildings – in concept

In October 2005, the Historical Commission approved in-concept the massing and location of three new buildings at this large site with three historic buildings in Mt. Airy. At that time, the Commission chose not to approve, even conceptually, the site plan, rehabilitation plans for the historic buildings, or plans for the three new buildings. The Commission asserted that the plans were not developed sufficiently to warrant approvals.

As part of the October 2005 application, the developers proposed a contemporary design for the three identical apartment buildings that will be constructed at the rear and center of the large site. That contemporary design has been abandoned. In its place, three alternative building types are now proposed. Again, the developers propose to erect three near identical buildings. The two connected buildings at the center of the site will be five stories each; the one behind the Nugent building will be six.

Alternative One is very reminiscent of the historic Presser Home. Alternative Two is a Jacobean Revival building that is inspired by the Nugent Home as well as the buildings at the nearby Alden Park complex. Alternative Three is a contemporary building.

The site plan has been revised since the last review. Retaining walls have been added; the parking has been refined.

Most of the work proposed to the historic buildings, for example pointing and roof repairs, can be reviewed at the staff level. The stair tower at the Presser building cannot be reviewed at the staff level. Likewise, the aluminum windows and doors proposed for some façades of the historic buildings cannot.

Staff Recommendation: Of the three design options for the new buildings, Alternative Two is the most cohesive and well developed. Although somewhat historicist, it is generally refined and therefore would not detract from the surrounding historic buildings. Both Alternatives One and Three have shortcomings related to massing, scale, proportion, rhythm, and detailing. Although either might be developed into an acceptable design, neither currently warrants a recommendation of approval in concept. The staff recommends approval in concept of the Alternative Two building, provided the central gable/penthouse on the six-story version is revised; approval in concept of the site plan, provided the landscape design is improved and the park pavilions are modified or deleted; approval in concept of the stair tower on the Presser building; denial of the aluminum windows and doors owing to incompleteness; pursuant to Standards 6 and 9 and Site Guidelines.

Jorge Danta presented the proposal to the Architectural Committee. Architect George Calomiris, engineer David Plante, and developers Jim Nolen and Sean McDougal represented the project.

Mr. Calomiris presented the original as well as the revised plans and provided a summary of the evolution of the project. He noted that, at the request of the neighbors, the new buildings and the parking had been pushed to the rear of the large lot to preserve as much open space as

possible along Johnson Street. Ms. Voith asked Mr. Calomiris to summarize the proposed use for the site. Mr. Calomiris explained that it would be a multi-family residential rental complex. He added that the historic buildings would be restored and adaptively reused and that it was his goal to maintain 100% of the structures and shells of the three historic buildings. He also noted that he would retain as much of the interiors as possible. He further noted that he would endeavor to comply with the standards of the U.S. Green Building Council. He stated that he has not yet identified the replacement windows, but would present the proposal to the Commission at a later date. Ms. Voith asked about the distribution of units in the complex. Mr. Calomiris replied that there would be 38 units in Presser, 22 in Nugent, five in the carriage house (one of which would be the residence and office of the complex manager), 30 units in each of the two smaller new buildings, and 35 units in the larger new building, for a total of 160 units. He remarked that they are requesting approval of two five-story buildings at the center of the site and a six-story building behind Nugent.

Vincent Rivera and Herb Levy arrived to join the Committee.

Mr. Calomiris then reviewed each of the alternate designs. He noted that the Commission staff and neighbors preferred the Alden Park-like design. He presented site sections and pointed out the parking and retaining walls. Mr. Calomiris stated that although test boring have not been undertaken for underground parking, his firm had been advised that the underground parking, as originally proposed, would not be feasible because of the large amounts of bedrock near the surface. He noted that the developer is negotiating for the purchase of a neighboring vacant garage with a capacity of 60 vehicles. It would be rehabilitated and connected to the complex with a driveway at the rear of the site behind the two new center buildings. Mr. Calomiris informed the Committee that the parking ratio would be one-to-one without the adjacent garage. The ratio would increase to 1.25 parking spaces per unit with the garage.

Ms. Voith questioned Mr. Calomiris on the height of the new building behind the Nugent Home. She asked Mr. Calomiris to provide sections showing the relationship. Mr. Calomiris displayed the section and noted that the new building would stand on the low spot on the site. Mr. Calomiris asserted that the new building would not be visible over the Nugent Home from the street. He acknowledged that it would be visible from Johnson Street on an angle from locations to the east of the Nugent Home. Mr. Thomas commented that Johnson Street is fairly narrow, reducing the potential for visibility over the historic building. Mr. D'Alessandro asked about the carriage house elevation relative to the parking to the west. Mr. Calomiris stated that the carriage house would stand several feet above the level of the parking.

Ms. Voith asked Mr. Calomiris to restate the numbers of units and parking spaces. Mr. Calomiris explained that there would be 95 units in the new buildings and 70 in the historic buildings for a total of 160 units. Ms. Voith asked if the site plan actually depicted 160 parking spaces. Mr. Calomiris explained that parking garages would not be included beneath the new buildings as originally proposed because of the problems with bedrock. Mr. Calomiris stated that the one-to-one parking ratio was easily achievable with surface parking only and was depicted on several of the site plan schemes presented. Ms. Voith countered that the site plan on the easel at the time did not show 160 parking spaces. Mr. Calomiris explained that the garages, which are being deleted from the plans, provided approximately 60 spaces of the 160 total. He explained that with the removal of the garages, which had recently been deemed infeasible, surface parking could be added at the backs of the buildings, where the garage entrances had been, without significantly increasing the paved area. The parking would now be double-loaded, not single-loaded. Ms. Voith expressed doubt about the number of parking spaces available with the removal of the garages. Mr. Calomiris showed where he could gain 25 plus 10 spaces with the reconfiguration of the parking. David Plante of Ritter and Plante, the

