

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE OF THE PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

16 January 1985

Herbert W. Levy, A.I.A., Chairman

Present: Herbert W. Levy, A.I.A., Chairman, Architectural Advisor to the Commission
Theodore T. Bartley, Jr., F.A.I.A., Preservation Committee, American Institute of Architects, Philadelphia Chapter
John Dickey, F.A.I.A.
Janet S. Klein, Vice Chairman of the Commission
Richard Tyler, Historian
Patricia Siemiontkowski, Architectural Historian

Also: Robert Jaeger, Philadelphia Historic Preservation Corporation
MaryLou MacFarland, Preservation Coalition of Philadelphia
Harry Fertik, Owner and Randy Henkels, Architect, to request permission to demolish the house at 222 S. Jessup Street.
David Gifford, Esq., John Lally and Robert Herd to request permission to demolish the buildings at 103-105 Walnut Street, 107-109 Walnut Street, 117 Walnut Street and 136 S. Front Street.
Paul Calvert, Architect, to present plans for renovations to the rear of 413 Spruce Street.
Richard Angelozzi, Owner, to request an approval of a rear addition constructed without the benefit of a building permit and the Commission's review and approval.
David Beck and Bill Krigan, Architects to present plans for the rehabilitation of 107-109 S. 2nd Street.

DEMOLITIONS

222 S. Jessup Street, Harry Fertik, Owner and Randy Henkels, Architect. Mr. Fertik appeared before the members of the Architectural Committee with his architect, Randy Henkels, to request permission to demolish 222 S. Jessup Street, a two-and-a-half story, nineteenth century, brick rowhouse.

Mr. Fertik previously received the approval of the Historical Commission to construct a one-story link connecting the building at 243 S. Quince Street with the building at 222 S. Jessup Street. Mr. Fertik had hoped to preserve both buildings, connect them with a link addition and use them as his family residence. Mr. Fertik, however, was denied a variance by the Zoning Board of Adjustment which would have allowed him to construct this addition. Mr. Fertik is appealing the Zoning Board's decision on this matter and a re-hearing is scheduled for 31 January 1985. Mr. Fertik also decided to request consideration and approval of his request for permission to demolish the Jessup Street house in the event that he again is denied his variance. If not permitted to construct the link addition as per plans approved by the Historical Commission, Mr. Fertik will consider demolition of the Jessup Street house and the construction of a large, two-and-a-half story addition to the rear of the Quince Street building. This alternate scheme will give the Fertiks the additional space they need, will meet all zoning requirements and will not require a variance.

The members of the Architectural Committee sympathized with Mr. Fertik and suggested that the Historian attend the Zoning Board of Adjustment hearing on 31 January 1985

to support Mr. Fertik's request for a variance. The Committee members do not favor the proposed demolition of the Jessup Street house and reiterated their support of the owner's initial scheme for linking the two buildings. However, the Committee voted to recommend to the Historical Commission that it not impose the six-month statutory delay of demolition. Since Mr. Fertik has already explored alternatives to the demolition of the Jessup Street house and has found one acceptable to the Historical Commission, an imposition of the Commission's six-month delay would merely be punitive. The Committee strongly supports Mr. Fertik in his effort to obtain a variance from the Zoning Board of Adjustment for a development that will ensure the preservation of these two fine buildings and an important corner in Washington Square West.

103-105 Walnut Street, 107-109 Walnut Street, 117 Walnut Street and 136 S. Front Street, David B. Gifford, Esq., John Lally and Robert Herd. Messrs. Gifford, Lally and Herd appeared before the Architectural Committee to present a request for permission to demolish the buildings at 103-105, 107-109 and 117 Walnut Street and 136 S. Front Street, a collection of nineteenth century commercial structures in Old City.

Mr. Lally explained to the Committee that Interstate Industries had acquired the Front and Walnut Street buildings with the intention of constructing an office building for Interstate's own use and for tenant leasing some time in the future. Interstate owns the entire parcel of land bounded by Front Street, Hancock Street, Walnut Street and Sansom Street except for two parcels, 149 S. Hancock Street and 115 Walnut Street. Over the years, Interstate considered various proposals for the development and reuse of the existing buildings, but, according to Mr. Lally, none proved feasible. All of these proposals would have required a substantial financial investment by Interstate, an investment which the company's stockholders could not make.

