

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

8 August 1985

David Hollenberg, Chairman

Present: David Hollenberg, Chairman

David DeLong

Herbert Levy, A.I.A.

Richard Tyler, Historian

Patricia A. Siemlontkowski, Architectural Historian

Randal Baron, Executive Secretary

Terry Koob, Clerk Steno II

Also: Robert P. Thomas and Lauri Feinberg of Campbell Thomas & Co. to present plans for 217 Church Street

Sabrina Soong of Soong Associates, Inc. to present renovation plans for 1019 Cherry Street and 127 N. 10th Street

Yuk Tong Lou, owner, 1019 Cherry Street

Ho Chang, owner, 127 N. 10th Street

Raymond Rola, Architect, and Michael Kenney to present plans for the rehabilitation of 3408-3410-3412 Sansom Street

Tony James of Stephen Goldner Associates to present plans for the rehabilitation of 771 S. 2nd Street

Michael Hauptman of Rothschild Co., Architect, to present plans for the rehabilitation of Biddle Hall, Naval Home

Kim Fisher of George T. Manos, Architects, to present plans for 201-203 S. 12th Street

Allan Sobel, to present rehabilitation plans for 303-311 Vine Street

James B. Francis, Architect, and Barry Stupine to present a courtesy submission on the proposed addition to the Veterinary School at the University of

Pennsylvania

and others

ALTERATIONS

217 Church Street, Lauri Feinberg and Robert Thomas of Campbell-Thomas Architects, Inc. Ms. Feinberg and Mr. Thomas presented plans for the rehabilitation and reuse of this four story, brick, commercial building c. 1855. Mr. Thomas explained that most of the work will be cleaning and repairing the front and rear facades. The plans also call for the addition of a roof deck and the installation of chimney stacks which will protrude approximately three feet above the roofline. Neither the deck nor the stacks will be visible from the street.

The Committee unanimously agreed to recommend an approval of these rehabilitation plans. Mr. Hollenberg requested that since this is a Tax Act project, we would like to have a copy of the site line study should the State Bureau for Historic Preservation require such an undertaking.

- 1019 Cherry Street, Sabrina Soong, Architect. Ms. Soong submitted a proposal for the renovation of the 1840s, residential building with turn-of-the-century commercial alterations. This proposal calls for the removal of the front facade and replacing it with an authentic traditional Chinese style storefront with new windows, doors and balconies. Ms. Soong explained that the structure will be used as a Chinese art and souvenir store on the first and second floors and an apartment on the third floor. The new facade will be designed and erected by the Ancient Chinese Architecture Construction Company from China which is the same company that constructed Philadelphia's Chinese Gate. The Committee was shown photographs of typical Chinese storefronts to be used as models for the new facade proposed for 1019 Cherry Street. The architect presented two preliminary designs for the Committee's consideration. The members unanimously decided upon the design scheme which portrayed a simple, flat roof treatment. It was the opinion of the Committee that a flat roofline would be more compatible with an urban streetscape than would a roof of curving lines and wide eaves.

The Committee members agreed that Chinatown's significance lay in the community's reflection of Chinese culture and tradition and not in its early architectural development. Indeed, those buildings in Chinatown designated historical by the Historical Commission were done so owing to their cultural association with the Chinese community rather than their architectural merit. In view of this, the Committee agreed to recommend an approval, in concept, of the renovation plans which call for a simple, flat roofline. Ms. Soong explained that the design for the front is not yet final and that further refinements will be necessary. The Committee asked that Ms. Soong resubmit her plans to the Committee for a final review when the design is complete.

- 127 N. 10th Street, Sabrina Soong, Architect, and Ho Chang, Owner. Ms. Soong presented renovation plans for this three-and-a-half story, brick, historically designated building c. 1830. This proposal calls for the application of a new brick veneer over the existing brick facade. It also entails cutting a grade level door opening out of an existing storefront window. Installation of a recessed, brick infill area above the new commercial window is also proposed.

