

**THE MINUTES OF THE 454TH STATED MEETING OF THE
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION
14 JUNE 2000**

**Commission Conference Room 18th Floor, 1515 Arch Street
Wayne S. Spilove, Chair**

Present

Wayne S. Spilove, Chair
David Baldinger, Deputy Director, City Planning Commission
David Brownlee, Ph.D.
Maxine Griffith, Executive Director, City Planning Commission
Shelly Merhige, Office of City Council President
David Perri, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Licenses and Inspections
Gillian M. Pollard, Director, Economic Planning and Research, Department of Commerce
Robert Thomas
Scott Wilds, Assistant Director, Office of Housing and Community Development
Caroline Wischmann
Clorise Wynn, Assistant Deputy Director, Department of Commerce

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

Mark Zecca, Esq., Senior Attorney, City of Philadelphia Law Department

Also

Anup M. Desai, 317 South 11th Street
Louise Hanson, 2144 St. James Place
Van Potteiger, Van Potteiger Architects
Harvey Klodoner, Germantown Cricket Club
Jonathan Dyer, SDI
Lenore Millhollen, Center City Residents Association/Preservation Alliance
Steve Pollock, Esq., Historic Clinton Street Association
Mike Barber, Dagit and Saylor Architects
Greg Riley, 4720 Ramona Avenue
Vivek Ghimire, Dagit and Saylor Architects
Nan Guttermann, Vitetta Group
Jack DeWaele, Historic Clinton Street Association
Kathy Cushing, 922 Clinton Street
Tobey Dichter, 1017 Clinton Street
Arthur Brandolf, 924 Clinton Street
Kelly Wolfington, 1008 Clinton Street
David Amburn, 700 South Washington Square
Helen J. File, Arch Street Meeting House
Linda Harris, Philadelphia Inquirer
Robert Powers, Robert Powers and Company
Dimitri Pappas, Ballard Spahr Andrews and Ingersoll

Laura Kern, Ballard Spahr Andrews and Ingersoll
Emel Wadhwani, Ballard Spahr Andrews and Ingersoll
Tara Sell, Ballard Spahr Andrews and Ingersoll
Linda Rogers, 1000 Clinton Street
Michael Prifti, Bower Lewis Thrower Architects
Robert Graves, Bower Lewis Thrower Architects
Peter Rudd, Bower Lewis Thrower Architects
Jane Golden, Department of Recreation, Mural Art Project
William Faust, Owner, 234 South 22nd Street
George Wolpert, Wolpert and Associates/ Bi-Glass System
Carolyn Wahrenburger, 507 Delancey Street
Ellen Metz, 1614 Spruce Street
Claudia Becker, Esq. K of P Greenwood Cemetery Company
Gwendolyn DeLong, Greenwood Cemetery
Steve Hafer, Northumberland
D. George DeLong, Greenwood Cemetery
Douglas Seiler, Seiler Architects/Academy of Vocal Arts
John Buffington, Northwood Civic Association
Fran Hanssens, Northwood Civic Association
Roger A. Huser, 1915 Delancey Street
K. James McDowell, Executive Director, Academy of Vocal Arts
Richard A. Shapp,
Christopher Scalone, CSA
Dave Lamontagne, Granary Associates
Jack Lee, Girard College
Martin Fricko, John Weber Incorporated
Richard Koelle, Vitetta Group

Wayne S. Spilove, Chair, recognized the presence of a quorum and called the 454th Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission to order at 9:10 A.M. Mr. Spilove welcomed Maxine Griffith, Executive Director, City Planning Commission, to the Commission.

MINUTES of the 453rd Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Wilds and duly seconded, the Commission unanimously approved the minutes of the 453rd Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission held on 10 May 2000, Wayne S. Spilove, Chair.

REPORT of the Architectural Committee, 30 May 2000, Robert Thomas, Chair.

411 West Manheim Street, Germantown Cricket Club

Germantown Cricket Club, Owner

Van Potteiger, Architect

DATE: 1890-1891, 1902, 1907

PROPOSAL: Alter window to door, addition to tennis building

The Architectural Committee recommendation: Approval

The proposal calls for cutting a door into a relatively hidden area of the façade of the squash building and adding an extension onto the non-historic metal tennis building. The door would be

appropriate owing to its relatively hidden position. The tennis building extension follows the same profile and same materials as the existing building.

Ms. Merhige made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation for approval. Mr. Wilds seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

317 South 11th Street, SE corner Clinton Street

Alpha Kappa Kappa Fraternity, Owner

Kirk S. Russell, Applicant

DATE: c. 1839

PROPOSAL: Cut gate in brick wall on Clinton Street

The Architectural Committee recommendation: Denial

This is a corner property with a garden wall on the Clinton Street elevation of the building. The fraternity seeks to legalize cutting a gate into its garden wall on Clinton Street to create parking in the back yard. The wall, constructed of cement block with a brick facing, would have a painted, two-leaf, wooden gate.