civil engineer and landscape architect, explained his plans for adding surface parking. Mr. Calomiris stated that the added parking would not significantly increase the amount paving. He would need to add about five feet of asphalt at the rear of the parking lot at the rear of the site along the property line. The added parking would be behind the new buildings, completely out of view of the public. Ms. Voith countered that 20 feet, not five feet, of pavement would be needed. She asked about the depth of the parking spaces shown on the site plan; she contended that the City requires 20-foot deep parking spaces. Mr. Calomiris stated that the City requirement is 8½ x 18 feet, not 20 feet. He also noted that they would not need to add that much pavement because of the space that would be saved along the buildings with the removal of the garages. Ms. Voith asserted that she had always drawn 10 x 20-foot parking spaces on her plans. Mr. Calomiris suggested that they move on to a more productive discussion, but did report that the neighbors have insisted on a large number of parking spaces from the very beginning. He explained that he is endeavoring to balance the preservationists' desire for the retention of open space with the neighbors' desire for on-site parking. He also explained that he had removed the front parking lots that had been shown on early site plans because all agreed that they impacted the views of the historic buildings. He again emphasized that the proposed parking in question would be behind the new buildings and completely out of the public's view. Ms. Voith asserted that the site was small and the impact would be great. Mr. Calomiris reminded the Committee that the site is 5½ acres. Ms. Voith suggested that the neighboring blocks be added to the site plan to allow the proposed development to be compared with the surrounding rhythm and scale. She stated that the surrounding neighborhood is composed of two and three-story houses. Others noted the existence of the large apartment and institutional buildings that bound this site to the north and west. Ms. Voith asserted that "a lot of pressure is being put on this site."

Mr. D'Alessandro stated that the new construction will have a significant impact on the carriage house. Mr. Calomiris explained that his design team had very carefully preserved the green space around the carriage house. They had worked to keep the parking away from the historic buildings.

Ms. Voith asked about the additions to the historic buildings. Mr. Calomiris stated that he was currently proposing a stair-tower addition in the courtyard area of the Presser building. He added that the developers recently requested that he find a way to incorporate the stair in the interior, obviating the need for the addition. He then discussed the ramp on Nugent. He explained that he would restore the rear porch at Nugent, which was lost in a fire. The ADA ramp would be added to the porch. The rear of the Nugent building, which would include the main entrance to the apartments and face the new parking, courtyard and picnic area, would be treated as the front of the rehabilitated building. Mr. Calomiris plans to work with the staff on the porch and ramp design and return to the Commission at a later date.

Mr. Levy apologized for arriving late and asked the architect to explain the parking scheme including the off-site parking. He asked if the off-site parking would be surface parking. Mr. Calomiris explained that the developers are negotiating for the use of a parking structure on an adjacent site. In response to Mr. Levy's question about the capacity of the garage, Mr. Calomiris explained that it could house more than 60 automobiles. Mr. Levy asked about revisions to the current site plan to accommodate the garage. Mr. Calomiris explained that a short driveway would run from the proposed parking lot at the rear along the property line behind the two new buildings to the garage to the north. Ms. Voith asked Mr. Calomiris to provide a commitment from the developers that they would provide the additional parking in the adjacent garage. She expressed some skepticism about the developers' intent to actually rehabilitate the garage. Mr. Calomiris confirmed that the developer would rehabilitate the garage for parking if the overall project progresses forward. He added that the developers will

not enter into a binding agreement for the garage until they have some assurances that the remainder of the project will succeed. Ms. Voith asserted that she was not convinced that the developers intended to provide adequate parking. She pressed Mr. Calomiris to offer a commitment to the parking; she said that she “heard a hedge.” Mr. Calomiris assured her that the developers would provide adequate parking. Mr. Rivera asked about test borings to confirm the existence of bedrock. He suggested that the Committee needed further proof that the underground parking was not feasible. Mr. Plante stated there were no signs of outcroppings but that they believed that the rock was just below the surface. Jim Nolan, the developer, said this area would be too expensive to excavate; he explained that it would add millions of dollars to the cost of the project to build the underground parking. He also noted that contractors had hesitated to take on the job with the underground parking. Mr. Rivera disputed Mr. Nolan estimate of “millions” for the excavation. He stated that the developers needed more accurate estimates for the project. Mr. Nolan explained that he was in the due diligence stage and was evaluating the feasibility of the project. After the review in concept, the design team would return to the Commission for a final approval with a detailed design. Mr. Rivera asserted that he believed that the underground parking would be feasible. Mr. Nolan again stated that they are assessing the feasibility at this stage, not presenting a final design. He stated that the project may or may not be economically feasible. He reported that the rental market in this area will not support expensive construction; it is only \$1.00 per square foot. Mr. Calomiris explained that two large reputable contractors have provided cost estimates; both agree that the cost of the underground parking will be prohibitive. Mr. Thomas opined that the parking proposal appeared reasonable; he noted that additions to the surface parking as described by the architect would be minimal. Mr. D'Alessandro pointed out that the current plan shows significant grading; he asked if that too would be expensive. Mr. Calomiris offered information about the site and explained that the grading would not be significant. Ms. Voith asked if the removal of the underground parking would change the appearances of the buildings significantly. Mr. Calomiris stated that the appearances and heights of the buildings from Johnson Street would not change. With or without the basement parking, they would look just as depicted in the elevations from Johnson Street. Mr. D'Alessandro and Ms. Voith stated that they wanted to review a site plan with the correct number of parking spaces on it. Mr. D'Alessandro stated that he also wanted to review a true contour drawing for the site.

