

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

**Vincent Rivera, Chair
Commission Offices, Room 578, City Hall
16 December 2003**

Present

Vincent Rivera, AIA, Chair
Rudy D'Alessandro
Daniel McCoubrey, AIA
Suzanne Pentz

Randal Baron, Historic Preservation Specialist
Jonathan Farnham, Historic Preservation Planner
Diane M. Hughes, Executive Secretary
Laura Spina, Historic Preservation Planner
Richard Tyler, Historic Preservation Officer

Also

Marianna Thomas, Marianna Thomas Architects
Jeff DiRomaldo, Marianna Thomas Architects
Joel Spivak
Michael Samschick
Matteo Weiner
John Gallery, Preservation Alliance
Arlene Matzkin, Friday Architects
Janet C. Bressler
Rick Snyderman
Steve Grandizio
Mike Giammarino, Lombardi's, 132 South 18th Street
Lenore Millhollen, Preservation Alliance/Center City Residents' Association
Mike Fried
Diana Bonsteel, Kaiserman Company
Michele Crusco, Kaiserman Company
Sabrina Soong, Soong Associates Incorporated
Ray Brogden, Soong Associates Incorporated
Hal Wheeler
Paul Stein
David S. Traub, AIA
Elise Vider, Center City District
W.T. Lawson
Bill Wheeler
Stuart Feldman
Nurit Nachum
Sherry Bore
Karl Krumholz, SRK Architects
John Lee, JAKO

Vincent Rivera, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:37 a.m.

City Hall, Broad and Market Streets

City of Philadelphia, Owner

Marianna Thomas, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1871-1901, John McArthur Jr. with Thomas U. Walter, architects

PROPOSAL: Alter portal doors for security

This application proposes alterations to four doorways in the East and West Portals in City Hall. The alterations would improve ADA access and security at City Hall. In each doorway, the central double-leaf doors, which are non-historic and automatic, would be replaced with replications of the historic manual doors. A sidelight and panel section would be converted into a single-leaf automatic door for ADA access. Access panels with card readers, motion sensors, door closers, emergency release buttons, and other support hardware would be added.

A majority of the staff has grave concerns about this proposal. First, the plans provided show neither how the historic sidelights and panels will be converted into doors nor how the newly-created doors will attach to the historic door surrounds. Better documentation should be provided so that the staff can assess the proposal. Second, the staff contends that it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to fabricate these doors from the sidelights and panels and hang them from the historic door surrounds without significantly damaging original, unaltered, historic fabric. The central, double-leaf doors are not historic; all efforts should be made to install the needed ADA-compliant doors in the altered central openings, leaving the historic fabric to the sides undisturbed.

Staff Recommendation: Denial, pursuant to Standard 5 and the Accessibility Guideline.

Mr. Farnham presented the application to the Architectural Committee. Marianna Thomas and Jeff DiRomaldo, the architects, and Frederick Robinson of the Capital Programs Office represented the project. Ms. Thomas acknowledged the staff recommendation and stated that, although she does not like to make threats, if this proposal is not approved, she would submit an application for a much more drastic, destructive scheme. Mr. Robinson noted that the City has made these security and ADA changes a high priority. Mr. DiRomaldo explained that the current design, with the double-leaf automatic doors, does not function properly.

Committee members asked if each existing historic panel and sidelight would be converted into a single-leaf door or if the historic fabric would be removed and new doors replicating the historic fabric installed. Ms. Thomas stated that they had not yet worked out these details. Committee members agreed that they should review this in concept application again before final approval is granted, allowing the details to be evaluated. Mr. McCoubrey noted that it would be challenging to use the historic fabric to create a new door. He asked if it could be stored on site if removed. Mr. Robinson noted the City's storage problems, but did not otherwise answer the question.

The Architectural Committee recommends approval in concept of the proposal as submitted.

128 Bainbridge Street

Michael Samschick, Owner

Joel Spivak, Applicant

DATE: c. 1780

PROPOSAL: Revised design for addition

This application proposes major alterations to an addition legalized by the Commission. The significant building is remarkable for its unusual roofline and wood siding and its early construction date, which may predate the Revolutionary War.