The applicant actually cut a gate into the wall and graveled the garden area for parking without a building permit, and the Department of Licenses and Inspections issued a stop work order. The wall appears to be an historic wall. It is brick with a concrete block backup sitting on a brick foundation which appears original. Commission members thought that the inner wythe of brick had been removed in a previous repair.

Mr. Russell, the applicant, spoke on behalf of the proposal and presented a letter from architect Lawrence A. Weintraub describing the wall. He also stated that the main purpose for the parking area is to generate income. The applicant stated that his contractor was not referred to the Historical Commission when he applied for the zoning. He also noted that he believed that the proposal would not increase the traffic and or become a safety hazard.

The Commission members explained that the applicant's zoning application clearly states that the applicant also needs a building permit and the building permit section refers applicant to the Historical Commission.

Mr. Thomas stated that the breaching of the wall and paving the yard was inappropriate and did not follow the *Secretary of the Interior Standards* guideline for historic preservation. The Commission's jurisdiction extends only to the property line, but includes the wall and rear yard.

Mr. Perri made the applicant aware of the false information on the zoning permit application. He also stated that the zoning permit did not give the applicant permission to demolish the wall. He explained that under the application they submitted, the structure was reclassified as a single family house allowing no more than three persons unrelated by blood or marriage to occupy the house. He urged the applicant to surrender the existing permit and reapply on the condition that the wall be restored prior to reapplication. In order to restore the wall to its original character the Commission suggested using salvaged bricks.

Ms. Merhige made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation for denial. Mr. Wilds seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

2144 St. James Place

Louise Hanson, Owner/Applicant

DATE: 1923

PROPOSAL: Re-stucco or repair and coat exterior walls

The Architectural Committee recommendation: Approval of patching and coating with staff to review samples of coating.

The applicant wishes to re-stucco or repair and coat the exterior walls of this corner English Village house. This English Village house is the last in a group of twenty with original unpainted pebbledash stucco finish. Owing to the fear of water penetration and the threat of the failure of some sections of the existing stucco, urgency attaches to this application. Some non-pebble-dash stucco patching has taken place in the past, giving the house a somewhat splotchy appearance.

Mr. Wilds questioned the effect the coating would have on the original texture and color. It was noted that the texture would remain and that owing to continuous patching over the years, discoloration has already occurred.

Mr. Baron made a note of the fact that the applicant presented the two options for the required work, not the staff.

Ms. Merhige made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation for approval with staff to review sample of coating. Mr. Brownlee seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

1600 Arch Street, SW corner of South 16th Street

Quinnco-1600 Arch Limited Partnership, Owner/Applicant

DATE: 1925

PROPOSAL: Conceptual review for rehabilitation, cut new entrances

The Architectural Committee recommended the following for conceptual approvals:

1. *Approval of one entrance cut on the western-most end of Arch Street;*
2. *Approval of Cuthbert Street entrances;*
3. *Approval of Arch Street marquee and the modification of the 16th Street marquee and planters, and*
4. *Approval of awnings and pylons.*

The Architectural Committee recommended denial of the banners in concept.

This conceptual review involves the conversion of an office structure into a mixed-use development of apartments with commercial uses on the two lower floors. The plan calls for cutting two new entrances on Arch Street in addition to constructing a canopy over the existing Arch Street entrance. The architects propose to cut four new entrances on the Cuthbert Street façade, which requires the removal of extensive decorative metal work. To create a commercial identity, plans call for a marquee on 16th Street, awnings on the first floor windows, and pylons, banners, and planters on the Arch Street façade. The applicant also proposes aluminum replacement windows.

Michael Prifti, architect, was present to answer questions and explain the project.

Mr. Wilds asked that the denial of the eastern entrance be reflected in the Architectural Committee's recommendation.

The building has an architecturally rich sculptured three-dimensional façade. The Commission believed the proposed entrance at the eastern end would be a major change and since there is no signed lease for this retail space, suggested that the applicant come back at a later date for consideration of the new opening.

Mr. Tyler said this project was reviewed and approved for tax credits and the Park Service asked that the 16th Street marquee be restudied.

Ms. Merhige made a motion to accept the modified Committee's recommendation for conceptual approval and the denial of the eastern most entrance on Arch Street and the banners. Mr. Wilds seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

1315 Pine Street

Richard Scott, Owner

Jane Golden, Department of Recreation Mural Arts Program, Applicant

DATE: 1832-36

PROPOSAL: Mural

The Architectural Committee recommendation: Approval

This proposal is for painting a mural of trees on the exposed former party wall of 1315 Pine Street. This wall overlooks a parking lot slated for landscaping. The Commission thought the proposed mural would improve the site.

Mr. Brownlee made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation for approval. Ms. Merhige seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

925 Chestnut Street

Thomas Jefferson University, Owner

Lee Dahlberg, Applicant

Stacy Kent, Kent Design

DATE:

PROPOSAL: Flags and poles

The Architectural Committee recommendation: Approval with details of the connection and the preservation of historic fabric to be reviewed by the staff, and the applicant to submit a depiction of all the signage.

