

**THE MINUTES OF THE 429TH STATED MEETING OF THE
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION
13 May 1998**

**City Council Caucus, Room 401, City Hall
Wayne S. Spilove, Chair**

Present

Wayne S. Spilove, Chair
David Brownlee, Ph.D.
Joseph James, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Public Property
Barbara Kaplan, Executive Director, City Planning Commission
Carol Lawrence
Edward McLaughlin, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Licenses
and Inspections
Shelly Merhige, Office of the City Council President
Michael Sklaroff, Esq.
Robert Thomas
Dennis P. Ward, III
Caroline Wischmann
Scott Wilds, Assistant Director for Housing, Office of Housing
and Community Development
Stephanie G. Wolf, Ph.D.

Richard Tyler, Historic Preservation Officer
Randal Baron, Assistant Historic Preservation Officer
R. Scott Jacob, Executive Secretary to the Commission
Laura Spina, Historic Preservation Planner
Elizabeth Harvey, Historic Preservation Planner
Kristin Fetzner, Historic Preservation Planner

Mark Zecca, Esq., Deputy City Solicitor

Also

Steven Pavlis
Todd Lowell
Sue Golden
Edward Palmer, Niles Bolton Associates
Suzanne Petruzell, Fox and Roach Realtors
Paul Calvert, The Office of Charles King
Lenore Millhollen, Center City Residents Association (CCRA)
Philip Senechal
Herbert Scherrer
Alan Heilman
Frank Heilman
Frank Conlin
Johnson E. Collins, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Raymond
Michael Bush
Judith Eden, CCRA
Michael Bush

Wayne S. Spilove, Chair, recognized the presence of a quorum and called the 429th Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission to order at 10:10 A.M.

Mr. Sklaroff acknowledged the article about Mr. Spilove and his activities regarding the sale of the Royal Theater to the Preservation Alliance in last month's *Player* magazine, and thanked him for his efforts with that endeavor. Mr. Spilove recognized the contributions of Richard Tyler, the Preservation Alliance and the others involved with the sale and planned preservation of the Royal Theater.

Minutes of the 428th 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 428th Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission held on 8 April 1998, Wayne S. Spilove, Chair.

Architectural Committee Report, 28 April 1998, Robert Thomas, Chair.

Mr. Thomas read the Committee's recommendations before discussion of each proposal.

124 South 18th Street

Leroy Kean, Owner

Sue Golden, Applicant

DATE: 1898

PROPOSAL: Security grates

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Denial of the original proposal, and approval of installing security grates inside the storefront windows, with the option of placing a translucent film between them or a curtain behind the bars.

Mr. Thomas explained that this proposal calls for the installation of a metal security mesh screen on the exterior of the storefront windows on Sansom Street. Mr. Thomas explained that Committee members recommended the applicant place the security grates inside the window, because interior grates often deter vandalism more than exterior, owing to the difficulty of getting through metal security grates after the commotion caused by breaking the glass. The storefront windows are currently painted black. Ms. Wischmann suggested the applicant could paint the mesh grates black to mitigate their impact on the storefront.

Sue Golden, the applicant, stated that a layer of sheetrock exists directly behind the windows, which necessitated painting them black. The sheetrock was installed to create more storage space and shelving. Commission members discussed *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Rehabilitation of Historic Property's* guidelines which allow for grates on the exterior if existing interior conditions cannot accommodate them.

Mr. Sklaroff made a motion to reject the Committee's recommendation, and to approve the installation of the mesh grates in separate panels for each section of the storefront, painted black, to the exterior of the storefront, with staff to review and approve details. Mr. Ward seconded the motion which carried with eight votes and one abstention.

600 Spring Garden Street

Seymore Rubin, Owner
Stephen Starr, Applicant
DATE: 1872
PROPOSAL: Awning with posts

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Denial of legalizing the new awning.

Mr. Thomas explained that this proposal calls for legalizing an awning installed without a permit. He also stated that Committee members thought the current awning does not fit the design or scale of the building. The Commission's building file contains historic photographs picturing two previous and more appropriate marquees. Mr. Thomas stated that the applicant agreed with the Committee that an awning in the character of one of the older ones should replace the current inappropriate awning. Mr. Sklaroff asked that staff work with the applicant in choosing a new awning design to ensure a more appropriate result.

