

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

9 April 1987

David Hollenberg, Chairman

Present: David Hollenberg, Chairman
Theodore T. Bartley, Jr., F.A.I.A., Preservation
Committee American Institute of Architects, Philadelphia
Chapter
John Dickey, F.A.I.A.
Mark MacQueen, Esq., Chief Assistant City Solicitor, Law
Department
John Street, Esq., Councilman, Fifth District
Richard Tyler, Historic Preservation Officer
Randal Baron, Preservation Planner
Terri Koob, Executive Secretary
Maureen Heaney, Clerk Steno I

Also: Bernard Dubin & James Leigh of Medifac to present a
proposal for the complete rehabilitation of the
Granary at 411 N. 20th Street
John B. Rosenthal of Regent Street Associates to present
a proposal for the substantial rehabilitation of the
Regent-Rennoc Court Buildings located in the 5100 block
of Regent Street
Francis J. Atkinson Jr., of Francis J. Atkinson & Sons
to present a proposal for work at St. John the
Evangelist, Church, 21 S. 13th Street
Nicholas Kovacs, Applicant, to present a proposal for
substantial rehabilitation of 1939 Mt. Vernon Street
William Becker of the Reading Company; David O'Neil
General Manager of the Reading Terminal; and, Daniel
McCoubrey and Steven Wiesenthal of Venturi, Rauch and
Scott Brown, Architects, to present a proposal for the
heating and air-conditioning system to be installed in
the Reading Terminal Market
Alison Towers, Applicant, to present a proposal for a roof
dormer at 815 S. Hancock Street
Martha Nestor and Mike Pate of John Milner Associates to
present a proposal for changes to the original design
of Mellon Independence Center, 8th & Market Streets
David Slovick, Architect, to present a proposal for the
screening of rooftop condensor units located at
1213-15 Locust Street
David Marohn of Venturi, Rauch and Scott Brown, Architects
also Nancy Trainer and Marianna Thomas of Thomas and

Continued

Newswanger Architects to present a proposal for the renovation and restoration of the Furness Library University of Pennsylvania
Martin Brooker to present a proposal for the cleaning and restoration of 48-50 S. Front Street
J. Shane Creamer and Hugh J. Bracken Attorneys for the Sameric Corporation to present a demolition permit application for 1908-1910 Chestnut Street
William G. Sarnacki, Applicant, to present a proposal for the complete restoration of the facade of 242 S. 17th Street
William Collins, Applicant, to present a sign proposal for 757 S. Front Street
And others

ALTERATIONS

411 N. 20th Street, Bernard Dubin and James Leigh of Medifac appeared before the Architectural Committee to present a proposal for a complete renovation to the Granary located at 411 N. 20th Street. The changes presented to the Committee today were as follows:

- 1) modification of the entrance on the south side as well as on 20th Street and construction of concrete steps as an enhanced entrance to the building,
- 2) cleaning and repairing of the facade of building;
- 3) repainting of the building with cementitious paint;
- 4) repair and replacement in kind of the existing steel windows;
- 5) replacement of the greenhouse on the roof; and,
- 6) reroofing building with EDMF roof.

The Committee reviewed the drawings presented and recommended an approval in concept of this project. Prior to final approval, the Committee requested shop drawings. A copy of the Part II application and more information on the greenhouse replacement was also requested.

5111-5122 Regent Street-Regent-Rennoc Court, John B. Rosenthal of Regent Street Associates. This submission involves the substantial rehabilitation of the Regent-Rennoc Court buildings. These buildings, constructed between 1908 and 1910, will be converted into eighty Section 8 rental units.

Exterior alterations include the complete restoration of the front porches and the replacement of all windows with new wood sash within the existing masonry openings.

Interior alterations include the restoration of the entryways and the staircase area. Mr. Rosenthal stated that it was his intention to try to maintain the historic feeling of the building.

The Committee unanimously agreed to recommend an approval of this project.

- 21 S. 13th Street, St. John the Evangelist Church, Francis J. Atkinson of Francis J. Atkinson & Sons. On 17 April 1985, the Architectural Committee reviewed the removal of eight limestone spires from atop the Church's two towers. This removal was undertaken without a building permit or the Historical Commission's approval. These spires were removed owing to serious structural deterioration.

Mr. Atkinson proposes to furnish steeplejack labor, rigging, material and insurance to install a copper cornice type band with a masonry cap and a fiberglass membrane roof on top of the buttressed columns to give a finished look and make the building water-tight. This proposal also calls for the fabrication of a copper cornice and the repair of the existing masonry cap. A fiberglass emulsion coating will then be used to make cap and cornice water-tight. A drawing showing the proposed treatment was presented.

