

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

**TUESDAY, 25 APRIL 2017
1515 ARCH STREET, ROOM 18-029
DAN MCCOUBREY, CHAIR**

PRESENT

Dan McCoubrey, FAIA, LEED AP BD+C, Chair
John Cluver, AIA, LEED AP
Nan Gutterman, FAIA
Suzanne Pentz
Amy Stein, AIA, LEED AP

Jonathan Farnham, Executive Director
Randal Baron, Historic Preservation Planner III
Kim Broadbent, Historic Preservation Planner II
Laura DiPasquale, Historic Preservation Planner II
Meredith Keller, Historic Preservation Planner I

ALSO PRESENT

Michelle Shlomo, Star Painting
Jonathan Zweifler
Mike MacCrory
David Labensky
Justin Engle
Amy Ricci, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia
Stuart Rosenberg, SGRA
George Thomas, Civic Visions
Nnadozie Ibeh, Associate Vice President of Project Delivery Group Temple
Neil Sklaroff, Esq., Ballard Spahr
Leonardo Diaz, Jacobs Engineering
MaryEllen Wikoff, Jacobs Engineering
Bart Schindler
Albert Taus, Albert Taus Associates
Nate Torek
Gary Vernick
Diane Tucker
Tom Chapman
Bob Torres, Studio Torres
Zach Torres, Studio Torres
David Middleton, Palm Restaurant
Caitlyn Rotiske, Tackett and Company
Jay Tackett, Tackett and Company

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. McCoubrey called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. Mses. Gutterman and Stein and Mr. Cluver joined him. Ms. Pentz arrived shortly after the start of the first review.

ADDRESS: 212 DELANCEY ST

Proposal: Alter façade

Review Requested: Review In Concept

Owner: Jonathan and Kate Jay Zweifler

Applicant: Michelle Shlomo, Star Painting and Wallcovering and Sons, LLC

History: 1970; Hassinger and Schwam, architects

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Society Hill Historic District, Contributing, 3/10/1999

Staff Contact: Kim Broadbent, kim.broadbent@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to square off an angled corner at the front façade and add a set of windows on this circa 1970 property in the Society Hill Historic District. The squaring off would remove the 45 degree corner wall at the first floor and replace it with a 90 degree corner, clad in vertical cedar boards. Turning the corner of this projecting area of the front façade, three windows are proposed where there is currently a solid brick wall.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval in concept of the addition of three windows at the return; denial of the change to the 45-degree-angle corner, pursuant to Standard 9.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Broadbent presented the application to the Architectural Committee. Star Painting's Michelle Shlomo and property owner Jonathan Zweifler represented the application.

Ms. Broadbent explained that the staff suggests that the 45-degree corner wall is a character-defining feature of the building. Mr. Cluver commented that it is difficult to review work to a more modern building in a historic district. He asked how the corner wall is contributing to the district. Ms. Broadbent responded that the Society Hill historic district includes redevelopment-era buildings as contributing to the district, and this property is one of a pair that has an angled corner, although this property appears to have been modified from what we assume was the original condition. She offered that it was not a unanimous staff recommendation for denial. Ms. Gutterman asked how much square footage will be gained. Mr. Zweifler responded that there are no structural alterations that are being made. The primary objective is to subtract from the various façade angles. As the corner gets extended down, there will be room for a storage area that can hide trash bins or garden supplies. The interior will not be changed to gain square footage. The first-floor interior floor will not be extended out. Mr. McCoubrey opined that the angles are character-defining features of the building. They define the entry court. They are the unique feature of the building. Obviously it is a 1970s house, but it is part of the redevelopment-era significance of the historic district, and therefore the Committee has to respect the architectural decisions that were made when the building was designed. Mr. Zweifler explained that the intention is to allow the house to better align with the block. Mr. McCoubrey responded that the recess is a unique feature. He opined that the improvements on the interior are fairly minimal for the extent of change on the exterior.

Mr. Cluver commented that the addition of three-side windows is of an obvious benefit to the interior, but that the blank façade should also be considered to be a character-defining feature of the building. He opined that the wall is as character-defining as the corner angle. Ms. Shlomo commented that not every house on the block is identical, and the proposed changes improve the aesthetics of the house. Mr. McCoubrey responded that the Committee operates under a different set of standards, which are used to review work to historically designated buildings. Mr. Cluver asked how one aspect of the project can be acceptable but the other is not. He

suggested that it should be all or nothing. He stated that while he sees the benefits of it, he believes the proposed work is too drastic of a change. Ms. Shlomo asked if the Committee considers the energy savings of adding an additional window. Mr. Cluver responded that windows do not have much insulative value, and that a typical insulated wall has more insulative value than energy-efficient windows. Ms. Stein commented that she is not opposed to the window in the side wall, but that bringing a wood element at the corner down to the sidewalk is problematic because only masonry survives at the sidewalk level. She stated that she would accept a change to the corner, but without alteration to the masonry base, so that it would be extended down only to the bottom of the first floor. Mr. Cluver asked about the single window on the side wall that does not show in plan. Mr. Zweifler responded that it is original, but that it was concealed from the interior when the drawings were made, but has since been revealed. Mr. Cluver asked about the greenery shown on the rendering. Mr. Zweifler responded that there is existing greenery and they are hoping to add additional greenery in the same space. Mr. McCoubrey commented that a punched system of smaller windows may look more in keeping with the building, rather than a big opening with three windows. He commented that he is fairly ambivalent about the side windows, since they are off the street frontage and in a garden area, but does feel strongly that the change to the corner is not appropriate. Mr. Cluver opined that this building is part of an historic district, so the Committee needs to be treating it the same way it would treat buildings of the colonial period. The same criteria should apply when reviewing changes to the exterior.

Mr. Cluver moved to recommend denial of the application as presented. Ms. Gutterman seconded the motion. The motion failed with a tie vote of 2 to 2. Ms. Pentz abstained, owing to her arrival after the start of the review. Mr. Cluver suggested considering the two aspects of proposed work in the application separately.

Ms. Gutterman voted to recommend denial of the change to the 45-degree corner of the building. Mr. Cluver seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Ms. Pentz abstained.

Ms. Gutterman voted to recommend denial of the windows on the masonry return. Mr. Cluver seconded the motion. The motion failed with a tie vote of 2 to 2. Ms. Pentz abstained.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial of the change to the 45-degree corner of the building, but offered no recommendation on the addition of windows in the masonry return.

ADDRESS: 102 PENSDALE ST

Proposal: Remove addition and rebuild wall; add dormer and screen; restore front façade

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: 4201 Main Street, L.P.

Applicant: Stuart Rosenberg, Stuart G. Rosenberg Architects, P.C.