The application calls for the installation of poles and flags on the face of both the Cret and 10th Street buildings.

Mr. Wilds questioned the guardhouse on Chestnut Street and the awning within the park, which extends the entire length of the Post Office sign temporarily put up in light blue, and the possibility of their removal.

The applicant requested and was granted a one-month continuance.

621 B South American Street

Angela Roach, Owner/Applicant

DATE:

PROPOSAL: Paint stucco

The Architectural Committee recommendation: Denial of the color as submitted and the approval of the Thoro-Coat Dijon color.

The applicant seeks to coat her stucco building with bright yellow Thoro-Coat paint. This trinity-style 1830s courtyard house stands in a row of stuccoed houses. The Committee thought the proposed color incompatible with the streetscape and the original stucco. The Committee recommended that the applicant tone down the color.

Mr. Wilds made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation for approval of the alternate color with staff to review a sample coating. Ms. Wynn seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

700 South Washington Square, SW corner Locust and 7th Street

Gene Locks, Owner

David Amburn, Architect

DATE: 1818-1823

PROPOSAL: Rear elevator

The Architectural Committee recommendation: Approval of the elevator in the existing shaft from the first to second floor, but denial of any exterior alterations above the porch roof or cutting into the cornice. It also recommended against the enclosure of any air conditioning equipment on the roof.

The proposal revisits the question of installing an elevator on the visible rear of this corner house. The Committee asked to see floor plans to establish possible alternative placements for a lift or elevator. The Committee expressed concerns because the building's rear 7th Street elevation is a principle façade with a magnificent cornice and iron porch. Owing to the size of the elevator and the location of the existing window, the applicant proposes to cut into the existing brick pier between two windows in the rear of the house. The proposed elevator would travel to all three floors. The Committee believed there was an achievable way to preserve the character of the house and access without going outside the building.

The applicant also wanted to include the enclosure of air conditioning equipment on the roof as part of the proposal.

Mr. Baron noted that the Committee's recommendation was not to enclose the air conditioning equipment.

David Amburn, the architect, stated that a revised plan that complies with the Committee's suggestions has been submitted to the Historical Commission staff.

Mr. Wilds stated that if this revised plan is agreeable to the staff, it should not have to come back to the Commission. He also recommended that the minutes be corrected to reflect that the Committee did not recommend enclosing the air conditioning equipment.

Mr. Wilds made a motion to accept the Committee's modified approval. Mr. Brownlee seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

216-220 West Washington Square, NW corner Locust Street

West Washington Square Partnership, Allan Domb, Michael DiPaolo, Owners

Christian Busch, The Sullivan Company, Architect

DATE: 1911

PROPOSAL: Rooftop addition in concept

The Architectural Committee recommendation: Approval in concept of an addition with a 20-foot setback from Washington Square, a 10-foot setback from Locust Street, and a height not to exceed 21 feet above the cornice.

This application for conceptual review revisits the design of a two-story penthouse as a part of the conversion of this office building on Washington Square into apartments.

The applicant requested a withdrawal of this application in writing and it was granted.

323 Cypress Street

Lisa Coulton, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c.1890

PROPOSAL: One story and deck to house, in concept

The Architectural Committee recommendation: Denial

This conceptual application involves the addition of a single-story room, set back 20 feet from the front façade, but with a roof deck railing set back approximately a foot and a half. The building faces Three Bears Park and has a public walkway along the side that will render any rooftop addition visible to the public.

The Committee stated that, based on massing and scale, the addition does not meet the guidelines for an addition to an historic building.

Mary L. Cromer, 326 Spruce Street, distributed photographs depicting the demolition of an exterior wall now in progress. Mr. Perri said that Licenses and Inspections visited the property but could not gain access. He took the photographs from Ms. Cromer to help with further enforcement.

Ms. Merhige made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation for denial. Mr. Wilds seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

507 Delancey Street

Karen Batchelder, Owner

Carolyn Wahrenburger, Applicant

DATE: 1794-95

PROPOSAL: Wall decoration-ceramic balusters

The Architectural Committee recommendation: Approval

The applicant wishes to install a railing of ceramic balusters along the top of a visible garden wall to provide privacy and support a vine. This side-wall is visible from the street and abuts a parking lot in the rear. The owner seeks to raise the wall for privacy and in order to support the vine with a trellis to trail down the railing on the wall. The balusters to be used are ceramic and imported from Asia.

Mr. Wilds questioned the cap on top of the rail and the material type to be used. The Commission asked that staff review these details.

Ms. Wynn made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation for approval but adding that the staff should review details. Mr. Brownlee seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

313 Gaskill Street

Gail Hauptfuhrer, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1820

PROPOSAL: Handrail

The Architectural Committee recommendation: Approval with staff to review shop drawings.

The applicant proposes a simple black metal handrail attached to the sidewalk and the brick wall of the house. The handrail would be mounted in the sidewalk to the right of the doorway and not into the marble. The Committee stressed the importance of keeping the design simple and in this connection, suggested that the break and S curve in the railing be removed.