Mr. Lally reported that a lack of tenant interest in the buildings caused them to stand vacant for several years. Efforts to sell the parcel and buildings also proved unsuccessful. The parcel is currently not on the market. As a result, the buildings have become a financial burden for Interstate and drain the company of approximately \$45,000 a year in insurance, taxes and other miscellaneous expenses. To eliminate these costs, Interstate wishes to demolish the Front and Walnut Street structures.

Members of the Architectural Committee expressed their belief that a market for residential and/or commercial use exists at Front and Walnut Streets and that numerous developers would be interested in undertaking the buildings' rehabilitation. This is particularly true in view of the construction of the Sheraton Hotel across Walnut Street. Mr. Herd did not agree and argued that the buildings could not be rehabilitated suitably in view of code requirements and the siting of the buildings on the parcel. He did advise the Committee, however, that Interstate would be willing to sell the parcel and buildings if an acceptable price were offered.

Following some additional discussion, the members of the Architectural Committee voted to recommend that the Historical Commission impose its six month statutory delay on the demolition of the buildings at 103-105 Walnut Street, 107-109 Walnut Street, 117 Walnut Street and 136 S. Front Street. During this period the Commission staff and other interested parties will search for a solution to the preservation of these buildings.

Mr. Tyler advised the applicants that the Area F legislation for this block requires that the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority and the Independence National Historical Park be informed of the proposed demolition of these buildings. Both agencies have thirty days in which to decide whether or not they will exercise options available to them under this legislation. The Area F controls require also that the proposed demolition of the buildings be advertised in a newspaper of general circulation for a specified period of time and that the owners of the buildings be billed for this service.

SUBMISSIONS FOR ALTERATIONS

413 Spruce Street, Paul Calvert, Architect. Mr. Calvert presented to the Committee his plans for renovations to the rear of 413 Spruce Street, a three-and-a-half story house built c. 1820.

The Committee members examined the plans and elevations submitted by Mr. Calvert and, following some discussion, voted to recommend their approval to the Commission.

2216 Mt. Vernon Street, Richard Angelozzi, Owner. Mr. Angelozzi appeared before the Architectural Committee to request the approval of his replacement of a one-story shed of frame construction with a one-story masonry addition. Mr. Angelozzi explained to the Committee that his contractor had performed the work without benefit of a building permit and the Historical Commission's approval.

Since the addition is not visible from any street, the Committee members voted to recommend to the Commission an approval of the completed work.

107-109 S. 2nd Street, David Beck and Bill Briger, Architects. Mr. Beck presented to the members of the Architectural Committee final working drawings for the rehabilitation of 107-109 S. 2nd Street, a five-story commercial structure of a 1930's vintage.

The Committee found Mr. Beck's plans for the rehabilitation of the 2nd Street building to be acceptable and voted to recommend a final approval of this project.

711 Spruce Street, Roland Davies, Architect. The members of the Architectural Committee reviewed the architect's drawings for alterations to the rear of

711 Spruce Street, a three-and-a-half story townhouse built c. 1795.

Since the window sash were not shown on the elevation drawings, the Committee members were not able to determine whether the existing sash were double-hung or casements and whether they contained one-over-one light sash or smaller light sash. The members asked that the architect either complete the drawings or submit photographs to show the existing sash.

At the second and third floors of the new addition, the Committee asked that small light, double-hung or casement sash to be consistent with the scale and character of the sash on the existing building be installed instead of single sheets of glass. On the ground floor, one-story addition, large panes of glass are acceptable since they will not be visible from the street.

Subject to the required change to the second and third floor window sash and the completion of the submission, a final approval of this project is recommended. Subsequent to the 16 January 1985 meeting, the Commission staff received the revised elevation drawings as requested by the Committee.

PLAQUES

1025 Westview Street. The Committee recommends the approval of a Certified Restored plaque for display on the building at 1025 Westview Street.

117 Elfreth's Alley. The Committee reviewed the owner's request for a plaque for 117 Elfreth's Alley. The members found the cellar bulkhead hardware to be inappropriate and agreed that a plaque could not be awarded to 117 Elfreth's Alley until the hardware is replaced.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Siemiontkowski
Architectural Historian