History: 1850

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Manayunk Historic District, Contributing, 12/14/1983

Staff Contact: Kim Broadbent, kim.broadbent@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to renovate this rowhouse to allow for future commercial use. The front façade would be restored with new doors, windows and shutters. It is unclear if

the existing roof and front dormer would be retained or reconstructed, and there is discrepancy as to the replacement and number of new front steps. A new dormer would be constructed at the rear roof to create headroom for a new stair leading to the attic, in addition to a new equipment platform and screen on the lower shed roof. The application proposes to demolish what it considers to be a later addition at the rear, and to construct a new rear wall with French doors at the first floor and a window wall at the second floor. The French doors would allow access to an expanded rear yard with six-foot high wood fence. New window openings are proposed for the north elevation, which historically was a party wall prior to Station Street connecting through to Pensdale Street. The staff suggests these windows could be modified in design so as to not appear historical, and asks for clarity on the number of proposed windows, owing to a discrepancy between the plan and elevation drawing.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval of the restoration of the front façade, new window openings in the former party wall, removal of the rear addition, and equipment screen, with the staff to review details; denial of the window wall at the second floor of the new rear wall, pursuant to Standard 9. Two punched openings of historic size and proportion would be appropriate for the second-floor rear.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Broadbent presented the application to the Architectural Committee. Architect Stuart Rosenberg and property owner Mike MacCrory represented the application.

Mr. Rosenberg explained that the proposed new use is a restaurant. He provided a rendering to show the new rear wall. He stated that the preferred option is for a series of French doors on both the first and second floors, but that he will accept the staff's suggestion of two punched openings at the second floor if necessary.

Mr. Cluver asked about the purpose of the new dormer at the rear. Mr. Rosenberg responded that the dormer's purpose is to provide headroom for access to the existing attic. Mr. MacCrory explained that the goal is to have a staircase that is more functional for staff and managers to have access to what will be the office, and is currently the attic. Mr. Cluver commented that if there is a head clearance issue, it will exist for the first portion of the stair regardless. Mr. Rosenberg responded that he will avoid the addition of the dormer if possible, but he will not know until the next phase of selective demolition, and they decided it would be prudent to have it as part of the approval. He suggested that the dormer could be modified to be smaller or to be a shed dormer. He explained that the design of the proposed dormer is based on the existing front roof dormer. Mr. Cluver commented that it is oddly located at the far end of the wall. Mr. Rosenberg noted that the existing front roof dormer is off-centered. Mr. McCoubrey suggested revising the design of the new dormer to look more like a shed dormer so that it is less visible and not confused as a historic dormer.

Ms. Gutterman asked about ADA access. Mr. Rosenberg explained that the outdoor dining area will not be viewed as the rear of the building. There will be a gate on Station Street, and that is where the hostess will be positioned. That will be considered to be the main entrance. He noted that this building is a companion to an adjacent property, which is owned by the same developer. This will function as the outdoor venue as part of that original restaurant concept.

Ms. Pentz asked about the age of the existing rear addition that is proposed for removal. Mr. Rosenberg responded that selective demolition showed that the entire side and rear wall of the addition is modern wood frame covered with stucco, and there is visible evidence of a break

line. Ms. Pentz asked if there is an existing masonry chimney. Mr. Rosenberg responded that the chimney was eliminated at some point in the recent past. It is visible in photographs from the 1950s. Mr. Cluver asked what portion of the existing building is shown in historic photographs. Mr. Rosenberg responded that it is not discernible. He explained that there was a party wall of a three-story neighboring building that remained after the taller building was demolished. At some point, it was cut down to the current sloping roofline. Ms. Broadbent distributed several historic photographs to illustrate what Mr. Rosenberg was describing. Mr. Cluver asked if there are extant portions of the historic rear wall. Mr. Rosenberg responded that it is difficult to know at this point, but it appears that there is nothing remaining to provide clear guidance on the original configuration of the rear.

Mr. Cluver opined that the addition of windows to the side wall is appropriate because it is a former party wall that is now a street façade, and would have had windows if it had started as a street façade. Mr. McCoubrey noted that the window openings are shown differently in plan versus elevation. Mr. Rosenberg distributed a revised drawing showing only four new windows to resolve the discrepancy.

Mr. Cluver asked about the design of the equipment screen. Mr. Rosenberg responded that it has not been finalized, but it will likely be a standard picket fence design so that it reads as more of a porch, but will provide enough of a screen to eliminate most of the presence of the equipment. Ms. Stein noted the commercial kitchen in the basement, and questioned if all equipment can fit on the platform. Mr. Rosenberg described how they will create an internal shaft that will go up through the second floor and will pop up through the roof after two turns.

Ms. Gutterman asked if marble steps are typical in Manayunk. Mr. Rosenberg responded that marble steps are preferred owing to durability and maintenance. Ms. Gutterman opined that they can be slippery. Randal Baron raised his hand several times before Mr. McCoubrey called on him. Mr. Baron commented that he recently approved marble steps for a building elsewhere in the city, and he learned of a finish called micro-hammered, which can be less slippery and can look worn rather than shiny. Mr. Baron asked for clarification on the roof and front dormer. Mr. Rosenberg clarified that they will apply new finishes on the outside of the existing framing, but will not completely rebuild a new roof or front dormer.

Mr. McCoubrey asked for public comment, of which there was none.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval of the restoration of the front façade, new window openings in the former party wall as per the revised drawing, removal of the rear addition, equipment screen and a simple baluster, and rear wall with French doors as originally proposed, with the staff to review details; denial of the rear dormer as proposed, pursuant to Standard 9.

ADDRESS: 912 WINTER ST

Proposal: Construct third-floor addition with deck at rear; remove Permastone from front façade

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Brent Wong

Applicant: Tommy Tran, JTRAN Expediting

History: 1850

Individual Designation: 4/25/1974

District Designation: None

Staff Contact: Randal Baron, randal.baron@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to remove the Permastone from the front façade of this brick house. At the rear, the application proposes to construct a one-story addition with deck on the rear ell. The deck would be accessed through the existing rear dormer, which would be altered. The work at the rear is not visible from the public right-of-way.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standard 9.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Baron presented the application to the Architectural Committee. No one represented the application.

Mr. Cluver stated that the applicant should work with the mason to assess the condition of the brick under the Permastone. Ms. Gutterman noted that the plans call for the restoration of the façade or a new brick veneer. She said that the building should not be veneered. The Committee members noted problems with the drawing including the height between the addition and the rear cornice line as well as the location where the new wall hits the rear wall of the main block. They noted that the construction should not result in closing up or moving the rear windows. Mr. Cluver asked Mr. Baron to verify that the construction cannot be seen from the public right-of-way.

Mr. McCoubrey asked for public comment, of which there was none.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval, provided that no brick veneer is added to the front façade, the new addition does not result in blocking up, reducing, or moving the rear windows, and the addition is constructed to sit below the rear cornice line, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standard 9.