Ms. Wynn made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation for approval with staff to review shop drawings. Mr. Brownlee seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

320 Arch Street, Friends Meeting House

Arch Street Friends Meeting, Owner

Helen File, Director/Applicant

DATE: 1801-05

PROPOSAL: Handicapped accessible entrance to yard

The Architectural Committee recommendation: Approval with a skirt at the bottom of the gate.

This proposal calls for modifying a granite step and brick walkway leading from the street into the meeting house yard to provide access for persons with disabilities. The applicant proposes to recess the stone to grade level and to reset the brick wall to allow accessibility to the yard entrance. The iron-gate, which is almost always open, will remain. Because of the change in grade the Committee suggested the addition of an iron skirt at the bottom of the gate.

Mr. Wilds asked if skirt at the bottom of the gate will be solid.

Ms. Wynn made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation for approval, with a solid skirt at the bottom of the gate. Ms. Merhige seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

1724 Locust Street, SW corner Mozart Place

Curtis Institute of Music, Owner

Karl Heitman, Architect

DATE: 1908

PROPOSAL: Cut louvers, close basement windows

The Architectural Committee recommendation: Approval of the louvers vents on the side wall. It further recommended the denial of stone filling of basement openings but approval of louvers to be installed in two of the basement windows behind the muntins.

This proposal involves cutting into the Mozart Place wall of Curtis Hall to install air louvers and the closing of a basement window with masonry on Locust Street. New heating and air conditioning equipment require one new opening with louvers and the enlargement of another to increase airflow. If installed at a higher, less visible location, they would interfere with the acoustics of nearby rooms. The use of the basement for storage and the need for security gave rise to the decision to close the basement windows.

Nan Gutterman was present to explain and answer questions about the proposals. She stated that some of the windows would have mesh and some an obscure glass in the wood sash behind the grates.

Ms. Wynn made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation for approval of the louver vents on the side wall, the denial of stone filling of basement openings, and approval of louvers to be installed in two of the basement windows behind the muntins. Ms. Merhige seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Mr. Spilove passed the gavel to Mr. Wilds.

1801 Walnut Street, NW corner of South 18th Street

Urban Outfitters, Inc., Owner

Anne Walsh, Applicant

DATE: 1896-1898

PROPOSAL: Exterior lighting

The Architectural Committee recommendation: Approval of mounting lighting fixtures at the cornice with staff to review details of mounting and denial of the proposal for fixtures on the belt course at sill level.

The applicant proposes installing light fixtures along the belt course at sill level to provide up lighting. The applicant proposes to wash the façade with light and has found a fluorescent fixture approximately seven inches deep that shines up and matches the stone in color. The proposal also includes lighting from the cornice. This project entails extensive drilling into the masonry for conduits. The Committee expressed concerns about the visibility of the fixtures and the impact of the installation on the historic fabric. The Committee suggested pole mounted lights in the sidewalk.

Ms. Merhige questioned the impact of such an extreme amount of lighting on the apartment building directly across the street and on the district as a whole and further stated that a project illuminating Rittenhouse Square has just been finished.

Lenore Millhollen, Center City Residents Association stated that she along with the community is unaware of the proposed lighting and asked that this proposal be tabled for a month and also stated that the corner is well lit.

Ms. Wynn believed the proposal would give additional security.

Owing to the Center City Residents Association's being unaware of the proposed project, and absent representation of the applicant, Mr. Tyler suggested tabling the proposal for a period not to exceed six months.

Mr. Thomas explained the importance of not approving piece-meal proposals and suggested that the applicant re-submit an overall lighting proposal, which includes the impact on adjacent historic properties.

Ms. Merhige made a motion to table the proposal for a period not to exceed six months, to allow applicant to re-submit an overall lighting proposal. Ms. Wynn seconded the motion which carried with 8 votes. Mr. Spilove recused himself.

Mr. Wilds returned the gavel to Mr. Spilove.

1614 Spruce Street

Ellen Metz, Owner/Applicant

DATE: 1922

PROPOSAL: Rooftop addition/deck, replace window and garage door

The Architectural Committee recommendation: Approval of expanding the existing penthouse, replacing the existing wood railing with a thinner metal railing, restoring the window as submitted and replacing the garage door. It added that it also recommends approval of an additional six inches in height to the penthouse if the owner opts to do so.

The applicant seeks to add to an existing rooftop penthouse and change a deck railing from wood to metal. A window opening will receive historically correct sash and the garage a new wood paneled door. The building presently has a deck with a wooden railing and access penthouse. The proposal calls for expanding the penthouse with a 24-foot setback from Spruce Street as well as a setback from Smedley Street, and replacing the existing wood railing with a thinner metal railing. The air conditioning unit on top of the penthouse will be moved to the rear. The sight line study shows that the proposed addition will not be visible from Spruce Street and only a small corner visible from Smedley Street.

