

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

**TUESDAY, 22 AUGUST 2023
REMOTE MEETING ON ZOOM
DAN MCCOUBREY, CHAIR**

CALL TO ORDER

START TIME IN AUDIO RECORDING: 00:00:00

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. The following Committee members joined him:

Committee Member	Present	Absent	Comment
Dan McCoubrey, FAIA, LEED AP BD+C, Chair	X		
John Cluver, AIA, LEED AP	X		
Rudy D'Alessandro	X		
Justin Detwiler	X		
Nan Gutterman, FAIA	X		
Allison Lukachik	X		
Amy Stein, AIA, LEED AP	X		

The meeting was held remotely via Zoom video and audio-conferencing software.

The following staff members were present:

Jonathan Farnham, Executive Director
Kim Chantry, Historic Preservation Planner III
Laura DiPasquale, Historic Preservation Planner III
Heather Hendrickson, Historic Preservation Planner I
Ted Maust, Historic Preservation Planner I
Allyson Mehley, Historic Preservation Planner II
Dan Shachar-Krasnoff, Historic Preservation Planner II
Alex Till, Historic Preservation Planner I

The following persons were present:

Allison Weiss, SoLo Germantown Civic Association
Ben Munk, Tunic Group Property Management
Chris Stigler, Blackney Hayes Architects
Dennis Carlisle
Hanna Stark, Preservation Alliance
Jake Blumgart
Jay Farrell
Jenny Bagley
Joe Ulaky, Blackney Hayes Architects
Todd Curry, Emerald Windows
Thom Tahopoulos

AGENDA

ADDRESS: 2033 CHESTNUT ST

Proposal: Construct four-story building on rear of parcel

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: George and Tassia Tahopoulos

Applicant: John Hayes, Blackney Hayes Architects

History: 1915

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Rittenhouse Fidler Historic District, Contributing, 2/8/1995

Staff Contact: Dan Shachar-Krasnoff, daniel.shachar-krasnoff@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This application seeks final approval for the construction of a four-story multi-unit building at the rear of 2033 Chestnut Street in the Rittenhouse Fidler Historic District. No work is proposed to the existing building at 2033 Chestnut Street that faces onto Chestnut Street. The new building will face Ranstead Street at the rear, which is the edge of the historic district boundary. The building will not be visible from Chestnut Street but will be visible from S. 21st Street to the west. The building's design is contemporary and technically lacks compatibility with the historic district; however, the location of the proposed building is limited in terms of immediate surrounding historic context, therefore its highly differentiated design will not impact the character of the Rittenhouse Fidler Historic District. The majority of this block of Ranstead Street is not located within the historic district boundary, and the overall context of the block is three- and four-story red brick buildings.

SCOPE OF WORK:

- Construct four-story building on rear of parcel.

STANDARDS FOR REVIEW:

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and Guidelines include:

- *Standard 9: New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.*
 - o The proposed new construction generally lacks compatibility with the historic district. However, it will not be visible from Chestnut Street. The lack of historic context on Ranstead Street, much of which is not within the district, means that the design will not have an adverse impact. The proposed application meets Standard 9.
- *Standard 10: New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment will be unimpaired.*
 - o The proposed new construction on Ranstead Street is not attached to the contributing building at 2033 Chestnut Street; therefore, the proposal meets Standard 10.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standards 9 and 10.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:03:15

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE, 22 AUGUST 2023

PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION, PRESERVATION@PHILA.GOV

PHILADELPHIA'S PRINCIPAL PUBLIC STEWARD OF HISTORIC RESOURCES

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Shachar-Krasnoff presented the application to the Architectural Committee.
- Architects Chris Stigler and Joe Ulaky, and property owner Thom Tahopoulos represented the application.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Stein noted that the proposed building is taller than adjacent buildings and wondered what material would be used to clad the side elevations.
 - o Mr. Ulaky said fiber cement lap siding is proposed for the façade that will be visible from 21st Street. The south façade, which will not be visible from any public right-of-way, will be clad with vinyl siding.
- Mr. Detwiler observed that the rear elevation drawing calls for fiber cement, not vinyl siding, which he preferred.
 - o Mr. Stigler clarified that fiber cement siding will be the cladding material on the rear façade.
- Ms. Stein inquired as to the window materials.
 - o Mr. Ulaky replied that the windows would be composite and may be clad in aluminum. Mr. Stigler clarified that the final window material has not been chosen but that it would not be vinyl.
- Mr. Cluver wondered if the brick on the Ranstead or front façade will wrap the side of the building.
 - o Mr. Stigler responded that he can revise the drawings to show the brick wrapping onto the side elevation for two feet.
- Mr. Detwiler opined that the existing buildings facing Ranstead Street are uniform in appearance, with brick facades and similar windows. He wished the design was more uniform regarding materials and colors on the primary façade.
- Mr. McCoubrey argued that it is preferable for the brick to extend higher on the façade, so it appeared as a mostly brick building with metal elements at the top.
 - o Mr. Ulaky stated that Sheet A.5.10, Section 3 indicates that there will be greater uniformity once the construction is field verified. At that time, the window height can be adjusted to better relate to the abutting structure to the east.
- Mr. Cluver observed that the plane differences on the Ranstead façade were unsubstantial.
 - o Mr. Ulaky noted that the wall bracing requirements will restrict plane differences to a six to eight inches.
- Mr. Cluver opined that color and material are being used to break up the mass of the building.
 - o Mr. Stigler agreed.
- Mr. Cluver suggested that the applicant provide the Historical Commission with elevation drawings of both the east and west building facades that identify the cladding materials.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- None.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Architectural Committee found that:

