

MEETING OF THE ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE

OF THE

PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

29 December 1988

David Hollenberg, Chairman

Present: David Hollenberg, Chairman
Herbert W. Levy, A.I.A.

Maria Petrillo, Chief Assistant City Solicitor, Law Department
Patricia Siemiontkowski, Assistant Historic Preservation Officer
Randal Baron, Preservation Planner

Also: Tony Atkin and Charles Evers of Tony Atkins & Associates to present a proposal for the addition of cooling towers atop One and Two Mellon Bank Center.
William Becker and Edward Hillis to request a preliminary reading on the proposed demolition of 2018-26 Sansom Street and 2017-21 Moravian Street.
Robert Donaldson to present a revised submission for the addition of a sign on the front facades of 509 and 511 South 2nd Street.
Susan Snyder and Nora Kerr of Snyder - Snyder Architects and Ross Goldberg of Posel Enterprises to present plans for the rehabilitation of 815-17 Sansom Street.
Christine Broda to present plans for the construction of a third story addition atop the building at 318 South Fawn Street
Peg Zabo, Esq., representing an adjoining property owner, and Joanne Weeks of the Washington Square West Project Area Committee regarding 318 South Fawn Street
David Galullo of Bartley Bronstein Long Mirenda to present plans for facade rehabilitation at 1702 Locust Street and the addition of a sign box.
John Miller, owner, to present plans for the reconstruction of a side porch at 29 E. Penn Street.
Winifred deBeuret to discuss with the committee proposed window replacement at 1810 Rittenhouse Square.
William Brennan of Burt Hill Kosar Rittelmann and Robert Petito of John Milner Associates to present plans for renovations to the John Wanamaker Store at 1300-24 Market Street
Marvin Verman, Architect, to present plans for the rehabilitation of 1227-1229 Locust Street and for new construction at 1225 and 1231-33 Locust Street.
Victor Arencibia, Architect, to present his proposal for the restoration of 104-06 Arch Street.
Lenard Dumoff, owner, and Albert Taus, Architect, to discuss with the committee structural problems at 69-71 North 2nd Street.
Lenore Millhollen, Preservation Coalition of Greater Philadelphia
William Jordan, Center City Residents Association

ALTERATIONS

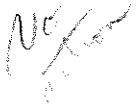
Mellon Bank Center, Broad and Chestnut Streets, Tony Atkin and Charles Evers of Tony Atkin & Associates. This submission covers the first phase of work required to effect the separation of the four buildings collectively known as Mellon Bank Center. Phase One involves the separation of the mechanical systems and necessitates the installation of new cooling towers on the site. The two buildings affected include One and Two Mellon Bank Center. 

Mr. Atkin and Mr. Evers discussed with the Committee the several options for placement of the cooling towers to serve Two Mellon Bank Center. Following some discussion, the Committee agreed to recommend approval of the option selected by the architects which places the units atop the annex roof behind Two Mellon Bank Center. The Committee agreed that these units should be screened in order to mitigate their visual impact from Broad Street and that the louvered screening be installed upside down. Finally, if structurally possible, the Committee asked that the units and screening be centered atop the annex.

The placement of new condensers to serve One Mellon Bank Center will occur atop the fifth floor roof behind the dome. Mr. Atkin noted that these units will not be visible from Broad or Chestnut Streets.

RECOMMENDATION: One Mellon Bank Center - Final approval. 

RECOMMENDATION: Two Mellon Bank Center - Final approval. 

2018-26 Sansom Street and 2017-21 Moravian Street, William P. Becker, Architect and Edward Hillis, Domus Enterprises. Messrs. Becker and Hillis requested of the Committee a preliminary reading of their proposal to demolish the Sansom and Moravian Street buildings to allow for the construction of a new, four story office building with ground floor retail space. Mr. Becker explained to the Committee that the partnership does not as yet hold title to the properties and for this reason no formal application has been made. 