This project has a long history with the Commission. On 8 November 2000, the Commission approved in concept an application for a 3-story addition at the rear of the historic building, provided the Permastone was removed and the façade was restored to its historic appearance, not faced with brick, as had been proposed. The design stipulated that the lower two stories of the addition would be set back 17'-3" from the front façade of the historic building; the 3rd story would include a front deck and would be set back 24'-3" from front façade. The Commission mandated the greater setback at the top story to prevent the addition from rising above and looming over the older building.

Following the conceptual approval, the owner demolished the rear of the eighteenth-century house and erected a 4-story addition without Historical Commission approval or a building permit. The addition is set back at the upper stories. Of note is the fact that the work has never been completed and that the building has been open to the weather for two years. In July 2001, the owner submitted a new application to the Commission to legalize the work done without approvals and permits. On 8 August 2001, the Commission remanded that submission back to the Architectural Committee, stating that the design documentation was incomplete and that neighbors' complaints needed to be addressed.

On 12 September 2001, the Commission reviewed revised plans for the illegally built addition. At that time, it compromised with the owner and legalized the 4-story addition with a front deck at the 3rd-story level and a 24'-0" setback at the 3rd and 4th-story levels, provided the front façade of the historic building was restored and the historic chimney was preserved. Again, the 24'-0" setback was mandated to prevent the addition from rising above and looming over the older building.

The current application seeks the approval of a new design for the front façade of the addition. The new design stipulates a front deck at the 4th-story level, not the approved 3rd-story level; it also stipulates a 24'-0" setback only at the 4th-story level, not at the 3rd and 4th-story levels as the Commission had previously mandated. In the current design, the addition would rise above and loom over the older building. Also note that the drawings submitted with this application state "No Change in Historic Façade." They do not explicitly specify that the façade will be restored or that the historic chimney will be retained, both provisions of the earlier approval.

Staff Recommendation: Denial, pursuant to the Commission's earlier decision. The application presents no justification for the annulment of the Commission's earlier decision, which represented a significant compromise, especially in light of the fact that the work was performed illegally.

Mr. Farnham presented the application to the Architectural Committee. Michael Samschick, the owner, and Joel Spivak, the designer, represented the project. Committee members noted that they had seen this project several times and had thought that a resolution had been reached.

After Committee members complained that the drawings did not provide the information needed to make a decision, Mr. Samschick and Mr. Spivak explained project. Mr. Samschick stated that he would like to extend the 3rd-story of the addition forward to the rear of the historic building and move the deck from the 3rd to the 4th story. He claimed that he had been unable to sell the partially completed building. Adding to the 3rd story would make it more marketable.

Committee members noted that the restoration of the front façade, which was part of the legalization compromise, had not occurred. They also noted that the proposed addition to the addition would loom over the historic building. They suggested that the owner make a financial hardship application if he is unable to sell the property in its current condition.

The Architectural Committee unanimously recommends denial. It suggests that if the owner makes a hardship application, it be referred to the Committee on Financial Hardship.

1709 Brandywine Street

Fred Duling, Owner

Arlene Matzkin, Architect/Applicant

DATE: c. 1920 and 1940

PROPOSAL: Demolish non-contributing garage, construct new multi-unit residential building - in concept

This application for approval in concept proposes the demolition of a non-contributing garage and the construction of a new building at 1709 Brandywine Street. The new building would include four residential units as well as four parking spaces on the ground floor.

Staff Recommendation: Approval of the demolition. The staff split on the new construction. One staff member recommends approval as submitted. All others recommend denial and suggest revisions. They suggest that the historic brick paving be preserved between the new building and the curb line. They also suggest that the ground-level façade, which is fortress-like, be reworked to be pedestrian-friendly; possible improvements could include lowering the entrance to a point closer to grade and fenestrating the first story. They also suggest that the building line at the sidewalk be altered to be straight and aligned with the neighboring building at the corner. For example, the entry stairway should not protrude. Bays and setbacks at the upper stories are acceptable. Also, all but one staff member contend that more information, for example materials and colors, should be provided. Those recommending denial of the new construction reference 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.*].