The Committee reviewed these renovation plans and objected to the proposed application of a new brick veneer over the existing facade which the Committee members agreed should be cleaned and repaired where necessary. The Committee also recommended that the owner retain the existing store window opening and fill the top portion with a glazed transom. The watertable may be cut down only to permit an at grade door. The remainder of this feature should remain intact.

Mr. Chang expressed his strong desire for permission to apply a new brick veneer to 127 N. 10th Street citing the many others in existence in Chinatown. He explained to the Committee that is a Chinese cultural trait to renew their buildings. The Committee members agreed to have a list prepared and forwarded to Mr. Chang noting several old buildings where excellent results were obtained from cleaning old brickwork.

The Committee unanimously agreed to table its recommendation on these plans pending an on-site inspection of the property and the streetscape. Mr. Chang was informed that should he disagree with the Committee recommendation, he may present his case to the Historical Commission at its Stated Meeting.

Subsequent to the 8 August meeting a member of the staff and a member of the Committee visited the 100 block of N. 10th Street and found the majority of the buildings to have been altered either partially or completely. Owing to the substantial change in the integrity of the streetscape and the context of the building, it was agreed that certification should be recinded and the building at 127 N. 10th Street removed from the Philadelphia Historical Commission Register of Historic Places.

3408-3410-3412 Sansom Street, Raymond Rola, Architect. Mr. Rola presented plans for additions and alterations to the rears of these Sansom Row houses built between 1869 and 1871. The houses stand two stories tall and are crowned with a Mansard roof and have brownstone facades. The rears of the buildings are presently visible from Moravian Street. However, Mr. Rola presented a letter from the University of Pennsylvania verifying the plans of the university to construct buildings behind the rears of these Sansom Row houses blocking them from street view. Mr. Rola's plans, as presented, call for the renovation of these three houses into a bar and restaurant with commercial and residential space. A rear wall is planned to screen the trash. Mr. DeLong suggested that this wall be reduced to the height of the transom windows which fall just below the bottom line of the standing seam copper roof.

The proposed installation of balconies on several of the apartment units necessitates the cutting of some window openings into doors.

The Committee unanimously agreed to recommend an approval of these plans subject to the submission of revised details for the rear wall. Since this will be a Tax Act project which requires the review of the Bureau for Historic Preservation and the National Park Service, any changes to the exterior demanded by the state and federal preservation offices must be referred back to this office for further review and final approval.

771 S. 2nd Street, Tony James of Stephen Goldner Associates, Architects.

Ms. Siemiontkowski stated that this Queen Village area building has stood vacant for a number of years. The current proposal calls for the conversion of this 1837 Baptist Church which later became the Neziner Synagogue into residential units. Mr. James explained that the proposed plans will keep the front facade as close to the existing design as feasible. Although some windows will be altered to accommodate the lowering of floor levels on the interior, the existing window design will be maintained. The ground floor doors will be replaced to match the second floor level doors and a set of double stairs will be installed with safety rails leading to the second floor entrance.

The Committee reviewed the preliminary design scheme presented by Mr. James and advised him to submit more detailed drawings for final review and approval as soon as they are available.

Naval Home, Michael Hauptman of Rothschild Company, Architects. Mr. Hauptman submitted a proposal to the Committee for the conversion of Biddle Hall into sixty-two apartments. The tenant entrances will be off to the sides of the building, accessible by gravel walks, with the central formal entrance used for visitors. Service entrances are planned along the sides and rear. Air conditioning units will be placed at grade level in the front of the building behind a retaining

wall. These units will be visible only from the apartment verandas. The existing windows will be restored. Most existing verandas will be replaced because of their poor condition. The grand staircase will be maintained. Stair towers will be executed in steel. A canvas canopy will be installed on the rear stair tower. All new doors will be modeled on existing flush and glazed doors remaining on the building. Thirteen of the original fireplaces will be retained in their present location; however, two will be moved to a different wall in the same unit.

The Architectural Committee agreed to recommend an approval of this proposal to rehabilitate Riddle Hall and its immediate surrounding grounds subject to the submission of specifications for this project.