Ms. Voith suggested that the Committee now address the architectural proposal in terms of style. Ms. Voith objected to the penthouse on the taller building, which she asserted did not relate to the main section of the new building. She also suggested that the building was too tall and that the courtyard space between the Nugent Home and the building would be dark and uninviting. She stated that the old buildings were horizontal and the new were vertical. She also asked about the colors. Mr. Calomiris offered to provide a brick sample for the final review. He explained that they had based the color scheme on the Nugent building. He added that the quoins would be pre-cast stone. Ms. Voith again asserted that the historic buildings and site are horizontal, but the preferred alternate, the Alden Park-like buildings, are vertical. Mr. Thomas disagreed with Ms. Voith and contended that the Nugent building is a very vertical building. He stated that the three historic buildings are very different. He noted his preference for Scheme 2, the Alden Park scheme. He asserted that the materials and scale are appropriate. He concluded that the addition of the buildings would not detract from the historic buildings or site. He did suggest that the penthouse on the taller building behind Nugent be redesigned. He thought that the pitched or hipped roof of the penthouse was out of character with the main section of the building. He suggested a lower penthouse with a stepped parapet. Ms. Voith and Mr. Rivera suggested that Mr. Calomiris consider removing the penthouse. Mr. Calomiris explained that the penthouse was added because the neighbors requested that the sizes of the units be enlarged. Mr. Thomas sought a compromise, suggesting that the architect redesign rather than delete the penthouse.

Ms. Voith asked about the layout of the contemporary scheme. Mr. Calomiris explained that several of the units in the contemporary building are two-story units. Ms. Voith stated that the Alden Park scheme was "pallid." She noted that she "gets depressed" when she looks at the Alden Park proposal. She stated that the residents of the Alden Park scheme would not have as much fun in the Alden Park buildings as in the contemporary buildings and therefore the rents would be lower. She lobbied for the contemporary scheme. Mr. Calomiris explained that the neighbors preferred the Alden Park scheme. Mr. Farnham offered the staff's reasoning behind its recommendation of approval of the Alden Park scheme. He stated that the staff is very concerned about the futures of the three historic buildings and had recommended approval of the Alden Park design, not because it was an architectural masterpiece, but because it appeared to be the most viable design that would allow the developers to proceed with the rehabilitations of the historic buildings. He remarked that there are myriad interest groups and that the majority appear to favor the Alden Park design. He stressed that the Commission's primary focus must be the historic resources on the site; the new construction should only be reviewed for its impact on the historic resources. He noted that the staff did not dislike the other two alternatives, but asserted that the Alden Park design was the most developed. Mr. Farnham reiterated that the staff endorsed the most viable design to promote the preservation of the historic resources. Ms. Voith countered that she would recommend approval of "the strongest piece of architecture." Mr. Farnham reminded the Committee that the significant historic buildings have been vacant since 2002 and are in need of stabilization.

John Gallery of the Preservation Alliance asserted that the plans are incomplete and contradictory. He remarked that the massing currently proposed differs from that approved in concept by the Commission. He explained that the buildings currently proposed are larger than those approved in concept. He stated that he is concerned about the parking on the site. He is also concerned about the height of the building behind the Nugent Home. He reported his preference for the Alden Park scheme. He stated that the ramp proposal for the Nugent building is incomplete. He asked the Committee to recommend denial owing to incompleteness.

Laura Siena, the executive director of the West Mt. Airy Neighbors, asked if the plans shown to Committee were the same plans shown to the community. She asserted that she was seeing plans that she had not seen before. She asked about the fate of the mature trees on the site and requested that the existing landscaping, in general, be used as to veil the new buildings. She requested that a landscaping plan be submitted to the neighborhood. She explained that the community groups supported the Alden Park design as a compromise.

Mr. Calomiris responded to the audience comments. He stated that the penthouse was added to increase the number of multi-bedroom units to satisfy the community and also to correspond to the roofline at Nugent. He also emphasized that Mr. Plante is developing a landscaping plan for the project. He noted that, if the developers decide to proceed with the project and purchase the properties, he will register the entire project with the U.S. Green Building Council.

Ms. Voith asserted that Mr. Calomiris is exploring too many alternatives. She requested that the architect provide more consistency across the submitted plans.

Mr. Calomiris stated that he would amend the Alternate 2 design to remove the inconsistencies and make the revisions suggested at today's meetings for presentation at the January 13 Commission meeting. Ms. Voith contended that the Architectural Committee must review the updated drawings before they are reviewed by the Commission. Mr. Calomiris remarked that they would be the same drawings presented today, but with the noted amendments and suggested revisions. Mr. Calomiris explained that the revisions to the Alternate 2 proposal

would not be significant, but would be those agreed upon during the meeting; he added that his clients have a purchase agreement that is about to expire and they need a commitment to an overall scheme. Mr. Calomiris said that his clients face a "dilemma." Ms. Voith noted that the Commission has already given a conceptual approval of the location and massing of three buildings and that this application does not precisely comply with that approval. Mr. Farnham explained that this application does not need to comply with the earlier approval. The current application requests an approval in concept of a new scheme; it does not request a final approval predicated on the earlier approval. Ms. Voith contended that the earlier approval in concept is all the developers need to go forward with the project; she said that "what we are talking about here is sort of detail." Mr. Rivera suggested tabling the application to allow the architect to provide more detail. Mr. Levy suggested giving the architect a "stylistic guideline." Ms. Voith stated that she would "prefer a stronger architectural expression in a more contemporary vein." She added that the architecture was less important than the parking issues.