Arlene Matzkin, the architect, remarked that it would be hard to lower the entrance of the proposed new construction, owing to the parking area. She stressed that the street consists mainly of garages.

Committee members concurred that the garage area as shown of the plans is ambiguous.

The Architectural Committee recommended approval.

565 Judson Street

Janet Bressler, Owner/Applicant

DATE: vacant at the time of designation

PROPOSAL: Hardscaping for parking

This application proposes the addition of landscaping as well as paving for parking at the vacant lot at 565 Judson Street. The lot's owner also owns the rowhouse at 563 Judson Street, to the south, and would like off-street parking. The Commission has 45-day-review-and-comment jurisdiction over the lot, which was vacant at the time of designation, but full jurisdiction over the curb cut. Note that the plan for the parking and landscape submitted for Commission approval differs significantly from the plan that received Streets Department approval. Also note that the Streets Department plan implies the addition of a door in the north-facing stucco party wall of the building at 563 Judson Street.

Staff Recommendation: The staff was split on parking on this lot. The Guidelines speak directly to this subject. The Site Guideline states: [*Recommended: Designing new onsite parking, loading docks, or ramps when required by the new use so that they are as unobtrusive as possible and assure the preservation of the historic relationship between the building or buildings and the landscape.*]. Three recommend denial of the curb cut because the parking would be "obtrusive." Two recommend its approval, contending that the parking would be "unobtrusive."

Janet Bressler, the owner, said that the submitted drawings are a rough sketch until the location of the curb cut is established. The Streets Department approved a curb cut on Judson Street conditioned that it does not abut the pavers. Ms. Bressler commented that in the near future, she plans to build on the site and that the hardscaping can be reversed.

Mr. Rivera recommended that the granite be sunk in. Mr. McCoubrey said that it is important to have the correct dimensions in order to support of the hedge.

The Architectural Committee recommended approval subject to the retention or resetting of the granite curb.

945 South 2nd Street

Steve Grandizio, Owner

Sabrina Soong, Architect/Applicant

DATE: c. 1815

PROPOSAL: New rear addition with deck and stair, legalize new front wall

The proposal seeks to legalize the demolition of the front façade and the construction of a new cinder block backup wall. The owner will clad the backup wall with a brick façade that restores the façade to its original appearance. In addition the applicant seeks to widen the visible rear ell and to build a roof deck on the ell with a stair to the yard.

Staff recommendation: Approval of the façade work with a pair of first floor windows pursuant to *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.]* with staff to review details.

Approval of the addition pursuant to *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 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.]*

Mr. Baron explained the proposal and said that he has been working with the applicant.

Steve Grandizio, the owner, Sabrina Soong and Ray Brogden, architects, and Mike Fried attended the meeting. Ms. Soong noted that inside one window there is plaster and lathe which is modern. This property can be attributed to many periods owing to the many alterations, but the stairs and sills still match. Mr. Fried said that owing to the four inch bowing of the bricks, starbolts were installed. Mr. Grandizio offered his intent to save the bricks, which were Flemish bond; however, they were crumbling.

Mr. Rivera commented that in order to install the two windows, the columns would have to be removed, which have new metal lintels above. The Committee concluded that if they had reviewed the rebuilding of the front wall, they would have required that two windows be installed and the height of the door raised. Mr. McCoubrey said that the original house has been modified at least two times. Mr. McCoubrey said that the installation of the two windows and widening of the door would mean the removal of the Pennsylvania marble sill. Committee members concluded that the alterations to the house should be done as reflected in the drawings, but without the shutters. Mr. Tyler thought there should be paneled shutters on the 1st floor. Mr. Grandizio showed photographs of the rear of the house, which show paneled shutters on the 2nd floor.

The Architectural Committee recommended approval as submitted, with louvered shutters on the 2nd floor and paneled shutters on the 1st floor, or no shutters at all, with staff to review details.

