

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

**Arlene Matzkin, Chair
Commission Conference Room
Suite 1301, 1401 Arch Street
30 September 1997**

Present

**Arlene Matzkin, Chair
Penelope Batcheler
William Cornell
Herbert Levy
Daniel McCoubrey
Suzanne Pentz**

**Randal Baron, Assistant Historic Preservation Officer
R. Scott Jacob, Historic Preservation Specialist
Richard Tyler, Historic Preservation Officer**

Also

**Robert DeSilets, Robert L. DeSilets Architect
Christian Busch, Robert L. DeSilets Architect
Charles Langan
Alfred Cappelli, Jr.
Sohrab Rabii
John Jones, Venturi, Scott Brown Associates
Ned Burns, Pella Windows
Kiki Bolender, Schade and Bolender Architects
Chuck LeGradi, Fire Department
Cynthia Cardonick, Atlas Signs Inc.
David Slocum, Architect
John Donnelly, BP Corporation
Millicent Muse, Board of Revenue of Taxes
Mark Motl
Margaret MacLaren, Center City Residents Association (CCRA)
Lenore Millhollen, CCRA
Ed Bronstein, AIA
Pat Dewey, American Fidelity
Thomas Koenig
Paul Corson
Kirk Kirkpatrick
Carl Zucker, Esq., 1912 Rittenhouse Square Street**

Ms. Matzkin called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

925 Chestnut Street, Federal Reserve Bank
Jefferson Hospital - Rothman Institute, Owner
Robert DeSilets, Architect/Applicant
DATE: 1925
PROPOSAL: Signage, recap conceptual designs

Mr. Baron explained that this application includes a conceptual proposal for new signage on the Chestnut Street facade of the building. He further stated that a summary of previous proposals will occur at the Commission meeting 8 October 1997.

Mr. DeSilets, an architect for the project, stated that the polished bronze signs or placards originally approved and installed on either side of the front entrance are "too glaring," and requested approval to remove the signs and install new marble signs to match the building.

This proposal also calls for the removal of the address sign over the front entrance, and for permission to install three large, boxed, bronze numbers within the grill-filled transom over the pedimented front door. Mr. DeSilets pointed out that Paul Cret's original design contained a similar feature. Ms. Batcheler suggested that wood mock-ups of the numbers, installed temporarily, would help Committee members and the applicants measure visibility and impact on the overall appearance of the entrance. Mr. Levy recommended eliminating the box around the numbers to lessen the amount of material to cover historic fabric. Mr. DeSilets assured the Committee that installing the new numbers will not harm the grill.

The applicants asked for permission to install a Jefferson Hospital flag in an existing apparatus over the front door.

They conferred with the Committee on the possibility of having a directory of building tenants on a sidewalk kiosk at the corner of 10th and Chestnut Streets, but presented no drawings.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the flag, and voted four-to-one to recommend approval of replacing new signs in marble, while leaving the historic signs visible below, but removing the gold leaf in the letters of the historic sign to lessen their impact and avoid confusion. Mr. Levy voted against the recommendation because he thought that leaving the Federal Reserve sign exposed would cause too much confusion. The Committee also voted unanimously to approve the mock-up of the address numbers, with good photographs, and to delay the final decision until after further examination.

917 South 2nd Street
Charles Langan, Owner/Applicant
DATE: c. 1800
PROPOSAL: Legalize demolition; reconstruction

Mr. Baron stated that the Committee and Commission had approved the rehabilitation of this rare, wood residence, but that the owner, Mr. Langan, commenced partial demolition of the structure owing to the advanced state of deterioration. Mr. Baron explained that the owner seeks to legalize the partial demolition, permission to demolish the rest of the structure except the chimney and foundation, and approval to reconstruct a replica of the historic building.

Mr. Baron stated that the owner has not submitted adequate drawings for the rebuilding. Mr. Langan stated that he does not want to rebuild the shed-roofed dormer, claiming that a non-original and poorly constructed feature of the building does not merit inclusion. Several Committee members strongly disagreed with him, affirming the dormer's appropriateness to the facade. Ms. Batcheler asked whether the front window sill is original. The owner stated he believed little of the facade was original. Mr. Baron expressed concern that the proposed plans for the frame molding around the first floor window and front door do not follow the existing design.