ADDRESS: 1801-35 N BROAD ST

Proposal: Construct bridge

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Temple University

Applicant: Thomas McCreesh, Temple University

History: 1870; Park Mall houses, Temple University

Individual Designation: 9/24/1986

District Designation: Park Mall Historic District, Contributing, 11/14/1990

Staff Contact: Randal Baron, randal.baron@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to construct a bridge across Liacouras Walk at Temple University. It would connect two buildings at the Fox Business School, one designated, the other not designated. The designated building to the west is located in the Park Mall Historic District. The building to the east is not designated. The designated building consists of series of historic facades along Liacouras Walk and Montgomery Street and a contemporary building behind and beside the historic facades. The Historical Commission approved the demolition of all but the facades and the construction of a new building behind the facades in 2004. At its most recent meeting, in April 2017, the Historical Commission approved additions to the non-historic part of the designated building. At that time, the Commission reviewed the original design for the bridge and then remanded it to the Committee with suggestions for revisions. The Commission suggested that the architect redesign the bridge to be lighter and more transparent. The current design for the bridge reflects the architect's response to the Commission's direction.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The proposed design appears to satisfy the Historical Commission's direction to the applicant.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Baron presented the application to the Architectural Committee. Nnadozie Ibeh of Temple University, attorney Neil Sklaroff, architect Leonardo Diaz, and preservation consultant George Thomas represented the application.

Mr. Baron explained that the Historical Commission approved the addition portion of the overall project at the last Commission meeting, but remanded the bridge portion back to the Architecture Committee with design suggestions. He explained that the Commission neither approved nor denied the concept of a bridge at its last meeting. The Committee is therefore tasked with reviewing both the idea of the bridge as well as the specific design.

Mr. Sklaroff distributed a letter from the Dean of the Business School as well as photographs of other bridges were also presented to the Commission. He said that Temple is seeking an identity with this bridge for the Business School. He reported that Commission members did not accept the claim that a bridge would isolate the occupants of the building from the public walkway. He said that his client has agreed to lighten the design. He explained that the bridge is very important for moving computers and other equipment without exposing it to the weather. He said that the bridge also provides ADA compliance.

Mr. Diaz said that the Commission objected to the cornice running across the bridge and connecting all the pieces of the complex; therefore, they have deleted it. He said that the bridge design that they have shown in this submission is based on the Liberty Mutual Headquarters in Cambridge, Massachusetts. He explained that, unlike that bridge, Temple's would have a solid floor, not a glass floor. He said that they would use a low-iron glass that would be less reflective.

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An opaque band of glass of unspecified height at the bottom of the bridge will hide the slope of the interior ramp as well as the structure, air-conditioning, and heating ducts. Ms. Stein asked about the difference between the two floor levels. Mr. Diaz responded that the ramp will need to rise two and a half feet. Mr. Cluver asked how they will handle air-conditioning as the space will heat up like a green house. He claimed that the details of this bridge are going to change significantly once it is engineered. He said he is wary of Temple being able to deliver on the image that has been shown. Mr. Ibeh mentioned radiant tubes for heating and Mr. Diaz said that they will have air-conditioning ducts in shadow boxes in the sides of the bridge.

Mr. McCoubrey suggested that the top of the bridge should tuck under the cornices of the buildings but that the bridge should not look like part of the buildings. Mr. Ibeh reported that, when the different parts of the business school were in separate buildings, it did not grow as much. The business school attracts about 50% of the students at Temple and supports all the other parts of the University. Mr. Cluver opined that he supports the idea of the bridge, although he does not believe that Fox Business School needs the bridge for growth and connectivity. Mr. Sklaroff responded that they disagree with Mr. Cluver's assessment.

Mr. McCoubrey asked for public comment, of which there was none.

Ms. Gutterman said that she would be willing to make a motion to approve the proposal in concept. She asserted it would be very important for the Committee to review the details and material samples. Ms. Stein agreed that there is too much that is unknown and stated that she would second that motion. Mr. Baron noted that the applicant would have to consent for the application to be converted from an application for final approval to one in concept. Mr. Sklaroff declined to convert the application to conceptual, but observed that the staff could review details. Mr. Cluver said that he would be willing to have the staff review the details if the bridge would look exactly as it does in the rendering. Mr. Baron noted that we already know from the discussion that it will not look like the rendering because the floor will not be glass and the beltline will be higher and of a different appearance. Mr. Baron asked how many feet of belt would be acceptable. Ms. Stein said that even the width of the bridge is an unknown. Mr. Diaz said that it would be closer to 10 feet wide. Ms. Gutterman withdrew her earlier motion and suggested a new motion to recommend denial, owing to incompleteness. Mr. Sklaroff explained that they only had a few days to get this application together and that no one asked them for details.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted unanimously to recommend denial of the application due to incompleteness.

Mr. Cluver asked if the applicant wished to convert the application to an in-concept application now that the Committee had recommended denial of it. Mr. Sklaroff declined, stating that they do not wish to be locked into presenting a new application to the Committee. He stated that they will provide additional details to the Historical Commission. The Committee members replied that they were in favor of the concept and the design as shown in the rendering, if it can be built.

ADDRESS: 2036 SANSOM ST

Proposal: Construct rooftop addition with decks and pilot house; install new storefront

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: 2036 Sansom LLC

Applicant: Rotciver Lebron, Harman Deutsch Architecture

History: 1870; altered for commercial, c. 1920

Individual Designation: None

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

Staff Contact: Randal Baron, randal.baron@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to construct a one and two-story addition on this building. The addition would be set back 22 feet from the front façade. A deck with a stair house would be located on the addition. Another deck would be located on the roof of the original building, in front of the addition, set back 14 feet from the Sansom Street or front façade. The staff visited the site to review a mock-up of the proposed additions. Because the building is taller than the buildings to the west, these additions are quite visible from Sansom Street.

The applicant also proposes work to the front façade, restoring the second-floor windows and modifying the storefront with a cornice and new windows and doors.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval of the front façade rehabilitation and one-story addition on the lower section at the rear, but denial of the rooftop addition and decks, pursuant to Standards 6 and 9 and the Roofs Guideline.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Baron presented the application to the Architectural Committee. Architect Jeremy LeCompte and owners David Labensky and Justin Engle represented the application.

Mr. Baron displayed a photograph showing the visibility of the mock-ups representing the upper-floor addition and decks from the public right-of-way. Mr. LeCompte explained the massing of the additions. Ms. Gutterman asked Mr. Baron if the third-floor addition and a lowered stairhouse would be visible. He said that he thought that such a design would be inconspicuous from the street. Mr. LeCompte said that they had revised their application, increasing the setback, which is now 22 feet. He showed a photograph of a mock-up with that setback. Mr. Baron said that he considered various setbacks when he made his site visit and concluded that the revised proposal that has been suggested would still be conspicuous from the right-of-way. Mr. McCoubrey contended that the second mock-up is still quite visible from the street. Mr. LeCompte said the additions would be visible from the west because the row of three-story buildings is so low. Ms. Stein asked about the property across from the street from the one in question. Mr. LeCompte said that it is a parking garage and a comedy club. Mr. Cluver asked if the deck would be visible in Mr. LeCompte's revised drawing. Mr. LeCompte showed a drawing depicting the visible railing. He also showed the restoration of the front façade, including second-floor windows, a wood-framed storefront, and cornice. Ms. Pentz asked if they propose to paint the corbels. Mr. LeCompte responded that the corbels will remain the color of the cornice.