Mr. Rivera stated that there was merit to the Alden Park design, Alternate 2.

Mr. Thomas noted that the timing of this application is significant; the developers must decide to purchase the property within a limited amount of time. He reminded his fellow Committee members that their primary goal is the preservation of the historic buildings. He remarked that what he did or did not like personally and which style he preferred was not significant to the discussion. He supported the Alden Park design, Alternate 2, because it is respectful to the historic buildings and site and it is preferred by the community. He suggested that Mr. Calomiris continue developing Alternate 2. He emphasized that Alternate 2 is not foreign to the surroundings. The buildings in the neighborhood are mostly vertical, like this scheme. He supported the choice of brick for the cladding. He did suggest redesigning the penthouse to remove the pitched roofs. He concluded that, in not asserting itself, the Alden Park design is respectful to the historic buildings.

Stating the recommendation, Mr. Rivera noted for the record that three of the five Committee members preferred the Alternate 2 proposal. Mr. Danta replied that the Committee must make a more explicit recommendation. Ms. Voith responded that the site plan must be further developed and presented again to the community groups. She said that the Committee would defer to the community on the architectural detailing of the new buildings. She said that she accepted the curb cuts and the amount of traffic coming and going. Mr. Farnham explained that the curb cuts exist. Ms. Voith stated that she needed some assurance that the parking on the adjacent lot would be developed as part of the project. She also requested a plan of the existing and proposed trees.

Mr. Calomiris expressed his confusion about the recommendation. He asked if the three-to-two vote for Alternate 2 indicated that he should pursue the further development of that scheme.

Mr. Farnham stated that the Committee owed the applicants some clarifications of their recommendation. He noted that the applicants have worked very hard to provide options to the Committee and the community and have provided a great deal of specificity for a review in concept. He opined that the application included sufficient specificity and detail for an approval in concept. He apologized for extending what had already been a very long review, but explained that he sought to clarify the Committee's opinions on several issues. He asked the Committee to express its opinion of the extension of the parking lot toward the rear property line. Mr. Plante explained that the parking lot would be extended a few feet toward the parking garage on the other side of the property line. Ms. Voith asked if the extension of the lot would require the removal of any trees. Mr. Plante stated that the vegetation along the property line

was scrub growth. The Committee stated that it would accept the extension of the parking and the driveway to the garage on the neighboring lot. Ms. Voith stated that she feared that the additions to the parking would not result in enough spaces for the complex. She also stated again that she rejected the proposal to place a pitched-roof penthouse on the flat-roof building. She suggested redesigning the penthouse. Mr. Calomiris asked her to clarify. Would she accept the lowering of the building owing to the deletion of the garage and the redesign of the penthouse? She replied that he should restrict the height of the new building to the height of the Nugent cornice. The developers responded that they would lose an entire floor of units if it was reduced in height to the cornice line. Mr. Calomiris offered to reduce the height as much as possible. The Committee responded that a significant reduction would be acceptable. Mr. Rivera noted that the goal was the preservation of the historic buildings; the new construction was secondary as long as it did not negatively impact the historic buildings. He suggested that the Committee offer some flexibility and compromise on the design of the new buildings. Mr. Calomiris reminded everyone that the project must be economically viable for the developers to proceed. Mr. Rivera opined that the Committee should not kill the project with unreasonable restrictions. Mr. Calomiris noted that the neighbors preferred the tall building to be located behind the Nugent building.

The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial of the proposal owing to the open issues related to the parking, the site plan, and the height and penthouse of the taller building.

900 Bodine Street aka 238 Christian Street

Owner: Green Park Properties

Applicant: Don Ventresca

History: Lot subdivided from 238 Christian Street

Project: New construction

This application returns for its fourth review. The application proposes the construction of four residential units on a lot subdivided from a designated property at 238 Christian Street. The units would face Bodine Street, a very narrow street that is listed on the register as part of the Thematic Historic Street Paving District. None of the early nineteenth-century houses facing Bodine Street are designated as historic.

The Historical Commission approved the first application in March 2005. This original scheme proposed a single-family house that occupied the entire lot. The owner later abandoned this proposal and submitted a revised scheme to the Historical Commission in October 2005. The second application proposed to develop the lot as four separate units. The Committee unanimously recommended denial and the applicant withdrew the application prior to the Commission meeting. In November 2005, the applicant submitted a revised proposal, which was very similar in scale, massing and style to the October proposal. The Architectural Committee once again unanimously recommended denial and the applicant once again withdrew the application before the Commission meeting.

The Committee suggested in October 2005 that the applicant delete the mansard, reduce the size of the dormers, and give each of the four residences a door on Bodine Street. It made these suggestions to reduce the overpowering mass and scale of the proposed building. The revised design of November 2005 incorporated several cosmetic changes but essentially retained the same design. The Committee reiterated their suggestions on reduction of massing and scale and separate entrances on Bodine Street.

The current proposal incorporates some of the suggestions offered at the previous two

Committee meetings. The four units are more clearly articulated as individual houses and the fenestration appears to have a more harmonious rhythm. The new design also breaks the massing of the third floor with the addition of mansards and a dormer on the two central units. It also creates a cornice at the second floor level on the end units. However, the scale and massing of the proposed building remains substantially unchanged. The monumental entrance alcove with side-by-side doors has remained unchanged throughout the three proposals, even though the Committee has repeatedly noted its awkwardness and requested its elimination.