Mr. Langan asked about the possibility of rebuilding the structure as a brick house that did not match the existing. The Committee members thought that the rare, wood structure had great value to the streetscape and the Southwark National Register Historic District. They also thought that Mr. Langan should not be rewarded for demolishing the building without permission. They recognized that the new construction must have fire rated walls, and that this could be accommodated within the exterior clapboarding.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the demolition of everything but the chimney and foundation, and reconstruction, with staff to review and approve revised drawings and details, and that the owner must rebuild the dormer.

310 Market Street

Alfred Cappelli, Jr., Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1830

PROPOSAL: Legalize sign

This proposal entails legalizing a sign installed without a permit or Commission approval. The sign covers the transom area of a significant historic storefront. Mr. Cappelli, the owner, showed the Committee several photographs of buildings on his block with larger signs than his, and argued that the Commission should also require their removal. Mr. Baron stated that several of those banners and signs may have violations, and that other examples occur on non-designated buildings. Ms. Matzkin and Ms. Batcheler explained to Mr. Cappelli that the particular significance of his storefront sets a good example in the area.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend denial.

2111 Mount Vernon Street

Sohrab Rabii, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1845

PROPOSAL: Replace six windows and sills in wood

This proposal entails the replacement of six windows on the front facade with two-over-two, wood, double-hung sash, installed in the existing frames in jamb liners. The owner wants to replace several sills in wood to match the originals.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval.

1300 Locust Street, Historical Society of Pennsylvania

Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Owner

John Jones, Architect/Applicant

DATE: c. 1905

PROPOSAL: Rooftop HVAC, handicap door

This proposal involves placing large HVAC mechanical units on the roof, and final approval of cutting a side door for handicap access. Mr. Baron explained that the position of the HVAC minimizes its visibility as shown in the sight-line study.

Mr. Jones, an architect for the project, explained that the owners asked that the Committee review conceptual changes to the front door, which include the installation of heavy glass doors in front of the existing, or replacing the doors in kind. Mr. Jones stated that the owners want the glass doors to "invite the public in." The Committee commented that the Historical Society will no longer cater to a walk-in public as a research facility, rendering the glass doors useless. The Committee found the proposed new doors unacceptable, but understood the need to change the swing direction of the doors to meet fire safety Codes.

The Committee members voted to recommend approval of the rooftop HVAC unit and new side door. They voted in favor of the concept of changing the swing of the front doors without adding new glass panes. Mr. McCoubrey and Ms. Pentz abstained owing to their association with the project's architect.

149-151 North 2nd Street, Fire Museum

City of Philadelphia, Owner

Kiki Bolender, Architect/Applicant

DATE: c. 1898

PROPOSAL: Replace wood windows with aluminum windows

Mr. Baron reminded the Committee of this window replacement proposal. In the last review the Committee looked at replacement with aluminum windows that failed to match sight-lines in terms of the distance between the masonry opening and the glazing. Since that time the architect has investigated aluminum clad wood windows. She has found a Pella window which matches the glass

opening sightlines as well as muntin configuration. Those windows will cost approximately \$17,500. Unfortunately, the two stock brick moldings do not match the current historic moldings of the window frames. Ordering custom extrusions to match the historic frames would add \$3,000 to the price of the windows. Mr. Baron stated that the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards* call for retaining existing fabric if it is salvageable, then replacement in the original material and finally, if the material will be changed, at least matching the appearance of the existing historic fabric. Ms. Batcheler said that in photographs, the windows appear to be in good shape or at least repairable. Ms. Matzkin said that she was convinced by Mr. LeGradi's insistence that the Fire Department will no longer maintain the windows. Other Committee members thought that the moldings came close enough to the existing and that this building was exceptional in that its scale made the cost of a custom window quite high. They thought that the higher location of the windows made it unlikely that the difference would be seen. Ms. Batcheler said that the side windows would be seen at ground level and the proposed wood doors would still have to be painted.

The architect showed the proposed wood door replication drawings and the dark green paint color for the whole project.

The Committee voted four-to-two to approve the proposed windows using the "Gun 3" molding with Ms. Batcheler and Ms. Pentz voting against the proposal.

34 South Front Street

Claudio Sandolo, Owner
Cynthia Cardonick, Applicant
DATE: c. 1835
PROPOSAL: Awnings, neon sign

This proposal calls for new awnings over each first floor window, and a neon projecting sign. The Committee reviewed the new drawings and recommended eliminating all awnings except the one over the front door. Ms. Cardonick, the applicant, presented a sample of the proposed awning material, which the Committee approved. They disapproved the neon sign, preferring an illuminated wood sign.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of an open-sided awning over the front door only, and a wooden sign of the initially proposed proportions. It was noted that leftover elements of the drawing that are no longer proposed, such as the wood bases of the pilasters, new doors and planters, are not being proposed or approved in this application.