The Sansom and Moravian Street buildings stand within the boundaries of the proposed Rittenhouse/Fitler Residential Historic District and are identified in the inventory for that district as Contributing buildings.

Although the Sansom Street buildings have experienced some unsympathetic alterations over the years, the basic form and character of the original design remains intact. The original roof and cornice line have survived without alteration. Although several of the Sansom Street facades have been veneered with inappropriate materials, the original window openings on the second

and third floor have not been altered. The Moravian Street carriage houses have undergone only little change over the years and stand virtually in their original condition.

Mr. Becker supplied the Committee with a brief description of the existing buildings and their condition, photographs, a preliminary floor plan, a perspective drawing for the proposed new construction and a rehabilitation analysis. Mr. Becker explained to the Committee that he considered four possible scenarios for the site. These included a complete rehabilitation of the existing buildings, a combination of rehabilitation and new construction, maintenance of the current uses and, finally, demolition and new construction. Mr. Becker expressed his intent to develop the site in a manner sympathetic to the scale and character of the district.

Following some discussion of the marginal significance of the buildings, the economics of rehabilitation and the appropriateness of the proposed new construction, the Committee advised Mr. Becker that upon the submission of a formal application for demolition the Committee would advise the Commission to request compliance with Section 7(f) of the preservation ordinance. The Committee further recognized the problems and costs associated with a proposed rehabilitation of the existing buildings and advised the architect to refine his economic analysis and to provide information on costs associated with new construction as well.

Subsequent to the Committee meeting, Mr. Becker advised the Historical Commission staff that the Agreement of Sale for the subject properties was not executed and that the project would not proceed. All materials submitted by Mr. Becker for Committee consideration will be returned.

RECOMMENDATION: No action required.

511 South 2nd Street, Robert Donaldson, Applicant. Mr. Donaldson presented his resubmission for the placement of a sign band across the front facades of 509 and 511 South 2nd Street. As recommended by the Architectural Committee at its meeting of 21 November 1988, Mr. Donaldson redesigned the sign band so that it would not intrude upon the existing second floor window sills. Mr. Donaldson also presented a lighting plan to the Committee for review. FR

The Committee found the redesign of the sign band and the proposed lighting plan to be acceptable and agreed to recommend a final approval.

RECOMMENDATION: Final Approval.

815-17 Sansom Street, Susan Snyder and Nora Kerr, Snyder-Snyder Architects. Ms. Snyder presented to the Committee her plans for a complete rehabilitation of the building at 815-17 Sansom Street. The proposed work includes the repair and repainting of the brick facade, the installation of new wood, double hung, two-over-two A with condition

windows on the upper floors, a new ground floor entrance treatment and the addition of window awnings and an entrance canopy.

The Committee, following some discussion, agreed to recommend a final approval of this project subject to review of a paint color sample on the front facade. The architect has proposed to paint the facade green. The Committee further suggested a reconfiguration of the awnings on the upper floors. The Committee suggested the use of rounded window awnings set within the arched masonry opening rather than shed type awnings. Mr. Levy abstained from voting on this project.

RECOMMENDATION: Final approval with condition.

Noted
318 S. Fawn Street, Christine Broda, Architect. This application calls for a third floor addition to an existing two story brick house. The circa 1825 half gable house has been stuccoed on its front facade. The owner wishes to enlarge the house because she married and now finds the house to small. The house is presently rented out to another couple, but the owner would like to move back into the house.

The architect originally proposed building a third floor addition that would extend the entire building one story upward and retain the half gable roof design. This design was withdrawn from the last Architectural Review Committee meeting at the request of the Washington Square West PAC in order to allow them to have input, particularly in terms of light and air issues. For this committee meeting the architect produced a new design which raises the building by one story but creates a flat roof with a cornice to match a neighboring late 19th century building.