201-203 S. 12th Street, Kim Fisher of George T. Manos, Architects. Ms. Siemiontkowski introduced the submission explaining that these two buildings were burned-out and have stood vacant for a long time. Ms. Fisher presented plans for the complete restoration of the buildings including a new roof. The exterior will be cleaned and windows, sills and sash will be replaced. Major repairs include replacing the brickwork and stone details on the bay windows plus the reconstruction of the cornice. Old photographs will be used to reconstruct the architectural features of these buildings. The Committee recommended that should no documentation exist for the ground floor storefront, a modern approach should be employed.

The Committee voted to recommend an approval, in concept, for the proposed rehabilitation plan subject to the submission of window details. Ms. Fisher offered to forward photographs of these two structures for the Commission's files. The Committee also agreed to allow an immediate approval for interior work so that this project may proceed without delay.

303-311 Vine Street, Alan Sobel, Cecil Baker & Associates, Architects. Mr. Sobel presented rehabilitation plans for this five-story, red brick, early twentieth century building. This proposal calls for the conversion of this commercial structure into fifty-two apartment units. The Committee reviewed these plans and agreed that the general location of the proposed new window openings on the east elevation was acceptable. However, the sill relationships of the new windows did not conform with the existing openings. The Committee stated that the proposed sill locations should not deviate from the existing sill line. It was recommended by the Committee that in order to distinguish the new windows from the existing ones, a different type of sash could be used. When questioned about the triangular shaped canopy over an entrance door on the south elevation, Mr. Sobel stated that this was merely to indicate a canopy and it would probably have an arched design to compliment the windows.

The Committee decided to table action on this project until additional data is submitted to document the existing conditions. If feasible, a member of the Committee and a staff member will review the data, visit the site, if necessary, and agree upon a recommendation. If the plans prove unacceptable, a resubmission to the Architectural Committee may be required.

Fort Mifflin, Mess Hall, John Dickey, Architect. Ms. Siemiontkowski presented Mr. Dickey's plans for the rehabilitation of the Mess Hall at Fort Mifflin. These plans include the installation of new windows and doors, refurbishing the chimney, a new roof and general restoration of the entire building. The Architectural Committee unanimously agreed to recommend its approval of this project.

Reading Terminal, Southwest Corner of Headhouse, David Hollenberg of John Milner, Associates, Architects. At the Architectural Committee Meeting of 12 June, 1985, Mr. Hollenberg presented plans for the restoration of the Headhouse at Reading Terminal. At that time the Committee recommended that these plans be approved with the exception of the Southwest Corner which required further evaluation. The Committee recommended that this corner be restudied and that revised construction drawings be submitted. Subsequent to the meeting of 12 June, Mr. Hollenberg submitted two different schemes. The Committee members voted to recommend the approval of Scheme B which employs a flat transom rather than an arched one as shown in Scheme A. While Scheme B is larger in scale than the design proposed originally, it is less grand than the alternative in Scheme A.

The Committee unanimously agreed to recommend that the Commission approve Scheme B in this phase of the Reading Terminal restoration. Mr. Hollenberg abstained from voting on this project.

COURTESY SUBMISSION

University of Pennsylvania, Veterinary School, James Francis of Francis, Kaufman, Wilkinson & Pepper, Architects, and Barry Stupine of the University of Pennsylvania. Mr. Francis presented a plan for an addition to the Old Animal Hospital at the Veterinary School of the University of Pennsylvania which is not a locally designated building. This addition will be located five feet from the Fraternity House and five feet from the Old Animal Hospital to which it will be connected by two passageways. Window openings in the Old Animal Hospital will be enlarged to accommodate these connections. This addition is proposed as a temporary structure to be used for an individual project which is slated to last approximately five years.

The Committee thanked Mr. Francis for his presentation and expressed its concern that the fabric of the Old Animal Hospital be respected as much as possible and that all original fabric removed be stored for replacement at a later date.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Koob
Clerk Steno II