301-303 Cherry Street

Rick Snyderman, Owner

Joel Spivak, Applicant

DATE: c. 1860, attributed to architect Steven Button

PROPOSAL: Legalize demolition of clerestory; new construction of penthouse and roof deck

This application proposes the legalization of the demolition of a clerestory and construction of a penthouse as well as the approval of the construction of a deck on the roof of the building at 301-303 Cherry Street. The clerestory was demolished and the penthouse constructed without Commission approval or a building permit. Such work requires a building permit regardless of historical status. The penthouse is highly visible from N. 3rd, N. 4th, and Cherry Streets.

An application to legalize the demolition of clerestory and construction of the penthouse and to approve the construction of the deck was reviewed and denied by the Commission at its October 2003 meeting. This application proposes the legalization of the demolition and the approval of a slightly modified penthouse and identical deck. The penthouse, which is 42' x 14', would be reduced in height approximately 3'-6" from the earlier, denied design; it would remain visible from N. 3rd, N. 4th, and Cherry Streets.

Staff Recommendation: Denial, pursuant to 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 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.*]; and the Roofs Guideline: [*Recommended: Designing additions to roofs ... 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.*].

Rick Snyderman, the owner, and Joel Spivak attended the meeting. Mr. Snyderman talked at length about his interest in preservation. He believes that the proposed addition is the same profile as the original clerestory. He contends that visibility is minimal and that the new construction does not destroy the historic details with a 40-foot setback. Mr. Snyderman said that the clerestory was deteriorated and not repairable. The proposed addition will make functional space. He offered to work with staff to come up with an appropriate design.

Mr. McCoubrey thought that the clerestory had architectural presence. Committee members suggested that the new addition have more glazing to mimic the original clerestory with the short side pitched and without a parapet. Mr. Rivera believes that more details should be submitted. Additionally, the windows should drop two-feet and the awning windows should be 18 to 24 inches wider. He thought that a grayish stucco would be appropriate and that the addition be no taller than shown in the revised drawings.

The Architectural Committee recommended approval of the revised proposal, with staff to review details.

1811-13 Walnut Street, 126-32 South 18th Street, and 1812 Sansom Street

Philadelphia Rittenhouse, Owner

David Polatnick, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1811-13 Walnut Street, built 1900, architect Newman, Woodman & Harris

Significant

1812 Sansom Street, built c. 1970, non-contributing

126-32 S. 18th Street, built c.1840, 126 refaced c. 1915, 132 refaced c. 1932
contributing

PROPOSAL: Demolition except for Walnut Street facade and new construction of 27-story condominium tower - in concept

This application in concept calls for demolition of all of these properties except for the front facades of 1811-13 Walnut Street. The applicant may rebuild or retain facades at 126-132 S. 18th Street. The new construction involves the construction of a 320 foot or 390 foot residential tower set behind and cantilevered over the Allison building at 1807 Walnut Street. The tower would sit back 10 feet from the 18th Street building line and would not reproduce the dormers or roof line of the existing buildings.

Although the plans call for retaining only the façade of the Rittenhouse Club on Walnut Street the tower does sit back substantially from that façade. The proposal includes no elevations of Sansom Street. The applicant has presented no demolition argument based on economic hardship or the public interest. The Commission voted on 8 November 2000 to approve a similar project in concept.

Staff recommendation: Denial pursuant to *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 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.] and 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 property and its environment would be unimpaired.]*.

Mr. Baron presented the proposal and noted that the previous approval for a project on this site is not valid. He offered to the Commission, the receipt of 82 letters from concerned citizens who are opposing the demolition. Mr. Baron remarked that the rear of the Rittenhouse Club did not receive posting of the proposed demolition. Mr. Tyler clarified the Ordinance with regards to demolition which should have a basis of financial hardship or in the public interest.