The Committee recommended the elimination of the membrane topping and instead recommended that the copper sheathing should completely cover and cap each column. The copper will develop a green patina and should not be painted.

The Committee unanimously agreed to recommend approval of this project pending the receipt and approval of a detailed revised drawing.

- 1939 Mt. Vernon Street, Nicholas Kovacs, Applicant. This proposal calls for the installation of a new two-over-two double hung window sash, the closing of three small masonry window openings on the 20th Street elevation and a roofdeck atop the two story rear section of the building.

The Committee reviewed the drawings presented and suggested that the roofdeck be pulled back several feet from the side of the building. The Committee requested drawings showing the location of side windows and an elevation of the excavated side wall of the building, a brick sample, specifications and information on what type of masonry cleaning is going to be used to remove the graffiti.

The Committee recommended an approval of this project pending receipt of specifications and revised drawings.

- 1000 Spruce Street. Randal Baron presented the owner's proposal for the removal of a ground level storefront on the 10th Street

side of 1000 Spruce Street and the closing of this opening with new brick masonry infill. The Contractor does not intend to tooth in the new brick but rather to create a vertical joint between the existing walls and the patch. Mr. Baron presented a brick sample to the Committee for their review.

The Committee requested drawings and specifications for this project before making a recommendation on this project.

Subsequently David Hollenberg has reviewed the proposal and recommended approval of the work.

12th & Arch Street, Reading Terminal Market, William Becker of the Reading Company, David O'Neil, General Manager of the Reading Terminal, Daniel McCoubrey and Steven Wiesenthal of Venturi, Rauch and Scott Brown Architects. Mr. Becker explained to the Committee that this is a three phase project.

Mr. McCoubrey, Project Manager, stated that the first phase of this project, which is being introduced today, consists of the installation of an air conditioning system. The vents will be placed above the doors to the Terminal. Drawings were presented to illustrate the location of the air-conditioning ducts.

The Committee reviewed the proposal for the Reading Terminal Market and recommended an approval of this project. David Hollenberg abstained from voting, because of his direct involvement with other phases of the Reading Terminal rehabilitation.

815 S. Hancock Street, Alison Towers, Applicant. Despite the conflict with The Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines, the Historical Commission, at its stated meeting of 25 March 1987, agreed to allow the addition of a dormer window on the front roof of 815 S. Hancock Street. The Historical Commission granted this request under waiver owing to the owner's claim of unusual hardship. The Commission would not permit, however, the addition of a projecting cellar bulkhead nor the replacement of the simple box cornice with a more elaborate cornice. The box cornice should be replaced in kind to match the original design. The two basement windows must remain as they currently exist. It was further agreed that the dormer design must return to the Architectural Committee for final design decision.

The Committee reviewed the drawings submitted by Ms. Towers and suggested that the trim on the dormer be made thinner and that the dormer window should be an atypical casement window. The Committee unanimously agreed on an approval of this project pending the receipt of drawings illustrating these changes.

Subsequent to the meeting Ms. Towers has brought in drawings showing the required thinner window moldings.

Mellon Independence Center, 8th & Market Streets, Martha Nestor and Mike Pate of John Milner Associates. This proposal calls for changing the entrance at 8th & Market Streets to include only one set of doors rather than the three sets of doors approved on the original plans. They proposed that a second entrance in the central portion of the building be recessed and that a set of exterior steps be installed behind the building line in the entryway. The plans also included the removal of the clerestory atop the masonry bridge over Filbert Street.

The Committee reviewed the drawings and recommended that the entryway at 8th & Market Streets retain the three sets of doors to preserve the scale of a major entrance to the building. The Committee recommended the approval of the recessed entryway and steps. The Committee noted that the clerestory of the bridge was part of the original design but agreed that it would be too expensive to repair. They voted not to require that it be retained. However, they strongly suggested that it should be kept if possible. The National Park Service has already granted a preliminary approval allowing its removal. David Hollenberg abstained from voting.

1213-1215 Locust Street, David Slovic, Architect. It recently came to the attention of the Historical Commission staff that several rooftop condensor units were clearly visible atop the building at 1213-15 Locust Street. Mr. Slovic was notified of this situation and asked to appear before the Architectural Committee to discuss screening them from view. Mr. Slovic explained to the Committee that it is his intention to put a screen around the condensor units to help hide them from view.