The staff asserted in its analysis of the November 2005 application that the design was fundamentally flawed and defied the rules of both classical and contemporary architecture. This new design has failed to once again relate to the surrounding historic streetscape with its overpowering massing, scale and historicist pastiche of unrelated decorative elements.

Staff Recommendation: Denial, pursuant to Standard 9, the Site Guideline [*Recommended: Design...adjacent new construction which is compatible with the historic character of the site...*]; and the Setting Guideline [*Not Recommended: Introducing a new building or landscape feature that is out of scale or otherwise inappropriate to the setting's historic character.*].

Mr. Danta presented the proposal. Tom Bello, architect for the project, was represented the application.

Mr. Danta noted that the previous recommendations of denial were, in part, predicated on the central doorway, which is out of character and scale for the historic neighborhood. The denials were also based on the need for more division in the front façade, to break it into units and reduce the overall massing.

Mr. Bello, in response to the question of one entrance for all four units, stated it is necessary to keep floor plans as large as possible. Individual entrance would cut deeply in the plans. The Committee asked for more of a townhouse appearance, so as not to appear like a large apartment building on a very narrow street. Mr. Bello noted that the lot is only 18 feet deep and that each unit is almost identical.

Mr. Rivera suggested a quieter design. He stated that the earlier designs were very busy, with extraneous bays and other exterior detailing. Mr. Levy expressed concern about the asymmetry of dormers. Mr. Bello noted that he had redesigned the exterior and varied the windows to reduce the monolithic nature of the building. Mr. Rivera objected to the false mansard at the third floor, calling it a very suburban element. Mr. Danta responded that the mansard was added in response to the Committee's request to reduce the overall massing of the building. The mansard helps break up the bulk of the large building. Mr. Rivera preferred the cornice that ran across the entire façade.

Rick Kohl of the Queen Village Neighbors Association expressed concern that this building would negatively impact Bodine Street, which is a very narrow historic passage. The neighbors are opposed to the large structure.

Mr. D'Alessandro rejected the mansard. He noted that it is not a true mansard, but is simply applied to the brick.

The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval, provided the false mansard is deleted and that section of the façade is constructed in brick.

301 South 19th Street

Owner: Wayne Spilove

Applicant: Heather Lutzker, contractor

History: 1924, Ballinger & Perrot, architects

Project: Replace wood windows with aluminum windows

This application proposes to replace all the windows on this fifteen-story apartment building. Currently the building has six-over-one double-hung wood windows. The applicant proposes to replace them with six-over-one metal double-hung windows. The drawings submitted by the applicant show that the replacement window would mimic the profile of the historic window almost exactly. The biggest difference would be a one inch increase at the jamb on either side. The top rail of the replacement window would be one inch bigger than the historic rail and the meeting rail of the replacement window would be ¼ inch bigger than the historic rail.

Staff Recommendation: Approval of the replacement window provided that the windows at the lower four floors of the building are replaced in kind (wood windows), pursuant to Standards 9 and 10.

Robert Thomas recused.

Mr. Danta presented the proposal to the Committee. Heather Lutzker and Mike Rampone of Graboyes Windows, the applicants, represented the project.

Mr. Rampone stated that the property owner is asking to replace all of the windows in aluminum. Mr. D'Alessandro and Mr. Rivera accepted the staff recommendation. Mr. Levy opined that aluminum could be installed at the fourth floor because those windows match the windows at the upper floors. Ms. Spina emphasized that four stories of wood was consistent with the Commission decisions for other high-rise buildings.

The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval of the proposed aluminum windows at floors 5 to 15, provided wood windows matching the historic windows are installed on floors 1 to 4, with the staff to review details.

326 South 19th Street

Owner: Wayne Spilove

Applicant: Heather Lutzker, contractor

History: c. 1925

Proposal: Replace windows with aluminum windows

This application proposes to replace all the windows on this thirteen-story apartment building. Currently the building has wood windows and the applicant proposes to replace them with metal. The profile of the proposed replacement window mimics the historic almost exactly. The most significant measurement differences would be as follows. The replacement jamb would be one inch bigger on either side. The top rail of the replacement window would be roughly ¾ inch bigger than the historic rail and the meeting rail of the replacement window would be ¼ inch bigger than the historic.

Staff Recommendation: Approval of the replacement window provided that the windows at the lower four floors of the building be replaced with wood windows, pursuant to Standards 9 and 10.

Mr. Thomas recused.

Mr. Danta presented the proposal to the Committee. Heather Lutzker and Mike Rampone of Graboyes Windows, the applicants, represented the project.

Mr. Rampone noted that most of the windows have been replaced in metal prior to designation. The design of the aluminum windows is based on original wood windows still found in the building. Mr. Levy noted the cornice above the second floor and opined that the aluminum windows could start at the third floor.

The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval of the proposed aluminum windows at floors 3 to 13, provided wood windows matching the historic windows are installed on floors 1 and 2, with the staff to review details.

138-40 North Front Street

Owner: 138 N. Front Street, LP

Applicant: Christos Christakis

History: remnant of 19th century building, partially stuccoed – non-contributing to historic district

Proposal: Demolish non-contributing building; construct four four-story townhouses with garages – in concept

This proposal in concept calls for the demolition of a non-contributing structure. This structure is a nineteenth-century back building of an ornate commercial building that faced Front Street before its demolition for the construction of I-95. The south wall, facing Bladen's Court, will be retained. The applicant seeks to construct four townhouses with parking areas faced with metal gates. The townhouses will be four stories with a roof-deck hidden behind a front gable. The designs incorporate elements of Colonial Revival, Italianate, and Bungalow styles. The staff has concerns about the variation in stylistic details, preferring elements that are more consistent between the four buildings. Some staff favored solid garage doors to prevent views into the garages. There was also concern about the lack of south and east elevation drawings, particularly a drawing for the elevation facing Bladen's Court.