Mr. McCoubrey asked for public comment, of which there was none.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval of the restoration of the front façade, a single-story third floor addition on

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the rear ell, and a roof deck on the rear half of the roof with access from a stairhouse located on the rear of the third floor, but denial of a fourth-story addition, with the staff to review details.

ADDRESS: 2218-22 WALNUT ST

Proposal: Alter storefront

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Post Brothers

Applicant: Albert Taus, Albert Taus & Associates

History: 1927; Roosevelt; J. Margolis, architect

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Rittenhouse Fidler Residential Historic District, Significant, 2/8/1995

Staff Contact: Randal Baron, randal.baron@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to remove infill from storefront window openings and other first-floor window openings and install new windows. Cafe windows would be installed in the storefronts. Unusual multi-pane windows would be installed in the smaller openings running down 23rd Street. The application also proposes canopies over the storefront windows and door. A zoning permit indicates that the storefront windows were altered in 1951. A photograph indicates that the southernmost four windows openings on 23rd had not yet been infilled in 1959. Unfortunately, the 1959 photograph does not reveal the design of the windows. The window designs should be simplified. Canvas awnings that fit within the openings would be more appropriate than the proposed canopies.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval, provided the window designs are simplified and canvas awnings replace the canopies, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standard 9.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Baron presented the application to the Architectural Committee. Architect Albert Taus represented the application.

Mr. Baron distributed a revised drawing and said that the staff would be in favor of this proposal as submitted. It was noted that the Preservation Alliance has an easement on the building. Mr. Taus explained that there are some six-over-one windows that survive on the rear façade of the first floor. Ms. Stein asked if the Walnut Street store window should perhaps be three leaves rather than four considering that a door has to also fit within the opening. Mr. Cluver suggested that it was better to retain the symmetry of four leaves. The Committee members opined that the small windows should be wood, but that the storefront windows could be a metal finish. They asserted that it was important that the finish match the remainder of the metal doors and windows on the first floor.

Mr. McCoubrey asked for public comment. Amy Ricci of the Preservation Alliance commented that the organization holds an easement on the building, but it had not yet received an application for this work.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval of the revised application submitted at the meeting, provided wood windows are installed in the small openings and the metal storefront windows to match the remainder of the windows at the first floor, with the staff to review details.

ADDRESS: 308 N LAWRENCE ST

Proposal: Construct third-floor addition at rear

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Bart Schindler

Applicant: Bart Schindler

History: 1785

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Old City Historic District, Significant, 12/12/2003

Staff Contact: Randal Baron, randal.baron@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to add a third floor to the two-story rear ell and connect that addition to the attic story of the front portion of the house. The connector would replace a portion of the rear roof slope, but would leave the rear dormer and remainder of the rear roof slope intact. The rear portion of the building is not visible from any street. This intact row of early buildings is very significant.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Denial, pursuant to Standards 9 and 10.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Baron presented the application to the Architectural Committee. Property owner Bart Schindler the owner represented the application.

Mr. Baron explained that the staff had concerns about cutting into the original roof because the building is so old and intact. However, the rear ell is a later addition with a flat roof and more modern brickwork. The staff did not object to the addition of the bedroom itself. Mr. Schindler explained that his father had recently died and he is bringing his mother to live with him and his wife. He was originally hoping to remove the entire rear roof to make a bedroom and bath. With the staff's help he has pared back the amount of demolition and will now retain a portion of the roof and the dormer. He explained that his neighbor to the right has already changed his roof and added a large deck. He said that there is a new house being constructed behind his house. The addition will not be visible either from the front or the rear. He is seeking to add a six-foot wide hallway to connect the bedroom to the bathroom in the old attic space. The bedroom addition to be constructed on the rear ell will be 10 by 11 feet. If he were to try to fit in a stair, it would reduce the size to approximately 6 by 9 feet. The Committee members asked if he could build an addition in the rear yard. He said that the yard is only about 10 feet deep and zoning only allows him to build on 75% of the lot. Ms. Stein asked if the addition could be accessed through the dormer rather than adjacent to it. Mr. Schindler said that the head height of the dormer is about six feet, which would be fine. Mr. McCoubrey asked if the bathroom can really fit in the attic. Mr. Schindler said that the plans show that it can. The toilet will fit in the dormer. Mr. McCoubrey pointed out that the existing dormer is a shed roof type and should remain so. The Committee members asked about the adjacent modified dormer. Mr. Baron explained that that change predates the establishment of the Old City Historic District. Ms. Gutterman asked about the number of dormers in this row that have been changed. Mr. Baron responded that one out of the six has been altered. Ms. Stein pointed out the difficulty in building the passage including the need to build next to the neighbor's deck and to drain storm water. Mr. Cluver opined that there would be less damage to the roof to construct the passage adjacent to the dormer rather than through the dormer. One would only have to remove about three rafters. Mr. Baron asked if those rafters could be saved and raised for the new roof. Mr. Cluver said that an engineer might reject the depth of those rafters.

Mr. McCoubrey asked for public comment, of which there was none.

Ms. Pentz stated that she would vote to recommend denial of the application because this building has extraordinary significance and the Commission has protected the main-block roofs from alterations proposed in other applications.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted 4 to 1 to recommend approval of the application, provided that the addition is not visible from the public right-of-way and the rear dormer is retained in its shed-roof form, with the staff to review details. Ms. Pentz dissented.

ADDRESS: 222-24 VINE ST

Proposal: Construct five-story multi-family building

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: 222 Vine LP

Applicant: Nathan Torok, Rock Construction & Development, LLC

History: 1960

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Old City Historic District, Non-contributing, 12/12/2003

Staff Contact: Meredith Keller, meredith.keller@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to construct a five-story, multi-family building with roof deck to replace a one-story, non-contributing building within the Old City Historic District. The north and east elevations would have an industrial appearance created with the incorporation of brick piers, multi-pane, metal-clad windows, and corrugated metal wall panels. A small side yard would separate the building from its eastern neighbor. The rear wall, which would be visible from New Street, would be stuccoed, and each story would contain one tripartite or single, metal clad window. The west elevation, which is mislabeled in the application, would function as a party wall.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval, pursuant to Standards 9 and 10.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Keller presented the application to the Architectural Committee. Property owner Nate Torok represented the application.

Ms. Keller clarified that the east elevation is labeled as “west looking elevation” in the application.

Ms. Gutterman asked about the current state of the site. Ms. Keller responded that the site contained a one-story non-contributing building and that the staff approved its demolition. Mr. Torok added that the non-contributing building is still standing but will be demolished in the next few weeks. The Committee reviewed a historic photograph included in the application and asked about the structures that were shown on the block. Mr. Torok clarified that three contributing buildings remain near the site. Ms. Keller added that the Painted Bride is also a neighboring building.