The Committee recommended that Mr. Slovic install a lattice work fence to the rear and west side of the condensers on top of the building. The Committee requested revised drawings be presented to the Committee for review and approval.

Furness Library, University of Pennsylvania, David Marohn of Venturi, Rauch and Scott Brown Architects along with Nancy Trainer and Marianna Thomas of Thomas & Newswanger Architects to present a preliminary proposal for the cleaning and restoration of the exterior of the Library. There was a slide presentation which illustrated the proposed restoration work.

The Committee approved this project in concept. However, a more detailed submission was requested for a final review at a future meeting.

48-50 S. Front Street, Martin Brooker, Applicant. Mr. Brooker presented a proposal for cleaning and stripping the paint off the stone base and walls of the building. New windows and doors were proposed for the front and side of the building.

The Committee requested specifications for the masonry cleaning and brick repointing. The Committee also commented that the

proposed new doors are not sympathetic to the character of the building and do not follow the historic design of the building as shown in our pictures.

The Committee suggested that Mr. Brooker redesign the doors and windows to follow what appears in the historic photographs.

242 S. 17th Street, William G. Sarnacki, Applicant. Mr. Sarnacki presented a proposal for restoration of the building's facade. The first floor of the building was badly damaged in the 1960s with marble ground floor treatment. The original iron spot brick facade was chipped away and is largely unsalvageable. This restoration includes the following:

- 1) rebuilding the ground floor to match the historic design of the building as shown in an historic photograph
- 2) repair all damaged window sills;
- 3) remove existing glazing compound and replace it with new compound and caulk around frames at masonry;
- 4) paint all window units in color as directed by Architect;
- 5) paint all exterior ferrous metal in color as directed by Architect; and,
- 6) color of gypsum shapes shall match existing masonry.

The Committee recommended an approval of this project. The Committee stated that they preferred the ground floor to be rebuilt in iron spot brick if it is available. However, if this brick is not available, stucco will be an acceptable alternative.

757 S. Front Street, William Collins, Applicant. This proposal calls for the addition of signage to the "Tivoli" restaurant and cabaret. The two signs will consist of plastic letters mounted on brick walls, one on the gable end of historic house and another is on an adjacent, nonhistoric, modern building. Sketches of the two signs proposed were presented to the Committee for their review.

The Committee rejected the concept of signage on the gable wall but approved, in concept, the second sign on the modern building. However, the Committee requested a more detailed sketch of the sign.

1910 Wallace Street, John Gibbons, Architect. Mr. Gibbons submitted for consideration plans and elevations for the complete restoration of the front facade of 1910 Wallace Street, a three-story Italianate rowhouse built c. 1860.

Mr. Gibbons' proposal calls for the removal of a 1930s commercial window on the ground floor and the restoration of this area to its original residential appearance as documented in the Commission's files.

An approval of this project is recommended subject to an on-site staff inspection of brick and mortar samples.

2301 Green Street. This proposal first came to the Committee at its 12 March 1987 meeting, when plans for rehabilitating 2301 Green Street were presented. The project received a recommended approval pending the receipt and review of a site line study for the roof decks. This site line study was presented to the Committee today for its review.

The Committee reviewed the site line study and recommended that the roof decks be moved back approximately four or five feet. A new site line study was requested before final approval can be recommended for this project.

Subsequent to the Committee meeting David Hollenberg rejected window details for aluminum replacement windows for this property. He rejected the window design based on the fact that it does not match the profile and lines of the original wooden windows which are being removed.

DEMOLITION

1908-1910 Chestnut Street, J. Shane Creamer and Hugh J. Bracken, Attorneys for the Sameric Corporation, appeared before the Committee to request approval for a demolition permit. Mr. Creamer stated that the basis for the permit is financial hardship and presented supporting material for this request.

Richard Tyler stated that according to the ordinance, a study must be presented to the Committee that proves that the building cannot be used for any purpose for which it is or may be reasonably adapted. The owner must demonstrate that the sale of the property is impracticable, that commercial rental cannot provide a reasonable rate of return and that other potential uses of the property are foreclosed.

The representatives for the Sameric Corporation stated that they are in the theatre business and do not wish to use the building, as it presently exists, as anything other than a movie theatre. They also stated, however, that in the long run they would perhaps be interested in using the land for a shopping mall. The owner was under the misunderstanding that he had to prove only that the building was not economical to run as an unaltered movie theater, however, the Committee recommended that he should study all reasonable reuses for the property.

The Committee stated that it will review the report submitted and make a recommendation to the Commission.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Heaney
Clerk Stenographer I

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