Ms. Merhige raised the question of the type of garage door replacement, and it was noted that the new door shall mimic the existing door.

Ms. Wynn made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation for approval. Mr. Brownlee seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

1918-1920 Spruce Street, Academy of Vocal Arts

Academy of Vocal Arts, Owner

Doug Seiler, Architect

DATE: c.1855

PROPOSAL: Stucco rear addition

The Architectural Committee recommendation: Approval of the repair of the fence in kind; replacement of the fire escapes, and painting the windows dark green. It voted to recommend denial of the stuccoing of the rear addition.

The proposal involves stuccoing the rear theater addition of the Academy of Vocal Arts and rebuilding the flanking fences without the crescent tops that mirror the shape of the theater gable. The Applicant wishes to repair the fence on the east and west in wood. He also seeks to amend his application to include replacing very deteriorated fire escapes and painting windows.

Doug Seiler, architect for the project, spoke and explained the history of the addition and said that the wall is not post-modern and invites graffiti.

K. James McDowell, Executive Director, stated that stucco was the initial intent for the wall. The Commission believed that the construction documents should show such intent.

Roger Johnson, 1915 Delancey Street, presented a petition from neighbors in support of the stucco treatment to match the neighborhood.

The proposal explained by the applicant is a new design, and Committee and Commission members believed the wall has architectural character and should be reviewed by the Committee and Commission with additional information and a new submission.

Ms. Wynn made a motion to table the proposal to allow the applicant time to present additional information and a new submission to the Committee. Ms. Merhige seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

2416 Delancey Street

Ralph Scott, Owner

Paul Elia, Architect

DATE: c. 1850; altered c. 1970

PROPOSAL: Construct a 3-story addition with garage on vacant lot, modify rear

The Architectural Committee recommendation: Approval of new stuccoed addition and the existing building to remain brick not to be painted, with staff to review details.

The applicant seeks to build a new three-story house with a ground floor garage as an addition to the existing non-contributing house.

The proposal is to stucco both the new and the existing non-contributing buildings in this row of predominantly brick houses. The cornice of the existing house will remain. The garage door will be a roll-up door with glazing.

Ms. Wynn made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation for approval of the proposal and to stucco only the new addition with staff to review details. Mr. Wilds seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Mr. Spilove passed the gavel to Mr. Wilds.

1841 Spruce Street

Rittenhouse Plaza Condominium Association, Owner

Martin Fricko, Applicant

DATE: 1924

PROPOSAL: Paint terra cotta with Thoro-Coat

The Architectural Committee recommendation: Approval of finishing the work in the same material.

The applicant seeks to legalize the painting of the terra cotta-clad upper floors with Thoro-Coat. The white glazed terra cotta had some cracking and spalling which the contractor sought to cure with this coating. Unfortunately the coating hides the joints and the glaze of the terra cotta. Several bays along the Spruce Street elevation have not yet received the coating.

Had this application come in prior to the work's being done, the Committee might have perceived it differently, but in looking at it from the technical end as architects and engineers and given that the material had already been applied, it reluctantly recommended finishing the work in the same material. Thoro-Coat does seal cracks and is protective, but it obscures some of the details and is virtually impossible to remove.

Mr. Brownlee raised the question of color. Mr. Baron said that the Thoro-coat hides the glaze of the glazed terra-cotta, is a lighter gray and it hides the joints. He also stated that it changes and diminishes the historic character.

Mr. Baron added a correction to the minutes that the representative for Thoro-Coat stated that there is no solvent to remove this coating.

Ms. Merhige made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation for approval. Ms. Griffith seconded the motion which carried with 8 votes. Mr. Spilove recused himself.

Mr. Wilds returned the gavel to Mr. Spilove.

256 South Van Pelt Street

Clinton Hewes, Owner

Arthur Willson, Architect

DATE: c. 1910

PROPOSAL: Cut window in rear

The Architectural Committee recommendation: Approval

The architect seeks to cut a new window in the rear of this carriage house residence. The rear has visibility from 22nd Street through an open garden and parking area.

The building faces Van Pelt Street, and its rear is visible from a side yard of a house on 22nd Street. A window had been previously cut on the second floor and the new window would be cut to match it. The Committee believed the new window architecturally appropriate.

Mr. Wilds asked that the date of construction of each property be put in the minutes.

Ms. Merhige made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation for approval. Ms. Wynn seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

234 South 22nd Street, NW corner of Latimer Street

William Faust, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1900

PROPOSAL: Rebuild existing windows with double-glazing

The Architectural Committee recommendation: Approval

The applicant seeks to improve the energy efficiency of his house by double-glazing his windows using the Bi-Glass system. The system involves cutting the wood window frame to form a sandwich around two pieces of glass. The contractor cuts new outer muntins in the field and applies them to the outside of the glass. The system has the advantage of retaining the sash frames and inner window muntins. The disadvantages include the possible weakness of the adhesive for the outer muntins and that the panes may lack the appearance of true division.