Mr. Cluver inquired whether the proposed structure complies with the zoning code in terms of height and bulk. Mr. Torok affirmed that the structure complies and that a zoning permit has already been issued. The plan, he continued, is by-right and approved for zoning. Mr. McCoubrey asked if the Historical Commission has full jurisdiction over the property. Ms. Keller confirmed that the Commission has full or plenary jurisdiction because a building stood on the site at the time of the historic district designation.

Mr. Cluver noted that the design adopted an industrial loft look, though he added that a few things struck him as out of place. He indicated that the main entry to the lobby area with the separate residential entry right off the street felt unusual. He further suggested that while the design captured the amount of open glass that is typical of older industrial buildings, it does not include the standard differentiation between the base, middle, and top. In this case, he commented, the base is an extension of the upper floors, and a cornice line or other defining element between the first and second stories would be expected. Mr. Cluver then asked Mr. Torok to explain the appearance of the corrugated metal panels proposed for the façade. Mr. Torok clarified that the panels would be ribbed square paneling. He added that they would not consist of the typical wavy galvanized finish, but would be a square stock finish in a gray metal color. The panels, he continued, would be positioned as depicted in the drawing, with lines extending vertically rather than horizontally. Ms. Stein asked Mr. Torok if he would characterize copper penny, the color of the panels identified in the drawings, as a metallic or dull finish. Mr. Torok responded that it would be a dull finish. Ms. Stein asked whether that meant brown, orange, green, or another color. Mr. Torok responded that it would be a dull gray finish.

Mr. McCoubrey inquired about the joints between panels. Mr. Torok responded that there would be no real joints between the panels, because they would be installed to appear as one solid, continuous panel on each floor. Mr. McCoubrey asked if Mr. Torok could obtain a 40-foot-long panel. Mr. Torok stated that the panels would overlap slightly and that the largest piece available is 12 feet. Ms. Gutterman asked for clarification on whether the joints would be at 12-feet on center. Mr. Torok affirmed that they would.

Mr. McCoubrey discussed the rhythm of the brick piers, noting that there appears to be three different bay sizes on the east elevation. There was some confusion over the elevations and direction of each wall. Ms. Keller clarified that the elevation identified by Mr. McCoubrey is the east elevation, though it is labeled incorrectly in the application. The property, she continued, is located midblock, adjacent to a parking lot. She commented that the property owner is proposing a small side yard as part of the design that would separate the new building from the adjacent lot or any future building constructed on that lot. Ms. Gutterman asked whether the east elevation would be approximately 5-feet from the property line. Mr. Torok answered that the wall would stand approximately 8-feet from the property line and explained that he sought an alternative to leaving a blank wall on the east side of the building. Instead, he continued, he set back the building from the property line to allow more light into the units on the east side and to give interest to the building exterior.

Ms. Stein asked if the rear elevation is visible. Ms. Keller answered that it would be visible from New Street, because of an empty lot at the rear. Mr. McCoubrey stated that the Committee requires site plans beyond the submission of a Google map. Ms. Gutterman observed that a site plan is included but added that it is confusing and difficult to understand how the building is sited and where streets are located relative to the city grid. The Committee and applicant discussed the site and its immediate context.

Ms. Stein remarked that the proposed building, which is to be five stories, is much taller than the neighboring buildings, which are three stories and one story. Mr. Torok agreed, adding that the adjacent parking lot, like his property, is zoned CMX-3. Ms. Stein asked where the mechanical systems would be located. Mr. Torok answered that air handlers would be in the units themselves, condensers would be on the roof, and the main mechanicals would be located in the basement. Ms. Stein observed that the building's top floor is quite tall. Mr. Torok replied that there would be a loft-style space at the upper story. Ms. Stein observed that the building would actually stand at six stories with a mezzanine inside.

Mr. Cluver inquired whether the proposed roof deck covers nearly the entire roof. Mr. Torok replied that it would be for residents. Mr. Cluver indicated that the deck steps back at two sides and questioned where the railings are located and whether the parapet defines the outer edge. Mr. Torok responded that there would be a pilot house on the roof and that the deck would contain a setback of approximately 10 feet from the front façade. He clarified that condensing units would be placed toward the front of the building and a second pilot house would be located at the rear, since two means of access are required. Mr. Cluver returned to the question of railings and asked why the drawings show a separate guardrail 5 feet from the Vine Street façade when the deck maintains a 10-foot setback. Mr. Torok replied that he does not have an answer. Referring to the roof plan, Ms. Gutterman asked what the unhatched area represents. Mr. Cluver remarked that he interpreted that area as the TPO roof and that there is no railing separating the deck area from the TPO roof. He suggested that the metal guard and parapets around the perimeter would serve as fall protection. While there is a defined deck area, he continued, there is nothing preventing someone from walking to the edge of the roof and extending the deck space. Mr. Torok responded that there will be a 42-inch metal railing, required by code, around the perimeter of the deck area. Ms. Gutterman countered that nothing on the drawings indicates that a railing would extend around the hatched deck space. Mr. Torok responded that, for liability reasons, there needs to be a railing around the deck perimeter. The Committee replied that it needs to be included in the drawings.

From a zoning perspective, Mr. Cluver commented, the height may be by-right. He observed that, in terms of the neighborhood context, the proposed structure seems to be taller than most buildings in the area. He asked Mr. Torok for nearby buildings of equal height. Mr. Torok answered that equivalent buildings are located at the corner of 3rd and Vine Streets. He also reiterated that the adjacent parcel, currently an empty lot, is zoned CMX-3. Ms. Gutterman inquired about the building shown in a contextual photograph supplied in the application. Ms. Keller responded that it is the Chocolate Works building on N. 3rd Street, which is a large former factory building. Mr. Cluver stated that while Mr. Torok's proposal meets the zoning requirements, the Committee determines how the structure would fit within the historic district. Therefore, he continued, height is a factor and the building will stand out in its context. Mr. Torok asserted that there are other tall buildings in the area. Mr. Cluver contended that the proposed building is a very tall five stories, especially when adding the pilot houses.

Ms. Gutterman asked to return to the elevations and the industrial appearance of the building. She asked whether the mosaic details are only tile work that will be set into the brick pattern. Mr. Torok affirmed that they would be. Ms. Gutterman asked whether the tile is all glazed, and Mr. Torok answered that the detail is glazed 6-inch by 6-inch tile but that it will have a matte finish.

Ms. Stein directed the other Committee members to drawing A2.1 that shows the Vine Street elevation. She observed that the drawing depicts the adjacent building in light gray and asked where the building's cornice falls relative to the proposed structure. Mr. Torok replied that the cornice of the adjacent building hits at the third story of the proposed structure. Ms. Stein clarified that the gray representing the building is depicted all the way to the ridgeline of the rowhouse.