Covered Bridge - Wissahickon at Thomas Mill Road

City of Philadelphia, Owner

David Slocum, Architect/Applicant

DATE: c. 1855; c. 1870 - alterations; 1937 - partial reconstruction

PROPOSAL: Repair

The proposal involves rebuilding portions of this covered bridge including a new metal roof, board and batten walls, and reinforcing the trusses. In several locations new metal elements will cover portions of the wood truss. Mr. Baron suggested the Committee scrutinize these to minimize visibility of new material.

Mr. Slocum, the project's architect, explained that to investigate interior workings, which have gone unseen for nearly 120 years, he needs to remove the siding. He also said that he designed the metal reinforcements to make them invisible to the public. Ms. Pentz recommended the applicant ask a wood pathologist to investigate internal rot in the wood boards. Mr. Slocum added that the siding has carved graffiti, which he suggested painting to obliterate. Committee members thought he should number the salvageable boards for matching reinstallation, because the graffiti, dating back for decades, is now an historic feature of the structure. Mr. Slocum also requested permission to build scaffolding and temporary railings around the bridge during construction.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of repairs; temporary removal of side boards and replacement in kind when necessary; and building scaffolding and railings.

325 South Street

Michael Morrison, Owner

Joel Spivak, Applicant

DATE: c.1798; storefront c.1890

PROPOSAL: New Storefront

This proposal includes the demolition of an existing storefront and its replacement with a newly designed one. Several years ago this tenant covered over the historic storefront including stained glass transoms without a building permit. The Department of Licenses and Inspections issued a violation. The tenant now claims that the storefront shows signs of structural failure.

The applicant stated that an engineer told him structural damage has caused the stained glass transoms to buckle. He added that the metal cornice above the transom requires a great amount of work, and should be removed. Ms. Matzkin confirmed that the cornice must be dismantled in order to repair the transoms. Mr. Baron suggested disassembling the storefront to make the necessary repairs and rebuilding it using the historic fabric to match the Commission's photograph of the building at the time of

designation. Mr. Baron offered to work with the architect to develop a design for the historic storefront, but explained that the architect declined the offer.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend denial of the proposed modern storefront. They said that applicant should repair the historic storefront and the stained glass transoms. They voted in favor of removing the existing material covering the historic storefront to explore conditions.

1220 Pine Street

Paul Bouikidis, Owner

Matthew Weinstone, Applicant

John Donnelly, Contractor/Applicant

DATE: c. 1820; c. 1900 - altered

PROPOSAL: Window, door and barge board replacement

Mr. Baron introduced this very complicated project that has been worked on by several owners and several contractors, mostly without permits or Historical Commission approval. At the time of designation, the building had two-over-two wood windows and ground floor windows covered with boards. A former owner bricked up the ground floor windows and installed aluminum one-over-one windows in the third floor and aluminum storm windows on the whole facade. Under Mr. Boukidis' ownership, the second floor wood two-over-two windows have been removed and new vinyl one-over-one windows have been purchased. The contractor, Mr. Donnelly, installed a new window and made a mock up with a wood mullion glued onto the face of the window to create the appearance of a two-over-two window. He claims that behind the storm windows a pedestrian can not tell the difference from the old windows. The owner proposes to remove all of the storm windows, repair the wood frames and install the applied muntin on all of the windows to create a uniform appearance. On the ground floor, Mr. Boukidis would install true wood divided light windows.

Committee members said that the mock-up does not look like a true divided light window. The openings have been closed down to accomodate the new frame surrounding the replacement windows, and the depth of the glass is extremely shallow vis a vis the frame. The screens and storm windows that partially hide this problem have themselves never received Commission approval. The Committee said that to approve these windows sends an inconsistent message to all the homeowners on this street and elsewhere who have installed wood, true divided light windows at the behest of the Commission. Mr. Baron said that a neighbor of this property came to his door the other night concerned about the aluminum windows that have already been installed on the property.

Mr. Donnelly explained that most neighbors like the work on the property and that as an investment property it would not be worth it for the owner to invest in more expensive wood windows.

He said that in his opinion the owner would not be interested in any other work if he can not keep these windows. Mr. Baron explained that the Committee must continue to review the other items proposed for this building unless Mr. Donnelly wishes to withdraw the application. Mr. Donnelly said that he did not wish to withdraw the application.