Staff Recommendation: Approval in concept of the demolition, the massing and the north facades of the new townhouses, subject to the removal of the Italianate design elements, pursuant to Standard 9.

Mr. Baron presented the proposal to the Committee. Jerry Fiore, the developer, and Vic Barr, the architect for the project, represented the application.

Mr. Levy suggested that the arched openings in the Bladen's Court wall, which are now infilled closed but visible, were used for moving boilers in and out. Robert Vosburgh of the Elfreth's Alley Association requested these openings remain visible in some manner. He noted that at one time this property housed a candy factory.

Both the Committee and the neighborhood association favored the contemporary design. The Committee expressed the need for more information regarding the impact on Bladen's Court and also more information on the historic facing east and south elevations.

The architect stated that the south wall will be retained. The Committee noted that the south elevation drawing of the proposal was not included with application. Mr. Barr presented a revised design that was more contemporary; he had inherited the colonial revival design from

the previous architect. The use of brick and metal infill panels and railings met with Elfreth's Alley Association (EAA) approval. Mr. Vosburgh of the EAA was encouraged that the developer was listening to the neighborhoods concerns. He stated that he would like to see more information about the proposal for the south or Bladen's Court elevation. He added that he would not be adverse to windows on the south elevation but would prefer to see step backs at the Bladen's Court elevation above the historic wall and suggested that the applicant provide a south elevation drawing.

The Committee expressed a preference for the more contemporary design. Mr. Thomas noted that the rear elevation would be a windowless party wall. All parties were in agreement with the demolition and massing of the new construction. The Committee had concerns about the visibility of the roof decks. The Committee did approve of the idea that each house would have its own identity. The Committee also requested the architectural drawings in a larger format.

The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval in concept of the demolition of the non-contributing building except for the south wall and the construction of four contemporary townhouses with garages. The recommendation of approval in concept does not sanction the proposed heights, decks, facade designs, and details, which should be addressed at later reviews.

244 South 22nd Street aka 2400 Rittenhouse Square Street

Owner: Linda and Martin Simon

Applicant: Craig Deutsch, architect

History: c. 1840; altered, c. 1890

Proposal: Legalize vinyl windows

The owner had 19 pairs of wood sash replaced with vinyl on the Rittenhouse Square Street façade of this corner building without a permit. Shutter hardware was removed and the wood frames were capped in aluminum. In her letter, owner Linda Simon says that she did not know that the building is historically designated. She cites the notice letter that went to the wrong address. This issue, while regrettable, does not excuse the work because:

1. The notice letter was also sent to owner at the property.
2. As a realtor living in the area, the owner would have been aware of the multiple posters with maps on every block as well as the newspaper notices.
3. Commercial buildings with multiple units require a permit for windows even if they are not designated.
4. Randal Baron requested violations and spoke to the contractor after the upper floor windows were installed, gave him a business card, explained that the building is historic, and asked him to seek a permit and inform the owner. Mr. Baron received messages from both the owner and the contractor before the second set of windows were installed.

Staff recommendation: Denial, pursuant to Standard 6.

Mr. Baron presented the proposal to the Committee. Craig Deutsch and Brett Harmon, the architects for the project, and Linda and Martin Simon, the owners of the property, represented the application.

Mr. Deutsch spoke on behalf of the owners, stating that they had received no written notice of the historic designation of their property. Mr. and Mrs. Simon hired Oregon Window to install windows on the side of their building. They specified these windows were to match windows

that had already been changed on the front of the property. Mr. and Mrs. Simon were under the impression that the contractor would secure the permits necessary for the work. Mr. Baron explained to them that, although an installer may obtain a permit, the property owner is ultimately responsible for securing the appropriate permits. The owners explained that the property is fully rented and wood windows proved insufficient. Mr. Simon pled ignorance to knowing that a permit is required to replace windows on the property. The owners claimed that they made every effort to match neighboring buildings by capping as close to the wood frames as possible. Mrs. Simon proposed changing only the flashing to bring the 19 windows into compliance.

Mr. Rivera conveyed to the owners that the Committee does not have the authority to recommend legalization of work that does not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. Mr. Baron noted the change from wood to vinyl is a key issue.

The owners were advised of their right to submit evidence to make a hardship argument and were notified of the 13 January 2006 Historical Commission meeting date.

The Architectural Committee unanimously voted to recommend denial of the legalization, pursuant to Standard 6.

329 South Street

Owner/Applicant: Nurit Nachum

History: c. 1890

Proposal: Alter storefront

This proposal is a revision of an application that was submitted last month. It proposes to alter a storefront on South Street. The applicant has now amended the proposal to retain two store-doors and the narrower vestibule in the exterior storefront area. However, the plans still show the removal of the rear portion of the central storefront window, creating an island, which may have an impact on the ceiling of the vestibules. The applicant also shows proposed aluminum and glass storefront doors. The staff believes that the historic wood and glass doors as well as the stucco cove ceiling should be restored. The details for the work to the masonry and stained glass should be reviewed by the staff.

Staff recommendation: Denial pursuant to Standards 2, 5 and 9.

Mr. Baron presented the proposal to the Committee. Nurit Macham, the architect, represented the project.

In her presentation, Ms. Nacham informed the Committee of her plans to remove the drop ceiling and reveal the historic coved ceiling. She also explained that her client is willing to install the recommended wood door. Ms. Nacham explained how she will create an island at the back of the storefront to allow better circulation. She is converting the building to a children's clothing store.