- The project at 2033 Chestnut Street is located at the rear of the property and faces onto Ranstead Street.

- The building will not be visible from the 2300 block of Chestnut Street.
- Ranstead Street north and east of the project are not designated as historic.
- The west section of the south side of the 2300 block of Ranstead Street is undistinguished within the Rittenhouse Fidler Historic District.

The Architectural Committee concluded that:

- The design of the rear building at 2330 Chestnut Street, which faces Ranstead Street, will not have a significant impact upon the historic integrity of the Rittenhouse Fidler Historic District, satisfying Standard 9.
- The proposed building is free-standing and if removed, the form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired, satisfying Standard 10.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee to recommend approval, with the condition that architectural drawings of the side elevations are provided, pursuant to Standards 9 and 10.

ITEM: 2033 Chestnut St MOTION: Approval MOVED BY: Cluver SECONDED BY: Stein					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Dan McCoubrey	X				
John Cluver	X				
Rudy D'Alessandro		X			
Justin Detwiler		X			
Nan Gutterman		X			
Allison Lukachik	X				
Amy Stein	X				
Total	4	3			

ADDRESS: 1919 DIAMOND ST

Proposal: Install door

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Final Flats LLC

Applicant: Ben Munk, Tunic Group Property Management

History: 1889; John M. Sharp, builder

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Diamond Street Historic District, Contributing, 1/29/1986

Staff Contact: Heather Hendrickson, heather.hendrickson@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to seek approval of a ready-made stock door to clear a door violation at 1919 Diamond Street. A custom wood door that replicated the appearance of the historic door was installed at this property before 2009; the replica door was stolen around 2020. This has become a common occurrence in this historic district. A replacement door was installed without first seeking approval from the Historical Commission. The replacement door is incompatible with this historic building in size, color, and material. A violation for the inappropriate door was issued to the property owner in March 2023, and the property manager has been very diligent in trying to resolve this issue. The applicant claims the financial burden to

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE, 22 AUGUST 2023

4

PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION, PRESERVATION@PHILA.GOV

PHILADELPHIA'S PRINCIPAL PUBLIC STEWARD OF HISTORIC RESOURCES

obtain another costly historically appropriate door is too great for the property, which provides subsidized housing to lower-income individuals through the Philadelphia Housing Authority. There is also fear of a replica historic door attracting additional theft.

This matter was brought before the Historical Commission in June 2023, and it was determined that the replacement door should be a wider single door, centered, with some glazing in similar proportions to the historic door. The applicant wishes to seek approval of a standard-sized stock door, to keep costs low, that would measure 36" x 80". A door wider than 36" was found to be custom, which dramatically increases the cost of the door. The applicant would paint this stock door brown and center it within the entry way opening.

SCOPE OF WORK:

- Install a 36" x 80" stock door.

STANDARDS FOR REVIEW:

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and Guidelines include:

- *Standard 5: Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.*
- *Standard 9: New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.*
 - o The current replacement door does not fill the doorway opening, is installed asymmetrically, and is incompatible with this historic district in size, color, and material.
 - o The proposed door, installed symmetrically and painted brown, would better approximate the historic door.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval, due to the current ongoing challenges of door theft in this area, provided the door is installed symmetrically in the opening and the door, infill, and frame are painted brown, with the staff to review details.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:24:22

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Hendrickson presented the application to the Architectural Committee.
- Ben Munk represented the application.

DISCUSSION:

- Mr. Cluver asked whether the stolen doors swung into the building or out from the building.
 - o Mr. Munk, the applicant, responded that he was unsure, as the doors were stolen before his firm owned the building. He said that he believed they must swing out to comply with the building code.
 - o Mr. Cluver stated that he asked because the outswing doors have their hinges on the outside making them easier to steal and he was curious to know how extreme the effort had been to steal the doors. He also noted that with an occupant load of 49 people or fewer, an inswing door is allowable.