Ms. Pentz remarked that she is troubled by the building's height, adding that the front elevation does not seem to fit in with the historic context. She commented that she understands that the proposed structure may be approved by zoning, but that the Committee has different considerations aside from zoning. Mr. Torok responded that CMX-3 has an unlimited height allowance, though in the Old City overlay there is a 65-foot height limit. Mr. Torok stated that he has met the overlay requirement and reiterated that the adjacent parcel is also zoned CMX-3. He added that the owner of the adjacent lot has plans to build a structure of similar height. Ms. Stein commented that the parapet pushes the total height of the structure approximately 3 feet above the 65-foot limit and asked Mr. Torok to clarify the zoning requirement. Mr. Torok answered that the 65-foot limit is to the top of the roof and does not include the parapet. Mr. Cluver added that typically parapets, pent houses, and access points are not part of the height requirement. Mr. Torok suggested that he can move the parapet off the façade. Mr. Cluver remarked that setting it back would look odd, since parapets are meant to be positioned above the building façade.

Mr. Cluver stated that he understands the general industrial concept but expressed concern over numerous details. The narrative and concept, he continued, matches the Old City Historic District, but he argued that the end result does not. He explained that, rather than specific details, the overall impression is that the building does not fit into the district.

Mr. Baron asserted that the building does not include parking at the front façade, which is a positive aspect for the district. He further elaborated that industrial buildings did contain some decoration at the top in the form of a square or bricks turned in different directions, and added that it is not uncommon to have those blocks at the top of a pier. Ms. Gutterman responded that she agrees such detailing is not uncommon but that she questions the appropriateness of the black tile design as opposed to using cast brick. She also indicated concern over the installation of the tile, because it may be susceptible to free-thaw cycles.

Mr. McCoubrey opened the floor to public comment. Gary Vernick, owner of 215 and 217 Vine Street, stated that his properties are located directly across the street from the proposed structure and that he has been associated with the block since 1978. He added that he is president of the local RCO, Franklin Bridge North Neighbors, but that he is present as an individual and not a representative of the organization. Mr. Vernick distributed a document to the Committee. He noted that, in the document, he included questions that surfaced as a result of the owner securing zoning over-the-counter with no neighborhood or local input. He contended that the Architectural Committee meeting is the first chance anyone has had to provide comment on the proposed building. He then noted that approximately 60 percent of the block had been recently sold to a development company called the Goldenberg Group. What they do in the future, he continued, will be decided at a future date. This particular structure, Mr. Vernick added, will serve as an example as to what can be constructed on a very significant, historic block that contains around 15 contributing properties and two very significant buildings that date to 1775. Those buildings are immediately adjacent to the west of the proposed structure, he

stated. He recalled appearing before the Architectural Committee about 9½ years ago for approval of two of his own properties. He noted that photographs of the properties are included in the application. At that time, he continued, he proposed constructing on a surface parking lot, and stated that Mr. Baron educated him on the responsibilities of building in the Old City Historic District. He explained that he was told brick is the appropriate material, that the window lines of the new building should follow those of the rest of the block, that the new building should not look old, but that it should blend into the surrounding context. He further elaborated that suggestions included installing two-over-two or four-over-four windows with “mutton chops,” that is muntins, providing lintels and sills above and below the windows, adding details to prevent the monotony of too much brick, installing a historic door, and so on. Mr. Vernick stated that he followed those recommendations and was very happy for the advice. He argued that the same guidelines need to be considered with the proposed building, and expressed concern over the scale and the materials, which he felt were not appropriate for a block containing very little aside from historic brick.

Diane Tucker, resident of 221 Vine Street, noted that she resides across the street from the proposed building and has been a resident of the block for the last 35 years. She claimed that she and her late husband have owned, managed, and rehabilitated approximately 60 percent of the 200 block of Vine Street. Ms. Tucker noted that she asked a friend, who is an architect, to work with her to compose a letter using technical language to express her views. She distributed the letter and a photograph of the property she owns, which is located at 226-28 Vine Street, immediately adjacent to the western property line of 222 Vine Street and which dates to the 1770s. She stated that she would be happy to answer questions, adding that she and her late husband, Dick Tucker, purchased 226-28 Vine Street in the 1990s to insure that the building would be preserved for the future. With that in mind, she continued, the reason she came to the Committee meeting was to learn about the proposal for the site adjacent to the significant historic building. She showed the photograph she distributed to the Committee members and stated that it depicts the historic structure as it is today and includes the adjacent, non-contributing building that is slated for demolition. The letter that was distributed, she continued, describes her sentiments toward the project. She urged the Architectural Committee to deny the application and insisted that a more appropriate design be prepared using properly scaled, high-quality materials and details.

Mr. Torok offered a brief history of his property, stating that he purchased the property from Mrs. Tucker’s son and his partners. The Goldenberg Group, he added, bought the other parcels. He argued that he purchased the lot on this particular block, because it is a beautifully historic block. He asserted that he worked with members of the Historical Commission staff and that he thinks this design represents the future of building in a historic district, because it is urban and caters to the people who want to live in the neighborhood. It is not a typical modern development, he contended, because it blends into the neighborhood with its use of brick and incorporation of large windows. Old City, he continued, consists of tall buildings, and the proposed structure is not out of line for the neighborhood’s building height, density, or scale. He agreed that it does not fit in with one-quarter of the block, but asserted that more than half the block will be developed in the future. He suggested that a precedent can be set to define Old City with the blending of old and new within the historic district. Mr. Torok indicated that he was not prepared for the degree of opposition to his proposal. Ms. Tucker stated that she is not opposed to a building, but she wants to see the right building.

Mr. Cluver acknowledged that Ms. Tucker takes issue with the materials and details but noted that she does not mention the building's height in her letter. He asked if she has no objections to the height. Ms. Tucker responded that she understands that 65 feet is the height limit in Old City, but she stated that she does take issue with the building's proposed height. She added that she knows the existing building will be demolished, but she expressed concern over the impending demolition of the structure, because it abuts her property. She stated that the new design appears out of place, though she cannot fight the zoning height allowance. The whole building and design, she continued, is inappropriate and could be modified. She reiterated that the block is very historic. Mr. Torok asked Ms. Tucker about the height of her residence. She responded that it is four stories tall. Mr. Torok asserted that it would probably be close to 65 feet. Ms. Tucker countered that the building was constructed in the 1770s.

Mr. Cluver asserted that an argument supporting the appropriateness of industrial buildings in Old City could be made, but explained that concerns have been raised over material and detailing that exacerbate the size and bulk of the proposed structure. With careful detailing, he continued, the building could better fit into the neighborhood, even with its current size. Mr. Torok responded that he understands that the Committee is discussing the materials, details, and façade, but he argued that the structure's footprint is set back to provide for additional green space, which is not required. He reiterated that he wanted a façade on the east wall, which would otherwise be a blank stucco wall, since it would function as a party wall. He contended that the setback was created because he cares about the façade and appearance of the building. He insisted that the setback allows the building to achieve a loft, factory-style appearance.