The Committee looked at both designs and expressed the opinion that neither of them would meet Secretary of the Interior Standards. It was noted at the meeting that the half gable roof design which used to be relatively common in Philadelphia is now so rare that only a handful survive. Both of the proposed designs would destroy the feature that makes this building significant. The Committee advised the architect to restudy the project to see if she could design a dormer addition with a setback that would solve the problem. The Committee made it very clear that that design might also be unacceptable, but that it was worth a try. The architect asked that the submission be withdrawn at this time until she could produce the restudied design and present it at another Architectural Review Committee meeting.

RECOMMENDATION: No action required.

1702 Locust Street, David Galullo, Architect, Bartley Bronstein Long Mirenda
Mr. Galullo presented to the Committee his plans for renovation work to the front facade of 1702 Locust Street. The proposed work includes the following:

Architect's condition

1. repair and repainting of the existing wood cornice and wood window frames and sash;
2. removal of existing wood shutters;
3. replacement of the existing entrance door and ground floor show window with a new door and window;
4. installation of a new entrance handrail;
5. installation of a new projecting sign.

The Committee agreed to recommend a final approval of this project subject to the submission of cleaning and repointing specifications, retention of the existing entrance handrail and elimination of the floodlights on the sign structure. The Committee recommended instead of floodlights the use of the sign tube as a self contained soft light fixture designed to wash the building facade with light.

RECOMMENDATION: Final approval subject to submission of cleaning and repointing specifications, retention of the existing entrance handrail and the elimination of floodlights.

29 E. Penn Street, John E. Miller, Owner. Mr. Miller presented to the Committee his resubmission for the reconstruction of an original side porch at 29 E. Penn Street which he had removed several years ago without a permit. (FA)

The Committee reviewed the drawing presented by Mr. Miller noting several items in need of correction. The members agreed to recommend to the Commission an approval, in concept, of the proposed reconstruction. Before a final approval can be granted, the elevation drawing must be corrected and resubmitted to the staff for a final review and approval.

RECOMMENDATION: Approval in Concept. ✓

1810 Rittenhouse Square, Winifred deBeuret, Applicant. Ms. deBeuret appeared before the Committee to discuss the replacement of all existing windows at 1810 Rittenhouse Square. A.M.C.

Following some discussion of various types of replacement windows, the Committee voted to approve, in concept, the replacement of the existing windows owing to severe deterioration. It was further agreed that the replacement windows must match the design of the original windows having a 2/3 fixed top light of glass and a 1/3 tilting bottom light of glass. Double hung sash, sliders and large picture windows are unacceptable.

RECOMMENDATION: Approval in concept. ✓

provided there is a reasonable match - FA

419 South 17th Street, Allan Baumholtz, Applicant. The applicant for 419 South 17th Street requests approval for work undertaken without a building permit or Historical Commission review. The circa 1865 rowhouse, a contributing structure in the proposed Rittenhouse Fidler Residential Historic District was altered in the mid 20th century with an inappropriate ground floor shopfront. The present

work consisted of enclosing an existing basement stairway with a projecting bulkhead constructed with brick cheekwalls and glass block.

Because the alterations occurred to an already inappropriately altered ground floor and no historical fabric was destroyed, the Committee recommended that the work be approved. The Committee also recommended that a letter be written to explain the reasons for approval and to caution the owner to apply for a building permit before undertaking future work.

RECOMMENDATION: Final approval.

John Wanamaker Building, 1300-24 Market Street, William Brennan of Burt Hill Kosar Rittelmann Associates and Robert Petito of John Milner Associates. Mr. Brennan reviewed with the Committee the two major portions of the John Wanamaker rehabilitation project. Floors one through five will house the retail portion of the project and floors six through twelve will serve as offices. FA

The two major areas of concern to the Historical Commission - the Grand Court and the Crystal Tea Room - were discussed in detail. In the Grand Court, existing plywood panels will be removed at the upper levels and replaced with a glass wall. The railing and other architectural features will remain intact. On the ninth floor, the Crystal Tea Room will remain unchanged. The kitchen serving the Tea Room will be demolished. An operator is currently being sought for this space. It is uncertain whether the Crystal Tea Room will continue to be operated as a public restaurant or whether some private use of this space will be found.