Mr. Levy expressed his concerns about the installation of the roll-down grill. Ms. Nacham assured the Committee that there is a beam at the rear of the storefront above the ceiling level that can support the mounting of this grill without any impact to the coved ceiling. At present, work is being performed at the rear of the property that has already been approved the Commission. Mr. Levy agreed with the island, but asked for an assurance that the ceiling can actually house the roll-down grill without it being seen when it is up. Mr. Rivera agreed with Mr.

Levy and noted that the configuration of the existing beam on which the grill would hang is a critical point. Ms. Nacham agreed to return to the Committee with addition information if the grill cannot be installed as she is now proposing.

Mr. Baron stated that any marble replaced at the storefront should match the existing as closely as possible. He also suggested that the applicant retain as much of the original marble as is feasible. She agreed to this stipulation.

The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval of the proposal with the wood doors, provided the coved ceiling and storefront are restored and the roll-down gate mechanism is hidden above the ceiling level, with the staff to review the details.

227 South 6th Street, Lippincott Building

Owner: MCW Enterprises, LLC

Applicant: Stephen Verner, architect

History: 1900, William Prichett, architect

Proposal: Install vent for diesel generator at rear

The vent for the diesel generator currently exits the building at the first floor at pedestrian level. The proposal calls for installing a vent that snakes up the rear of the building to the roof. The vent will be painted a brick-red color. Although on the rear of the building, houses face this façade.

Staff recommendation: Approval, pursuant to Standards 9 and 10.

Ms. Spina presented the proposal to the Committee. Stephen Verner, the architect for the project, represented the application.

In response to Mr. Rivera's question on the dimension of the stack, Mr. Verner stated that it would have a five-inch inside diameter and six-inch outside diameter. Mr. D'Alessandro noted the stack should not be installed at the corner of the building. He also suggested that the applicant respect the brick joints and jack arches. Mr. Verner agreed to these points.

The Architecture Committee voted to recommend approval, with the staff to review the details.

20-30 North Front Street

Owner: 20-30 North Front Street, LLC

Applicant: Mark Wieand, architect

History: bet. 1828 and 1836 for Girard Estate – significant in district

Proposal: Demolish rear additions, add five-story rear addition to 30 N. Front Street, add one-story roof-top addition to 22-30 N. Front Street, rehabilitate façade – in concept

This multi-pronged, in-concept proposal calls for the rehabilitation of six Greek Revival industrial buildings for residential use. These buildings, built by Stephen Girard, serve as part of the gateway to the City and sit in one of the most intact historic blocks of Front Street along the entire waterfront. As the photograph from Penn's Landing shows, these prove highly visible from the water, despite the presence of Interstate 95, and retain much integrity along their front façades. At the rear, several have additions that have suffered from neglect and the Department of Licenses and Inspections has declared these additions unsafe. However, the cast-iron and glass forge at the rear of 24-26 North Front Street, added in the late nineteenth

century has its own significance. Also in the late nineteenth century, the Board of City Trusts added a fifth floor to 22, 24 and 26 North Front Street. At the same time, the windows in 22-30 North Front Street were changed from six-over-six, double-hung windows to eight-light casement windows. Many of the frames for these casements still exist. 28 and 30 North Front Street had small additions constructed on their roofs, but their original steep, gable roofs remain. Except for three small doors installed on the Church Street façade for a fire-escape, 20 North Front remains unchanged.

The proposal calls for demolishing all of the additions at the rear of the buildings for a courtyard and parking. Church Street, a granite block street, also appears on the Philadelphia Register as a part of the Historic Street Paving Thematic District. The courtyard would only hold four cars, for the multi-unit development. At the rear, light wells would be excavated for basement windows for those units. The courtyard would be paved with block and have several trees. A gate at the Church Street street-line would be installed. (See Plan A101)

The second major part of the proposal is a roof-top addition on five of the six properties. The steep gable roofs of 28 and 30 North Front would be removed and changed to a 5th floor and then a 6th floor addition will be added to 22-30 North Front Street. The new 5th floor on 28 and 30 North Front will be stuccoed to differentiate it from the lower floors and have coupled, four-over-four windows. The 6th floor addition will be set back approximately 14 feet from the front façade with no set back for the roof decks. The 6th floor addition will have a contemporary design, but the plans do not discuss materials. The overall height of the roof-top addition will be 14'-7" and the privacy fences between the roof decks, which come to the cornice, will measure almost 6 feet in height. (See Plan A204)

Another portion of the application is a five-story rear addition to 30 North Front Street. This building is currently a 4½-story building. The addition would house living units on each floor. The façade facing the courtyard has tripled casement windows and a central, projecting portion with projecting balconies. HVAC units would sit on the roof. Materials for the addition are not included.

The final aspect of the proposal includes the overall rehabilitation of the historic buildings. No details of materials or methods are included. For the front façade, the proposal calls for six-over-six windows in all buildings in the upper floors. The first floor storefronts would retain the original door-window-door configuration; however, the design of the doors and storefront windows is incorrect. Also, the floor plans show basement units, requiring light and air from the space under the storefront windows. The plans do not identify the materials for this area. Also, this area generally had glazed doors, like those on the first floor, which may satisfy the applicant's need. On the rear, the proposal calls for installing six-over-six windows on the upper floors and infilling the first floor (where the rear additions were removed) with glazing. The plans do not detail if the material for the support system will be metal or wood.