- Mr. D'Alessandro noted the steps up to the door preclude having an outswing door. He postulated that a custom hollow metal door and frame that fits the rough opening would be within the budget. He stated the application was incomplete as there was no documentation of the present condition or the appearance of the proposed door in the opening. He explained that they would need more information such as door swings, size of the door, and size of the rough opening. He said he believed the property owner had not done its due diligence.
 - o Ms. Stein asked if Mr. Munk could respond to any of the questions posed by Mr. D'Alessandro.
 - o Mr. Munk said the door was 36" x 80". He stated that the property was used for Section 8 housing, and their budget was \$1,000 including labor as opposed to the \$5,000 referenced by Mr. D'Alessandro. He noted they had contacted some companies and the quotes were all more than \$2,500, which did not include labor or shipping.
 - o Ms. Stein asked Mr. Munk if he knew the dimensions of the frame.
- Mr. Detwiler explained to Mr. Munk that there had been multiple recent door applications and the Architectural Committee and Historical Commission have been struggling to find an acceptable solution to the problem of door thefts in this neighborhood. He explained that they would like to find a solution which could be applied to many of the properties and approved at the staff level.
- Mr. McCoubrey stated that they were in a gray area and were unable to conclude that the proposal satisfies the Secretary of Interior's Standards, which is the charge of the Committee.
- Mr. Detwiler noted that, in a normal situation, if someone were replacing the doors at this property, the Architectural Committee would make them match the original or historic doors. He stated they would be willing to accept a simplified version of the door, but the proposed door is too far in the other direction. Mr. Detwiler explained that there are different levels of custom doors including semi-custom, which can be more affordable. He also mentioned the possibility of using salvaged doors or a single-panel door that appears as a double panel.
- Mr. D'Alessandro revisited the idea of a hollow metal door.
- Mr. Cluver opined that, from an architectural perspective, anything proposed, apart from replicating the historic door, does not meet the Secretary of Interior's Standards. He contemplated suggesting a standard stock door that is an obvious infill, which would be replaced at some point in the future when the current crime situation has ameliorated. He noted that whether it was a three- or four-foot door now, it does not change the fact that it is not compliant with the Standards. He said, however, he would vote for denial of anything other than the replication of the historic doors because following the Standards is the charge of the Architectural Committee.
- Mr. D'Alessandro questioned whether the Architectural Committee has approved hollow metal doors in the past.
 - o Mr. McCoubrey noted he did not recall if hollow metal doors had been approved in the past but contended that would be a good option for security.
- Ms. Lukachik reiterated the fact that the bare minimum was submitted.
- Mr. D'Alessandro noted that whatever they choose will be used for multiple locations.
- Mr. McCoubrey pointed out that this was for Section 8 housing, not regular rental housing.
 - o Mr. D'Alessandro wondered why that made a difference.
 - o Mr. McCoubrey stated for financial reasons.

- Ms. Lukachik opined that each case should be reviewed on their individual merits, and more documentation and information are needed for this application and without that, it is impossible to come to any conclusion apart from denial of this application.
- Mr. Detwiler asked Mr. Farnham: if a door was approved for this property considering financial limitations, would it then set a precedent and be approved for other properties?
 - o Mr. Farnham responded that if a door was approved that did not comply with the Secretary of Interior's Standards for one address owing to specific reasons, it would not necessarily set a standard that the staff could approve for other properties.
- Mr. D'Alessandro added the need to view written proposals of cost from the applicant.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Todd Curry of Emerald Windows commented that it would be "obnoxiously expensive" to replicate the stolen historic doors. He stated that he was not sure that a hollow metal door could be integrated into the historic door frame. He stated that the Architectural Committee should follow its Standards and not make an exception for one owner when it had required more of other owners.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Architectural Committee found that:

- The application is not complete. More documentation is needed including existing conditions documentation, scaled drawings of the rough opening, and drawings of the proposal within that opening. Financial documentation of proposals is also needed.

The Architectural Committee concluded that:

- The application does not satisfy Standards 5 and 9.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial, pursuant to Standards 5 and 9.

ITEM: 1919 Diamond St MOTION: Denial MOVED BY: Detwiler SECONDED BY: D'Alessandro					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Dan McCoubrey	X				
John Cluver	X				
Rudy D'Alessandro	X				
Justin Detwiler	X				
Nan Gutterman	X				
Allison Lukachik	X				
Amy Stein	X				
Total	7				

ADJOURNMENT

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:52:55

ACTION: The Architectural Committee adjourned at 09:54 a.m.

PLEASE NOTE:

- Minutes of the Philadelphia Historical Commission and its advisory Committees are presented in action format. Additional information is available in the video recording for this meeting. The start time for each agenda item in the recording is noted.
- Application materials and staff overviews are available on the Historical Commission's website, www.phila.gov/historical.