Mr. McCoubrey recommended against continuing the same system from the front façade to the east elevation, suggesting that there are ways to simplify the secondary façade. Ms. Gutterman agreed and stated that the secondary east façade is given more prominence with the current design. She proposed that the design be changed so that the Vine Street elevation functions as the primary façade where detailing is focused and that the east elevation be treated as a secondary wall within the historic district. It may be set back, she continued, but it should not have the same detailing as the Vine Street elevation, since it is not a corner building where both elevations warrant the same prominence. She urged Mr. Torok to create a hierarchy to the building's design and noted some of the Committee's earlier comments that included establishing a base, middle, and top. She noted that she does not object in concept to a 65-foot-tall building in Old City, given the location on Vine Street and heights of surrounding buildings, but she did argue that the detailing would need to be refined to allow the building to contribute to the district rather than compete with it.

Ms. Stein referenced the assembly of neighboring buildings included in the application and argued that they exhibit a water table at the base with a tall first story that grades up so that each addition story is slightly reduced. Those design features, she added, make a difference. She asserted that the bands at the bottoms of the buildings are important and that element is missing in the proposed design. Those types of details, she continued, would allow the proposed building to fit in with the neighboring structure, which has emphasis on the first story. She added that the proposed programs, such as a private residence on the first floor, can still be accomplished with this design.

Mr. McCoubrey continued the discussion on detailing by remarking that the design could include brick at the first story and continue it again at the upper stories with fenestration in between. Mr.

Torok asked if the Committee would compile a list of suggestions. Mr. McCoubrey stated that Mr. Torok would need to consult with his architect. Mr. McCoubrey also advised against using wood panels at the first story, stating that they are not appropriate for this type of building. Ms. Stein advocated for incorporating masonry at the base. Mr. Torok asked whether the Committee was suggesting creating a stucco wall at the east elevation. Ms. Gutterman asserted that the Committee is not recommending that Mr. Torok create a stucco wall. She added that she appreciates that the east elevation is set back from the property line and that Mr. Torok gave light and air to the apartments.

Mr. Cluver commented that a typical industrial loft building would consist of a gridded structure with solid piers and fenestration that spans from pier to pier. This design, he continued, includes 8 inches of corrugated material between the window and pier, which he argued changes the vocabulary. Mr. Torok asked whether bringing the windows from pier to pier would be recommended. Mr. Cluver showed Mr. Torok how to modify the drawing to improve the design, suggesting that he add horizontal bands at the sills and heads to allow the element to extend across the facade. He suggested that, to distinguish the primary from the secondary facade, Mr. Torok could incorporate brick oriented in different directions between windows on the front facade. He recommended possibly using a different texture or setting the brick back a couple inches. On the side, he continued, the materials could be simplified at the infill areas. He concluded that Mr. Torok would need to look at other buildings in the district, adding that those subtleties that have been discussed are reflected in the comments from the Committee and neighbors.

Mr. Torok asked whether the Committee found the building's height to be problematic. Mr. McCoubrey argued that the design accentuates the height of the building by having large piers extend from the top to the bottom of the facade. He recommended that horizontal elements be introduced. Ms. Gutterman suggested adding more detailing in the pier to create shadow and to prevent the elevation from looking flat. She reiterated her concern that the tile may not withstand freeze-thaw cycling and would not have depth. Mr. Cluver added that the Committee senses that Mr. Torok is attempting to construct a building that fits the district but that the design is not quite resolved.

Ms. Gutterman inquired about the west elevation. Mr. Torok answered that it is a stucco wall along the party line. Ms. Gutterman noted that the elevation is missing from the application. Mr. McCoubrey suggested including a drawing of the elevation to show how the front facade turns the corner, specifically regarding the brick pier and cornice.

Amy Ricci of the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia stated that the Alliance produced a publication that discusses compatible infill in historic districts and would be happy to provide it to the applicant.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial.

ADDRESS: 200 S BROAD ST

Proposal: Install signage and awnings

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Bellevue Associates

Applicant: A. Robert Torres, Studio Torres, LTD

History: 1902; Bellevue Stratford Hotel; Hewitt Brothers, architects

Individual Designation: 8/2/1973

District Designation: None

Preservation Easement: Yes

Staff Contact: Meredith Keller, meredith.keller@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to install new signage for the Palm Restaurant, located in the first-floor space of The Bellevue. Existing awnings would be replaced above all Broad and Chancellor Street windows. Two illuminated blade signs and a back-lit sign would also be installed at the Broad Street façade. The Preservation Alliance holds a façade easement on the property.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval of the proposed awnings and one blade sign, but denial of all other proposed signage, pursuant to Standards 2 and 9.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Keller presented the application to the Architectural Committee. Architect Robert Torres and attorney Tom Chapman represented the application.

Mr. Cluver directed the applicant to drawing SK-1, which contains the sign schedule, and stated that it appears some signs are existing while others are proposed. He asked which are proposed. Mr. Torres answered that the signs on the schedule are predominantly existing, but included in that square footage calculation is the proposed signage. Ms. Keller stated that the staff interpreted the proposed new signage as consisting of the replacement of all the awnings shown on the drawing in brown, the installation of two new blade signs, and the addition of one back lit sign on the Broad Street façade. Mr. Torres added that there would be logos on the awnings, in addition to "Palm Restaurant" being written on the awnings' aprons. Mr. Cluver clarified that the new signage is noted in bold lettering on the schedule. Mr. Torres affirmed.

Ms. Gutterman asked where the vinyl lettering would be placed. Mr. Torres responded that the vinyl lettering would be on the awnings.

Mr. Chapman noted that the application includes a photograph of the existing façade. He asserted that the proposal, in terms of square footage, is well within the allowable limit according to the zoning code. He stated that the allowance is approximately 392 square feet of signage on the Broad Street façade, and that he and Mr. Torres are proposing about 226 square feet. That figure, he continued, includes both existing and proposed signage. In addition to the Historical Commission's approval, Mr. Chapman stated that he also needs to seek approval from the Art Commission, Planning Commission, Zoning Board, and the Preservation Alliance. Ms. Gutterman acknowledged the other approvals that will be required, but stated that the Architectural Committee is reviewing the appropriateness of the signage given the nature of the building.

Ms. Gutterman asked whether the lettering on the awnings continues along Chancellor Street. Mr. Torres answered that it does, adding that Chancellor Court is a private street. Ms.

Gutterman noted that patrons would enter the restaurant through the Broad Street entrance. Mr. McCoubrey asked for clarification on what is meant by including lettering on the awnings. Mr. Torres directed him to drawing SK-2, which shows the brown awnings with The Palm's logo. Mr. McCoubrey countered that he does not see lettering on the rendering. Mr. Torres explained that the rendering shows only the logo but that the client would also like to include the words "Palm Restaurant" on the apron, similar to the existing awnings.