There are two facades visible from the street. The process used would preserve a large amount of historic fabric, including the interior muntin and frame. The outside muntin, however, would become more shallow. Owing to fire damage, some windows would have to be completely replaced; others could be rebuilt. The muntin pattern would be exactly the same.

The building has original windows and the proposal is to mill existing windows to provide for insulating glass. Owing to the small panes, the cost would be prohibitive to get a true divided light insulated glass.

The Committee was impressed with the system and believed it a good way to preserve the historic sash.

The applicant researched all alternatives, interior storms, exterior storms and energy panels, and these seemed less aesthetically pleasing as far as what can be seen by the public.

George Wolpert, Bi-Glass representative, gave a presentation that explained the process that utilizes the existing sash without changing the appearance. He presented examples of the finished product.

Ms. Wynn made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation for approval. Ms. Merhige seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

3700 Chestnut Street, NW corner Sansom Street and 37th Street, Westminster Hall

University of Pennsylvania, Owner

Vivek Ghimire, Applicant

DATE: 1884-86

PROPOSAL: Install louvers in windows, install air conditioning unit in rear court

The Architectural Committee recommendation: Approval of louvers with size, spacing and color of vanes to be reviewed by staff. The Committee recommended an alternative location for the air conditioning unit and the selection of low decibel equipment.

This proposal calls for the placing of an air conditioning unit in a corner formed by the juncture of two buildings on Sansom Street and the installation of louvers in three windows, two on the South 37th Street façade and one facing west.

The Committee suggested another location for the air conditioning unit, for its closeness to the building will cause sound to reverberate and intensify. Mr. Thomas noted that while visibility is important, so is the unit in terms of noise levels.

The Committee believed that all the property belonged to the University of Pennsylvania.

Michael Barber, architect, spoke on behalf of the project and stated the first challenge that the air conditioning unit has to be within the boundaries of Westminster Hall. He stated that the north side was inappropriate. On the east side the air conditioning unit could not be integrated into the landscape because there is not much room between the building and the sidewalk and the south side has a stone retaining wall that would put the unit halfway out into the sidewalk. The only reasonable site for the unit is then the west side which does not impact on the existing conditions and would put the unit out of the way of pedestrian traffic.

Mr. Wilds stated that the proposed location hides the unit and believed that the noise issue is not for the Commission to decide.

Mr. Wilds made a motion to reject the Committee's recommendation and approve the proposal as submitted with staff to review details. Ms. Wynn seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

REPORT of the Committee on Historic Designation, 19 May 2000, David Baldinger, Acting Chair

1322 Chancellor Street, a.k.a. 205-07 South Juniper Street, Mellor & Meigs Atelier

Juniper-Chancellor LP, Owner

The Committee on Historic Designation recommendation: Mr. Lavery made a motion to recommend designation. Ms. Klein seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

The Mellor and Meigs Atelier possesses significance as a fine and rare example of the Arts and Crafts style by important Philadelphia architects Mellor and Meigs, nationally known for residential architecture. The building served as their studio and offices from 1912 to 1946.

Ms. Spina noted that this building meets criteria d and e. The Designation Committee unanimously voted to recommend the designation of this property.

Ms. Wynn made a motion to accept the recommendation of the Committee on Historic Designation. Ms. Merhige seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

2101 South College Avenue, Girard College

Girard College, Owner

The Committee on Historic Designation recommendation: Mr. Baldinger made a motion to ratify the 1956 designation of Girard College as the five buildings erected between 1833 and 1847, the perimeter wall and gates. Ms. Klein seconded the motion which carried with 2 votes. Mr. Lavery and Mr. Myers recused themselves.

The submission of diverse permit applications for Girard College necessitates the clarification of the extent of the Commission's designation of the College's buildings, i.e., what buildings appear on the Philadelphia Register. Mr. Tyler framed the issue in terms of the Commission's intention

at the time of designation, 1956. If the Commission meant to list only the College as it stood in the period 1833 to 1847, the designation would include Founder's Hall, Bordeaux Hall, Allen Hall, Merchant Hall, Mariner Hall, the perimeter wall, and gates.

In view of the theory and practice of historic preservation and the 1955 Ordinance's authorizing the listing of buildings only, not districts, Mr. Tyler believed that the Commission intended in 1956 to designate Founder's Hall, the buildings flanking it built between 1833 and 1847 and the perimeter wall. Mr. Tyler consulted with Dr. Margaret B. Tinkcom, his predecessor at the Commission from 1956 to 1974, concerning the Commission's view of Girard College in 1956. Dr. Tinkcom agreed with Mr. Tyler's interpretation of the Commission's 1956 intention and jurisdiction

Mr. Tyler recommended that the Commission confirm the 1956 intention and suggested that if the Commission wished to include the totality of Girard College on the Philadelphia Register, it should direct the staff to prepare the requisite nomination form for submission to the Commission.