The Committee members looked favorably on the replacement of the bargeboard and roofline trim so long as it matches the existing. For the main roof, this includes a bead molding on the edge of the board as evidenced by the surviving piece near the front of the building.

On the side door and frame that has already been installed, Committee members thought that the contractor built the frame of the transom too low. They recommend that the transom frame be rebuilt and glass installed. They also favored reopening the ground floor windows and installing new wood frame windows.

Mr. Baron explained that the building had been completely repointed without approval on the ground floor with an over-wide joint and over-hard mortar and on the upper floor with a narrower joint and softer mortar. He recommended approval of the pointing because he thought damage would be done cutting out the hard mortar on the ground floor.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the repointing, reopening the ground floor windows, installation of wood windows on the first floor and replacing the wood bargeboard conditional upon it matching the extant beaded board. They also recommended in favor of replacing the metal roof molding on the rear side of the building to match the existing.

The Committee unanimously voted to recommend denial of the proposed vinyl windows at the second floor and of the existing door frame and transom. They asked that the contractor modify the frame to fit the opening and to glaze the transom.

2211 Walnut Street

1260 Housing Development Corporation, Owner

John Donnelly, Architect/Applicant

DATE: c. 1850

PROPOSAL: Brownstone repair, new windows in existing frames

This proposal includes installing new wood sash into existing frames to match the existing historic ones. The applicant also wants permission either to repair the badly damaged brownstone facade with epoxied brownstone patches, or fill in the damaged areas with stucco and paint the entire facade to look like brownstone. The applicant prefers stuccoing and painting to patching in the interest of color uniformity. The Committee expressed reservations about painting over the building's facade, which can lead to more problems.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the arch top sash in existing frames, and brownstone patching with an integral brown mortar. Mr. Baron gave the applicant a technical brief describing this repair method for brownstone.

1710 Pine Street

Dr. Stanton Smullens, Owner
Mark Motl, Architect/Applicant

DATE: c. 1845

PROPOSAL: Paint removal, repointing, replace shutters

This proposal includes paint removal and repointing of the front facade as well as new shutters to match existing. Mr. Baron stated that the proposed mortar mixture with equal parts lime and cement seemed too hard. He suggested halving the amount of Portland cement in the mixture. Mr. Motl agreed to a mixture of two lime, one Portland cement, and four sand.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval, with staff to approve a mortar sample.

1700 Locust Street

Victor Fiore, Owner
Edwin Bronstein, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1895

PROPOSAL: Facade rehabilitation, replace railing, install lights, signage

This proposal to rehabilitate the building into a hair salon includes paint removal, new one-over-one wood windows, awnings, removing a door on Locust Street, new steps, a planter, and altering a railing on 17th Street. The architect seeks to light the building.

Committee members agreed that the paint removal would re-expose the Victorian red and brown coloration of the building and reveal something of the historic window shapes. They approved the proposed new wood windows, new blue awnings, and modern signage. Lenore Millhollen, of the Center City Residents Association, expressed disapproval of the awnings, which she cited as excessive. Ms. Batcheler also took exception to the number of awnings.

The applicant wants to build a brick and stone pier filling in the non-original Locust Street entrance. He explained that the brick and brownstone would match the rest of the facade. Committee members asked that staff review stone and brick samples prior to construction.

The Committee disapproved the proposed ultra modern railing on 17th Street. They recommended keeping the existing, traditional, vertically oriented railing.

The architect wants to install up lights and a glowing light tube attached at the cornice to illuminate the building. Committee members recommended lessening the amount of light and painting the fixtures to match the bricks.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of windows, paint removal, new steps, planter, signage, removal of the Locust Street entrance, and lighting. The staff should review samples of the paint removal and the brick and stone used in the door in-fill pier. The Committee voted unanimously to recommend disapproving the proposed railings.

265-271 South 15th Street

Paul J. Corson, Owner

Patrick Dewey, Applicant

DATE: 1928

PROPOSAL: Legalize roll-down grates, install new awning

The pharmacy owner has installed roll-down grates without a permit and seeks to legalize them. The grate housing attaches directly into the highly ornamental stonework above the door. Mr. Baron explained that he advised Mr. Corson to install the security grates inside. The owner explained that the amount of space between the original and drop ceilings is not large enough to accommodate an interior security grate: he presented a letter from the manufacturer stating the same. Ms. Matzkin suggested that the photographs showed that the contractor could install the grate housing in a soffit in the new dropped ceiling, and that it could fall partially below the tops of the transoms.