Mr. Cluver noted the amount of repetition in the signage proposal. He commented that, in his opinion, he associates sedate signage with classier restaurants, because those restaurants are treated as destinations. The proposal, he continued, runs counter to his image of The Palm. He agreed with the staff that the signage seems excessive and argued that the subtlety of the current signage is preferable.

Ms. Gutterman inquired whether the existing signage creates confusion with the public over where the restaurant's entrance is located. Mr. Torres replied that, when driving on Broad Street, the restaurant is difficult to find. He asserted that everyone knows the Bellevue, but not everyone knows that The Palm Restaurant is in the Bellevue, which creates an identification issue. Ms. Gutterman responded that she understands the addition of a blade sign would help resolve the identity issue. She then asked why the proposal includes two blade signs and a palm tree with lettering on every awning. To improve identity, she continued, placing additional signage on Chancellor Street seems counterintuitive, because no one would see it. The Committee discussed with Mr. Torres whether there would be logos and lettering on the Chancellor Court awnings or whether the awnings would be plain.

Mr. Cluver noted that the application includes photographs of other restaurants in the area, but asserted that those signs do not support the argument in this particular case. Those signs, he continued, show a variety of types, but each sign type is of a different restaurant. Nowhere, he added, does he see this multiplicity of signage at a single restaurant. Mr. Torres responded that he intended to show different conditions of signage, not necessarily suggesting that each location has blade signs, awnings, etc. Mr. Cluver contended that, in terms of historic appropriateness, the signage should be scaled back.

Ms. Gutterman asked if Mr. Torres considered restoring the historic door. Mr. Torres answered that there was discussion of it and that, in the past, The Palm Restaurant proposed café seating. At that time, he continued, he developed a drawing that proposed to restore the main entrance to The Palm Restaurant and to duplicate the historic entryway as closely as possible. He stated that he applied to the Historical Commission and the application was approved, but the proposal came at a time when the economy was on the decline, and the project was ultimately placed on hold. He commented that historic photographs were included in his current application to show that there were blade signs on the building's façade in the past.

Mr. McCoubrey stated that the backlit sign seems very difficult to integrate with the building and stretches over the voussoirs. Mr. Torres indicated that, if the sign were to be approved, he would create a sign similar to the Capital Grille sign, though it would not include the large box underneath. Instead, he continued, it would have a relatively small box, approximately 5 square inches. Mr. McCoubrey responded that no matter what, even with beautiful pin letters, it would still obscure the stone detail. Mr. Torres asked whether Mr. McCoubrey's concern related to the size of the letters and whether a smaller sign would work. Ms. Gutterman stated that a sign is not appropriate for that location. Mr. McCoubrey agreed, adding that it would be difficult to make

a sign work with the stonework of the base. He also agreed with the staff that one blade sign would be acceptable and that it could be mounted in the reveals of the stone. Mr. Cluver added that the graphic of the palm on the awning would greatly help with the identification issue, because the current lettering on the awning is very small.

Ms. Gutterman stated that another problem with the restaurant is that people do not know where to enter. Mr. Torres agreed. Mr. Cluver suggested placing the blade sign closer to the main entryway, so it attracts people to the entryway. Using one blade sign to demarcate the entrance, he added, is further argument for not having the redundancy of two blade signs.

Mr. McCoubrey opened the floor to public comment. Amy Ricci of the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia stated that her organization holds an easement on the property and she looks forward to reviewing the application with the recommendations from the Committee. Mr. Cluver asked if the application has been submitted to the Alliance. Mr. Torres replied that it has not.

Mr. Torres asked whether the Committee would consider a smaller projection. Instead of the proposed 3-foot projection, he continued, the sign would have a 2-foot projection. With a smaller sign, he asserted that he could include two blade signs that would be less commercial in appearance. Mr. Torres showed an image of a sign from one of the restaurant's other locations. Mr. Cluver inquired about the dimensions of the new sign Mr. Torres is proposing. Mr. Torres explained that the sign proposed in the application is 3 feet by 8 feet and that the new sign would be proportional but with a 2-foot projection. Ms. Gutterman stated that she prefers the smaller sign but still advocated for one rather than two. Mr. Torres replied that the smaller sign is more open and is a better design. Mr. Cluver reiterated that having one sign will help resolve the confusion over the entrance location. Given the choice between the two sign types, he agreed with Ms. Gutterman that the smaller sign would be better, independent of size.

Mr. Torres asked for clarification on the Committee's objection to the flat wall sign. Ms. Gutterman stated that it obscures too much of the building's architectural detail.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval of the following parts of the application, with the staff to review details:

- the proposed awnings, with the understanding that, in addition to the palm tree logo, the words "Palm Restaurant" would be placed on the apron;
- two vinyl window appliques; and,
- one blade sign that reflects either the design submitted in the application or the revised design presented at the meeting, with a preference for the revised design.

The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial of all other proposed signage, pursuant to Standards 2 and 9.

ADDRESS: 231-37 RACE ST

Proposal: Paint mural on wall at rear of parking lot

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Brandywine Construction and Management, Inc.

Applicant: Martin Jay Tackett, Tackett and Company, Inc.

History: 1827; new façade, c. 1920

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Old City Historic District, Contributing, 12/12/2003

Staff Contact: Laura DiPasquale, laura.dipasquale@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval, pursuant to Standard 9.

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to paint a mural on the side of an exposed one-story party wall of a property fronting on N. 3rd Street, which is overlooking a parking lot accessed from Race Street. The proposed mural would depict the skyline of Center City Philadelphia in lavender and grey.

DISCUSSION: Ms. DiPasquale presented the application to the Architectural Committee. Architect Jay Tackett and designer Caitlyn Rotiske represented the application.

Mr. Cluver questioned the reversibility of the work and whether the mural could be removed without damaging the materials underneath. Mr. Tackett responded affirmatively, stating that it is paint.

Ms. Gutterman asked whether the wall would be restuccoed as part of this project. Ms. Rotiske responded that loose stucco would be removed and repaired, but that the whole wall would not be restuccoed.

Mr. Tackett presented a color swatch, which appeared more distinctly lavender than the pink-purple of the rendering. Mr. McCoubrey noted that the grey of the skyline seems to flow directly out of the parking lot. Mr. Tackett responded that that is the idea.

Mr. McCoubrey opened the floor to public comment, of which there was none.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval, with the staff to review details.

ADJOURNMENT

The Architectural Committee adjourned at 12:08 p.m.

STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES CITED IN THE MINUTES

Standard 2: The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinct materials or alterations of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.

Standard 6: Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.

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 works shall 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.

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 would be unimpaired.

Roofs Guideline: Recommended: Designing additions to roofs such as residential, office, or storage spaces; elevator housing; decks and terraces; or dormers or skylights when required by the new use so that they are inconspicuous from the public right-of-way and do not damage or obscure character-defining features.