Mr. Wilds, along with Ms. Merhige, expressed concerns focusing on the open space which in past designations was interpreted as the property's address which included the yards, driveways and the like. Thus any alterations or new construction would be under the Commission's jurisdiction. He asked if the clarification sought would affect the ability to review construction within the grounds and gave an example of the Naval Home, which is designated with one address including the buildings and the grounds as a whole. In the case of Girard College with its boundary wall, the question was posed as to how the twelve to thirteen buildings should be handled.

Mark Zecca stated that in 1984 the City passed the current Ordinance. It states that everything on the Philadelphia Register in 1984 is historic and gives the Commission the authority to add or subtract from the Register through the designation process. It also defines a building to include its site and its appurtenances. Therefore if an address is listed, the address as a whole is listed.

Mr. Brownlee stated that the following seems clear. The buildings identified as historically important were the oldest ones; our current jurisdiction is based on property lines and street address, and there are a number of significant 20th century buildings on this property. Therefore Mr. Brownlee believes that the Commission should adopt a motion stating that the Commission affirms that the designation of Girard College includes the entire property with the acknowledgment that the Commission placed special emphasis on the oldest buildings on the site at the time of designation. This would be a responsible statement of the Commission's position and the historical record, and would clarify the Commission's jurisdiction over the parcel as defined by the present and historic property lines

Mr. Zecca stated that all of Girard College is already designated by the City Council Ordinance. He also stated that the Commission is not legally required to designate Girard College as a district, although this would be an alternative method to use. The creation of a district gives other options such as designating certain buildings as significant, contributing and non-contributing. This would give flexibility to deal with the diversity of buildings on this property and the power to act accordingly.

Mr. Tyler's view is that if the entire parcel is included, the Commission had created a historic district in 1956 which it lacked the legal authority to do. Mr. Thomas disagreed, stating that a

district involves multiple ownership. This property, owing to its being bounded by the wall and not having been changed, is clearly one historic resource.

John Lee, Director of Business Operations, spoke on behalf of Girard College and stated that coming to the Commission for approval every time something has to be done will impose a considerable administrative burden on the College.

Mr. Wilds objected to the word “ratifying” of the 1956 designation in the Committee’s recommendation; instead the Commission should use “confirm” our understanding of the 1956 designation. Mr. Brownlee believed that the 1984 legislation action already creates at this address a historically designated group of buildings. Mr. Tyler stated that if the Commission meant the limited group in 1956, it could not subsequently expanded that listing without a formal action by the Commission.

David Baldinger stated that documentation for designation as a district is absent and research should be done before considering Girard College as a district.

Mr. Wilds made a motion to reject the Committee’s recommendation, which limits review to the five buildings and the wall and gate. Mr. Brownlee seconded the motion which carried with 7 votes. Mr. Baldinger opposed the motion. Ms. Wynn recused herself.

1316 Walnut Street, University Club

Mid-City Camera Exchange, Owner

The Committee on Historic Designation recommendation: Mr. Myers made a motion to table the vote pending a site visit. Mr. Laverty seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

The Committee recommended tabling the designation for one month pending a site visit by members of the Committee.

Ms. Merhige made a motion to accept the Committee’s recommendation to table the designation pending a site visit. Ms. Wynn seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Founder’s Memorial Bell, PNB Tower, 1 South Broad Street

Corestates Bank, Owner

The Committee on Historic Designation recommendation: Mr. Myers made a motion to recommend designation. Mr. Laverty seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

The John Wanamaker memorial Founder’s Bell, a Philadelphia landmark atop the CoresStates/Philadelphia National Bank building, was commissioned in 1926 by Rodman Wanamaker, son of John Wanamaker. The Designation Committee voted unanimously to recommend designation of the bell and the clapper as an object. The Bell meets criteria a and f of the Ordinance.

Ms. Wynn made a motion to accept the Committee’s recommendation for designation. Ms. Merhige seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

1601-39 John F. Kennedy Boulevard, Suburban Station

Richard I. Rubin, Inc., Owner

The Committee on Historic Designation recommendation: Mr. Myers made a motion to recommend designation. Mr. Lavery seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

The Suburban Station Building possesses significance in four areas of the history and architecture of Philadelphia. It possesses significance as the last surviving station in Center City built by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company; for its association with the Pennsylvania Railroad, the Philadelphia based company that became America's largest corporation and leading railroad from the late 19th century well into the 20th century; as an outstanding example of Art Deco design applied to a skyscraper; as one of the few buildings in Philadelphia designed by the noted Chicago firm of Graham, Anderson, Probst and White.

The Station meets criteria a, d, e and j of the Ordinance. The nomination includes the building only, not the subterranean track area and not Penn Center underneath.

Ms. Merhige made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation for designation. Ms. Wynn seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

328-330 Delancey Street

Joseph Ottaviano, Jr., Owner

The Committee on Historic Designation recommendation: Mr. Lavery made a motion to recommend changing the classification of 328 and 330 Delancey Street from contributing to non-contributing buildings in the Society Hill Historic District. Mr. Myers seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Reclassification from Contributing to Non-Contributing

The Commission referred the reconsideration of the classification of 328 and 330 Delancey Street to the Committee in response to an application for a review in concept for the demolition of two houses and the construction of a new dwelling on the site. The Commission also asked that the staff conduct an on-site inspection of the properties to determine if any historic fabric survived their remodeling in 1950.