This proposal calls for an awning to cover a door and a window, hiding the extant roll-down gate housing. A single awning will span both openings and cover over decorative brick and stonework. Committee members noted that since none of the other shops have awnings on this facade this proposal would create an imbalance on the ground floor.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend disapproval of exterior grates and proposed awnings, and to recommend approval of interior grates. They suggested Mr. Corson consider a wood blade sign or window signage rather than the awning.

115-117 North 15th Street

Franklin Tower Historic Association, Owner

Patrick Dewey, Applicant

DATE: 1928

PROPOSAL: New awnings

This proposal calls for the removal of an overlarge canopy with support poles at the entrance to this apartment building, and replacement with a smaller canvas awning.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval.

235 South 10th Street

Tom Koenig, Owner

Phil DiDonato, Contractor/Applicant

DATE: c.1840

PROPOSAL: Exhaust fans

This proposal involves removing an existing exhaust fan located on the side (10th Street) facade of the building, and replacing it with two exhaust fans on either side of the existing one. Mr. Baron explained that the two new vents would be located within bricked-in windows to avoid damaging historic fabric. Mr. Baron asked the Committee to consider approving a fan with an interior blower and a flush grate on the outside that should be painted to match the bricks.

Committee members agreed with the applicant that lack of interior space necessitates an alternate plan. Mr. McCoubrey suggested building a wood fence or screen on top of the existing brick wall high enough to block the new vents from public sight. Ms. Batcheler and Ms. Matzkin agreed, but specified the fence should be horizontally louvered and approved by staff. Mr. McCoubrey added that a fence taller than ten feet requires a zoning variance.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the fans, conditional upon the installation of a wood screen built high enough to conceal them.

1913 Delancey Street

Kirk Kirkpatrick, Owner/Applicant

DATE: 1917

PROPOSAL: Alter entrance

This proposal calls for changes to the rear facade of an addition to a Spruce Street building now broken off to form a separate residence. It involves closing up an added door, lengthening a window into a new door on the other end of the facade, lengthening existing windows below ground, and creating a new below-ground step. The owner also proposed replacing the damaged bricks in the relieving and jack arches. He also wants to add a new railing at a second floor doorway for safety.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval.

1912 Rittenhouse Square Street

Claire Oliver, Owner/Applicant

DATE: 1886

PROPOSAL: Awning, material for steps

This application calls for altering the material of the proposed reconstructed front steps from stone to cast stone, and adding a sign canopy over the proposed front door. Committee members asked that the staff approve a sample of the cast stone.

The Committee members disapproved the proposed awning in shape and coloration, recommending a shed-type awning and a reversal of the colors: they thought the cream field would appear dirty faster than the blue. Mr. Zucker, representing the owner, said that they do not intend having letters or a logo on the side of the awning.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of a shed-type awning to fit with the opening, and with reversed coloration.

120 Elfreths Alley

Miriam Punzalan, Owner

Dick Caswell, Contractor/Applicant

DATE: c. 1728

PROPOSAL: New windows, door

This proposal calls for new twelve-over-twelve windows with half-inch putty-glazed muntins, shutters, cedar shakes on the pent eave, a new door, and restoration of the front dormer to its original state. Mr. Caswell, the contractor, used photographs of other houses on the block to show what he intends to do. He explained that the owner wants the windows replaced with more historically accurate, but still twelve-over-twelve, windows. Mr. Caswell further stated that interior renovations revealed the frame of a side window, which may prove the originals were double hung. The applicant also requested permission to replace the existing modern door with a panelled wood door appropriate to the 1728 construction of the residence, based on the one at the Elfreths Alley Museum; to re-shingle the pent eave with cedar shakes; and to install historically accurate shutters.

Mr. Caswell asked the Committee to review proposed alterations to the remodeled front dormer. Committee members examined old insurance surveys and an older photograph of the rear dormer for proof of the original construction. The photograph revealed a nine-over-nine, double hung window in a shed-roofed dormer, and panelled shutters on a second floor window instead of the usual louver type.

Ms. Batcheler pointed out the importance of this very old building, and recommended the applicant and owner take an archaeological approach to the project. She suggested asking Nick Wyman of the National Park Service to examine the work.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval, with staff to approve details based on further above-ground archaeology.

2032 Delancey Street

Tom Natalini, Applicant

DATE: c. 1870

PROPOSAL: Repointing

This proposal involves repointing the facade using mortar of three parts sand, two parts lime, and one part cement.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval.

Respectfully submitted,

R. Scott Jacob

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