On the exterior, Mr. Petito described for the Committee the proposed maintenance and repair of all stone, terra cotta, cast iron, etc. He explained that on Juniper and Thirteenth Streets access to an underground parking garage will require the removal of stone infill panels within two bays - one on each street elevation. Existing storefronts will be restored. The existing entrance doors will be replaced with doors more appropriate to the original design of the building. At the Juniper Street office entrance, two new entrances will be introduced into the flanking walls.

Following considerable discussion of the proposed work, the Committee voted to recommend a final approval of this phase of the rehabilitation project. Mr. Hollenberg abstained from voting on this submission.

RECOMMENDATION: Final approval.

1225-31 Locust Street, Alesker, Reiff & Dundon and Marvin Verman, Architect. Air C
Mr. Verman presented to the Committee his plans for the preservation and rehabilitation of two existing historically designated buildings at 1227 and 1229 Locust Street and the construction of a new five story building at 1225 and 1231-33 Locust Street.

Following some discussion of this project, the Committee agreed to recommend its approval in concept. With regard to 1227 Locust Street, the Committee asked for a break in the roof between 1227 and the new building to the east. The Committee also asked for the submission of door, window, shutter and balcony details. With regard to 1229 Locust Street, the Committee asked for a correction of the window design to agree with the historic photograph on file in the Commission office. The Committee noted also that an entrance railing was unnecessary but that the existing railing could remain if desired. The submission of architectural details is required for this building as well.

Although the Historical Commission has no jurisdiction over new construction on this site, the Committee suggested strongly that the architect consider a redesign in an attempt to introduce more verticality into the design of the new construction. This would result in a design more compatible with scale and proportion of the historic buildings.

RECOMMENDATION: Approval in concept.

104-06 Arch Street, Victor Arencibia, Architect. Mr. Arencibia presented to the Committee his revised plans for the complete rehabilitation of the buildings at 104-06 Arch Street. The revised drawings, as presented, reflected the changes suggested by Mrs. Batcheler as a result of a site visit and a review of the records in the Commission's files.

App subject to condition

The Committee reviewed the revised drawing and agreed to recommend a final approval of this project subject to a lowering of the dormer windows on the roof and the submission of window, door, shutter, cornice, and pent eave details.

RECOMMENDATION: Final approval with conditions.

69-71 North 2nd Street, Albert Taus, Architect and Lenard Dumoff, Owner. Messrs. Taus and Dumoff appeared before the Architectural Committee to discuss the illegal work that was undertaken on the building and the structural problems that prompted the work. At the staff's request, the Department of Licenses and Inspections issued a stop work order after the applicant demolished the buildings' historic shopfronts without benefit of a building permit or the Historical Commission's review.

No action!

Mr Taus explained that the buildings have suffered structural problems as a result of the facade collapse of a neighboring building as well as possibly an underground stream. In July a car also crashed through one of the bays of the building. The ground floor cast iron columns presently lean and the owner has buttressed them with cinder block. He further explained that the engineer is working on a design to stabilize the buildings, but that the design could not be ready in time for the meeting. Mr. Taus asked permission for his client to continue interior work on the building

and stated that his client will cooperate with the Committee to design a new shopfront which corrects the structural deficiencies of the buildings.

The Committee asked the applicant to apply for a building permit for interior work in order to lift the stop work order and to return as soon as possible with the storefront design. The Committee asked the staff to request that L&I inspect the building to determine its safety in the meanwhile.

RECOMMENDATION: No action required.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Siemiontkowski
Assistant Historic Preservation Officer

Randal Baron
Preservation Planner