Hal Wheeler, Graham Wyatt and David Polatnick attended the meeting. Mr. Wheeler suggested that the previous approval was based on financial hardship and he believed that the new design addresses the historic issues. Mr. Wyatt described the project at length. He said that the Rittenhouse Club historically was two buildings and the building at the rear would be demolished owing to its deteriorated condition. The Van Rensselaer Mansion, which has a significant rear façade would be retained and restored, and rebuild the garden behind, while the Allison Building will be retained in its original condition. He commented that the four facades on 18th Street are problematic. Mr. Wyatt said that the proposed building would have two entrances, using the central bay of the Rittenhouse Club with four residential buildings behind the façade and a gallery that leads to the residential side. Retail space along the 18th Street frontage, the Allison Building and the Van Rensselaer Mansion. The design would keep the 1st bay as it turns around the corner. The off street service area as required is enclosed on Sansom Street. Mr. Wyatt said that all parking would be below grade. There would be no curb cuts on Walnut Street. The proposed buildings would be set back 25 feet from the Allison Building. They would consist of red brick with clear glass with granite to mimic that in the Rittenhouse Club.

William Lawson who is representing the tenants of 18th Street argued that there is a requirement to post on all street frontages. Mr. Tyler cited the posting requirements as specified in the city Ordinance.

Mike Giammino, owner of Lombardi's expressed opposition to the not posting of the rear of the Rittenhouse Club.

Mr. Rivera asked if the height of the proposed buildings would have any impact on the four facades. Mr. Baron inquired about the granite fence in the yard, and it was noted that it would be shifted and rebuilt. Mr. D'Alessandro inquired about the distance between the facades and it was answered 14 feet.

Mr. Tyler believes that the proposed development is not in keeping with historic preservation. He said that 18th Street is significant as an urban experience. The 18th Street rhythm and scale with incredible street vitality and retaining just the facades is heresy. He believes that the buildings should be torn down out of respect for the buildings. Mr. Rivera disagreed with Mr. Tyler. He cited the 7th and Walnut Street project. Mr. D'Alessandro believes that 18th Street is familiar with its streetscape, which would be lost with putting something in with a different concept.

Mr. Wyatt offered to pull back the proposed buildings to respect the cornice line.

Mr. McCoubrey expressed the importance of 18th Street as being the gateway to Rittenhouse Square.

John Gallery, Preservation Alliance, opined his belief that the submission is incomplete. He remarked that the applicant gave a good presentation and cited another similar project which does not justify financial hardship. Mr. Gallery cautioned against interfacing between architectural and financial hardship with being submitted simultaneously.

Gersil Kay said that Philadelphia is turning into a Brasilia with the tearing down of entire streets. She believes that the proposed development will not enhance Rittenhouse Square. She thinks that the demolition of these buildings amounts to the raping of Rittenhouse Square. Ms. Kay asked if a survey had been done to justify the need for thirty-three stories.

David Traub believes that this is the gravest matter before the Commission. He opined that the creation of a district should protect the buildings before the city becomes a cartoon of itself. Sansom Street has an intimate in scale. The bicycle store, which stretches around the corner, should be preserved. In conclusion he believes that the developer is creating a legitimate site through demolition. Ms. Pentz questioned the necessity of sacrificing historic buildings and said that based on the submitted materials, she could not approve the demolition. She expressed concern with the demolition of the Rittenhouse Club.

Mr. Wheeler remarked that he would be very happy to resubmit his application to reflect the suggestions of the Committee.

The Architectural Committee recommended denial based on an incomplete application, pursuant to Standard 9.

1728 Chestnut Street

Ilan Zaken, Owner

Nurit Nachum, Contractor/Applicant

DATE: 1914, Frank H. Keisker, architect; storefront & window alterations, c. 1965

PROPOSAL: Alter storefront for 2nd door

The original storefront of this building had been altered in the 1960s. The owner wishes to install a second door, as found in the original storefront, but keep most of the materials that were added in the later alteration.

Staff Recommendation: Staff split. Four recommended approval, with staff to review details, pursuant to Standard 9 [*New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize a property. The new work 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.] and 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.]. One staff member recommended denial and believes that enough photographic evidence exists to have the storefront restored. Staff thinks that if the railings at the second floor do not prove necessary for code they should be removed since they are non-historic.

Nurit Nachum attended the meeting. She said that the 3rd and 4th floor would be residential and originally there was a door on either side. Ms. Nachum noted that the existing pilasters are from the 1960s. Mr. Rivera inquired if she proposed to match the existing pilasters. Mr. McCoubrey asked if the base of the storefront is stone and Ms. Nachum responded that it is wood panels complete with 60s infill.