The site visit revealed that 328 Delancey Street, built between 1897 and 1916 as a two-story house with garage, was rehabilitated and refacaded in 1950, and that only in the somewhat piebald east brick wall does any original fabric remain.

Ms. Merhige made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation to reclassify the properties. Ms. Wynn seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

930 Adams Avenue, Greenwood Cemetery

Greenwood Knights of Pythias Cemetery Company, Owner

Ms. Spina made a presentation of the nomination. The Greenwood Cemetery occupies 40 acres of land that once formed a part of an estate owned by Benjamin Rush. It contains an 18th century Federal style dwelling, a partially subterranean receiving vault, a cement block structure known as the barn, a frame garage, and a post-World War II house. A stone wall with an ornate iron gate surrounds the property. Ms. Spina noted that the barn, garage, and relatively recent house do not

contribute to the historic character of the cemetery. The grounds are in large part wooded and poorly maintained. She concluded that the cemetery meets criteria a, d, g, h, and i of the Ordinance.

The Commission has received over 80 letters and four petitions for approval of the designation.

Mr. Tyler stated that part of the recommendation is to add a memorandum of understanding to explain the Historical Commission's jurisdiction over the cemetery. He also stated that in order to turn the cemetery around financially there is a proposal to demolish the barn and to erect an office and crematorium. He explained that simply selling lots and opening graves is not financially viable for cemeteries anymore. The Commission received a letter in opposition to the designation which expressed concerns of jurisdiction over the interior alterations, which made it even clearer that there is a need for clarification the Commission's jurisdiction.

The counsel for the buyer found the memorandum acceptable. The sellers found it acceptable, for this buyer but if the sale does not go through, they oppose the designation and the memorandum of understanding. The Northwood Civic Association and neighbors found the memorandum of understanding acceptable with the proposal of "opening of new graves". Mr. Tyler stated that the term "new graves" is unnecessary, owing to Orphans Court's jurisdiction of removal of graves. The Councilman for the district, Richard Mariano, approves of the memorandum.

Mr. Brownlee questioned the memorandum concerning the demolition and removal of existing grave stones and the roadway pattern. Mr. Brownlee believed that plans for demolition or removal of the existing grave monuments and a change in landscape pattern should come to the Commission. Owing to its being a major change in the landscape, Mr. Tyler believes that the proposal to remove the growth and landscape of the almost twenty acre parcel should come to the Commission.

Peter Kelsen, counsel for the buyer, believed that the memorandum of understanding would allow routine maintenance which may involve the repaving and restoration in areas currently used as dump sites. He also noted that one challenge that must be reflected in the memorandum of understanding is the possibility of repairing or removing damaged or destroyed monuments beneath the debris without referral to the Commission. Mr. Kelsen stated that his client is committed to erecting a new structure and placement of a parking area. Mr. Kelsen stated that without a clear understanding, he would not proceed with the sale.

Claudia Becker, counsel for the seller, stated her position in regard to the designation which she believes will hinder the sale of the cemetery even though prior to designation it has not been sold. She believes it will be a hardship if designated.

John Buffington, Northwood Civic Association, said that he was instrumental in circulating the petition for designation, and a majority of the community approves of the memorandum of understanding. The community is prepared to accept the crematory, subject to the assurance of the cleaning up and revitalization of the cemetery.

Anita Batten, 4600 block of Castor Avenue, had reservations concerning the designation owing to her fear of the cemetery's not being cleaned and the designation would hinder the buyer to accomplish his goal as presented to the community.

Mr. Tyler urged the Commission to consider the nomination and property on its own merits and the criteria spelled out in the Ordinance, and not on the contingency of the sale. He also stated that it is important that the memorandum of understanding as presented to the Commission and other parties be included as a part of the designation.

Ms. Merhige stated that the Commission should not make a decision based on the sale but rather consider it based on its historic merits.

Mr. Baldinger said the correct thing to do is to designate the property; he believed that the designation would not impede the sale.

In view of the pending loss of a quorum, Mr. Tyler recommended that the matter be tabled until next month in order to give counsel for the seller an opportunity to be heard

Mr. Wilds made a motion to incorporate a memorandum of understanding into the designation. Ms. Wynn seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Mr. Brownlee made a motion to table the designation for one month. Mr. Wilds seconded the motion

THE REPORT on the Activities of the Historical Commission Staff, May 2000

Mr. Tyler asked if members of the Commission had any questions about the report. There were none.

Harry A. Batten Memorial Fund

Mr. Tyler asked the Commission to approve expenditure for the Architectural Committee lunches.

Ms. Merhige made a motion to approve the expenditures. Mr. Brownlee seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Mr. Brownlee made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Merhige seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 12:35 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane M. Hughes
Executive Secretary