Staff Recommendation:

- 1) Approval of the demolition of the rear additions on 22, 28 and 30 North Front, owing to their condition and the violations issued by the Department of Licenses and Inspections;
- 2) Approval in concept of an addition on the rear 30 North Front Street, but only to four stories, pursuant to Standard 9;
- 3) Approval in concept of the rehabilitation of the historic buildings, on the condition that the rehabilitation includes eight-light casements on the front and rear elevations of 22-30 Front Street and the storefront doors and windows match the historic configurations, pursuant to Standard 6;

- 4) Denial of the demolition of the forge addition at 24 and 26 North Front, pursuant to Standards 2, 5 and 9;
- 5) Denial of the 5th floor addition at 28 and 30 North Front Street, pursuant to Standards 9 and 10 and Roof Guideline;
- 6) Denial of the 6th floor addition at 22-30 North Front Street. The Commission has denied similar additions on other buildings on Front Street, pursuant to Standards 9 and 10 and Roof Guideline.

Ms. Spina presented the proposal. Mark Wieand and John Bower, the architects for the project, represented the application. Meredith Marshall, Alexander Taylor, and Geoff Flournay of BRP Development and preservation consultant Bob Powers also attended.

Mr. Bower introduced the project and displayed several renderings. Mr. Bower explained that 20-22 N. Front Street would house a restaurant. He also noted the installation of 8-light casements, which replicate the historic window configurations. Ms. Spina noted that 8-light casements were appropriate on the rear as well. Mr. Bower proposed triple glazed aluminum, not wood, windows for the front, though the plans did not mention the window material. He also noted that dividing privacy walls would separate the decks at the penthouse level. Mr. Wieand noted that the buildings originally had very tall gables.

Mr. Galley of the Preservation Alliance strongly opposed this project. He was adamant that the Commission should deny the fifth and sixth-floor additions, noting this is the only block left with integrity that shows the historic character of Front Street. If this change were to take place, it would be totally out of the character. Mr. Galley stated these buildings hold more than an architectural significance, they hold a historical significance. He also stated the rear addition should be limited to four stories. He asserted that these buildings represent the City's best example of demolition by neglect. Mr. Galley suggested that the developer be required to rebuild all of the rear ells, which collapsed because of neglect.

Martha Coonley, who owns 109-111 Church Street, voiced her opposition to additions to this property. She expressed great shock at the thought of altering these buildings, including the height of these buildings. Ms. Coonley stated she bought her property counting on the fact that neighborhood properties would be protected by the Historical Commission. Ms. Coonley feels strongly that because she adhered to the rules of the Historical Commission at a great expense, her neighbors should as well.

Mr. Baron cited that up to this point, no approvals have ever been given for additions to existing buildings on Front Street. Discussing other additions in the city, he noted that the Lippincott approval was based on financial hardship; it was not a standard application. He also noted that the Commission required that the addition to 103-105 Church Street be carefully designed to avoid visibility from Front Street.

Mr. Rivera noted that these buildings represent the high water mark of design in Old City. Mr. Thomas cited the important view from the waterfront. The Committee members agreed that this project would not meet the *Secretary of the Interior Standards*.

Mr. Powers spoke of the forge addition that is close to collapse and the need for rear access to the buildings. Mr. Bower responded that the forge does not work structurally without the neighboring rear ell walls, which are collapsing or have collapsed. He added that the forge does not make sense for this new use. The need for a courtyard to bring light to the front buildings was expressed. Mr. Thomas noted that a courtyard would be important because of I-95. He suggested documenting the forge before demolition.

Mr. Powers and Mr. Wieand responded to Mr. Rivera's questioning of the original gable. Mr. Rivera spoke of the rooftop additions greatly changing the character of the area. Mr. Bower replied that the view across I-95 is not historic.

Mr. Marshall, one of the developers, reported that the project is not economically feasible without a penthouse and additions. Mr. Thomas agreed with Mr. Galley that the developer was attempting to make a hardship argument, which is outside the jurisdiction of the Architectural Committee. Ms. Coonley was emphatic that Girard Estate should be held accountable for the deterioration it has allowed. Mr. Taylor stated that the state of the buildings is not the cause of economical difficulty; the buildings themselves are difficult to adaptively reuse. Mr. Bower explained that the cramped spaces within the buildings render reconfiguration difficult. From an economic standpoint, larger units are necessary.

Mr. Rivera explained that the Committee must uphold the *Standards*. He believed the applicants were offering an economic hardship argument, which is not under the purview of the Committee, and not an architectural or preservation argument.

The Architectural Committee voted to recommend the following:

- 1) Approval of the demolition of the rear additions on 22, 28 and 30 North Front, owing to their condition and the violations issued by the Department of Licenses and Inspections;*
- 2) Approval in concept of an addition on the rear 30 North Front Street, but only to four stories, pursuant to 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.];*
- 3) Approval in concept of the rehabilitation of the historic buildings, on the condition that the rehabilitation includes eight-light casements on the front and rear elevations of 22-30 Front Street and the storefront doors and windows match the historic configurations, pursuant to 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.];*
- 4) Approval of the demolition of the forge addition at 24 and 26 North Front, provided it is photographically documented prior to demolition;*
- 5) Denial of the 5th-floor addition at 28 and 30 North Front Street, pursuant to Standards 9 and 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.] and the Roof Guideline [Not recommended: Radically changing a character-defining roof shape or damaging or destroying character-defining roofing material as a result of incompatible design.];*
- 6) Denial of the 6th-floor addition at 22-30 North Front Street. The Commission has denied similar additions on other buildings on Front Street, pursuant to Standards 9 and 10 and Roof Guideline [Not recommended: Introducing a new roof feature that is incompatible in size, scale, material and color.].*

The Architectural Committee adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Gonski, Administrative Technician

Jonathan E. Farnham, Acting Historic Preservation Officer