The Architectural Committee recommended approval subject to the removal of the railings at the 2nd floor, with the staff to review details.

1828 Spruce Street

Richard and Sherri Bore, Owners

Karl Kromholz, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1887 for Col. A. K. McClure; A. J. Boyden, architect; significant in district

PROPOSAL: Partial demolition, 1-story side addition and 2-story rear addition

This application includes several parts. First, the proposal calls for a small one-story addition in the crux of the rear ell. Second, the rear of the rear ell would be demolished up to the three-sided bay. The rear ell has some decorative features including a molded wood cornice, stained glass windows and a chamfered corner. Third, the proposal calls for a large, two-story rear addition that is the full width of the property and would include a one-car garage. The addition wraps under the three-sided bay. There would be one, four-light, fixed window at the first floor and a series of four-light fixed windows at the second floor.

Staff Recommendation: Approval of the one-story side addition, pursuant to Standard 9 [*New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize a property. The new work 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.*] and 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.*]; denial of the demolition, pursuant to Standard 2 [*The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.*], Standard 5 [*Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.*] and Standard 9; denial of the two-story addition, pursuant to Standards 9 and 10. The rear ell should remain, especially the chamfered corner. A small addition may be acceptable to accommodate a garage if it does not include major demolition or obscure important details.

Sherry Bore, the owner, and Karl Kromholz, the architect, attended the meeting. Mr. Kromholz said that rear would not be demolished and that a majority of the work is at the rear wall of the 2nd floor. He noted that the height of the addition has been lowered to retain the sense of the historic fabric. He pointed out that the addition would be cut back beneath the bay in response to the staff's concern. The proposal would demolish the 1st floor bay. Ms. Spina commented on the skylight and Mr. Kromholz said that it would not be visible. Ms. Bore cited the project at 1822 Delancey Street, which she believes is a similar project. Mr. Kromholz presented the Committee an alternate design.

Mr. McCoubrey thought that a one-story addition would be more appropriate and the Committee concurred. He said that given the limited visibility and the importance of preserving the historic fabric, he believed that the addition could be brick, which would be non-intrusive. Mr. D'Alessandro stressed the importance of retaining the windows and all other architectural features. Ms. Pentz believed that scheme B is a more appropriate design. The Committee asked the applicant to submit revised drawings and floor plans.

The Architectural Committee recommended approval of scheme B, with the staff to review details.

1509 Walnut Street

John Lee, Owner/Applicant

DATE: 1902, Newman, Woodman & Harris, architects; storefront cut, c. 1985

PROPOSAL: Illuminated signage, remove basement grates

This application calls for several items. First, the storeowner previously applied for an illuminated sign that attached above the storefront window at a slant, but it was much larger and obscured the stone cornice above. At the Architectural Committee meeting, the Committee suggested a smaller sign that fit into the concrete signband, which the Historical Commission approved. The storeowner now returns for the same type of slanted sign, but in a smaller size so that it does not obscure the cornice. The sign will attach to the building on three posts and have a frame that will hold removable panels. The panels will change on a regular basis. The frame will have two florescent lights at the bottom to illuminate it. Second, the storeowner would like to remove the original basement grills and install flush internally illuminated glass boxes in the basement windows. Currently, the basement windows are boarded.

Staff recommendation: Approval of the sign, if the panels are painted wood, and lights, pursuant to Standards 9 and 10. Denial of the removal of the historic basement grills, pursuant to Standards 2, 5 and 9. The basement windows can certainly be restored to allow more light into the basement area.

Mason Warner and John Lee attended the meeting. Mr. Lee said that it is his intention to treat the sign as artwork. Mr. Warner offered to store the grates, once they are removed, which would help in bringing light into the building. He inquired if the grates could be painted, Committee members responded in the affirmative. Committee members concurred that the grates should be retained.

The Architectural Committee recommended approval of the sign, if the panels are painted wood, and lights, pursuant to Standards 9 and 10. Denial of the removal of the historic basement grills, pursuant to Standards 2, 5 and 9.

The meeting adjourned at 1:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane M. Hughes
Executive Secretary