Ms. Wolf made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation to deny the current awning. Mr. Wilds seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

1401 East Bristol Street, Carl Mackley Houses

Canus Corporation, Owner
John Tucker, Architect/Applicant
DATE: 1934
PROPOSAL: ADA ramp

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval of the ramp, using stone facing on the new ramp wall that complements the existing stone wall, and a stair rail that stands free of the adjacent building.

Mr. Sklaroff recused himself for personal reasons.

Mr. Thomas described the proposal to add a handicap accessible ramp to the side of an existing stone stair that would greatly reduce the travel distance to the garage for persons in wheelchairs. He explained that the Committee recommended covering the exposed wall of the ramp with stone to tie it in with the existing stone wall the ramp wraps around, and

redesigning the stair rail so it does not attach to any historic fabric of the adjacent building.

Ms. Wolf made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation.

Ms. Merhige seconded the motion which carried with ten votes.

Mr. Sklaroff recused himself.

1115-1145 Market Street, Reading Terminal Headhouse

Reading Terminal Headhouse Association, L.P., Owner

Eric Gianelle, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1895

PROPOSAL: Garage door storefront on Filbert Street

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval, with staff to review and approve details and colors.

Mr. Thomas described the proposal to install two roll-down garage doors and a pedestrian door into existing open bays on Filbert Street. The garage door will contain aluminum panels and match a neighboring existing door. The wood details and trim will match those existing on Filbert Street, with translucent panels in the pedestrian door. He explained that Committee members recommended that staff review and approve the color scheme.

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

141 League Street

John Fernandez, Owner

Burkhart Stelzer, Architect/Applicant

DATE: c. 1850; c. 1920

PROPOSAL: Install new windows, roof deck and stair; infill garage door

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval of the roof deck, stair and the door infill with recessed bricks, but to deny approval of the proposed windows.

Mr. Thomas explained that this address includes a circa 1850 institutional building and an industrial building dating from the early twentieth century. The new owner wishes to use the combined buildings for offices and a private residence. The proposal includes new modern metal windows, a roof deck and filling in a loading dock with recessed bricks. Mr. Thomas stated that Committee members expressed concern over the use of glass block for some of the window replacements, and recommended installing window treatments based on the historic design. He explained that the architect and the owner agreed to look into other window options and return to the Commission at a later date.

Ms. Wolf made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation.

Mr. Wilds seconded the motion which carried with ten votes. Mr. Sklaroff dissented.

University Avenue Bridge

City of Philadelphia, Owner

Michael Cuddy, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1925-1929

PROPOSAL: Remove and reinstall stonework to replace machinery; install traffic gates; restore lights

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval, with some expression of the historic pin plates over the new splice plates, and with staff to review and approve details.

Mr. Thomas described the proposal to remove and reset stonework of several different portions of the bridge to install updated mechanical equipment, and to fit new horizontal traffic gates as well as repair the historic lanterns. He also stated new, hidden transformers will replace the existing, non-historic ones on the overlooks. Mr. Tyler stated the proposal does not include installing replicas of the historic railings where they do not exist now, and that the lanterns will contain clear or opaque white plastic instead of glass owing to frequent vandalism

Mr. Sklaroff requested clarification regarding Mr. Cornell's recommendation in the Committee Report that the applicant install false hangers that resemble historic design elements over the new splice plates. Mr. Thomas explained that new technology has superseded the use of pin plates in the structural support of bridges, and that Mr. Cornell wanted an expression of the historic system to demonstrate that it did exist. Mr. Sklaroff wondered whether installing false pin plates would create an impression of false history. Mr. Thomas explained that installing an expression of what was there historically does not constitute false history. Ms. Wischmann recommended replacing the term "false" with "non-functioning" to avoid any confusion. Mr. Sklaroff suggested delaying any decisions pertaining to the pin plates until the applicant submits detailed drawings.

Mr. Wilds made a motion to approve every aspect of the original proposal, but to deny approval of the pin plates until the applicant submits detailed drawings. Mr. McLaughlin seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

1319 Lombard Street

Herbert Scherrer, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1850

PROPOSAL: Legalize six vinyl windows

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Denial.

Mr. Thomas explained that the applicant seeks legalization of the six vinyl windows he installed without a permit. Mr. Scherrer, owner of the building, listed several concerns about the historic status of the building and his violation. He maintains that he was not informed of the building's historically designated status because it did not exist on the deed. He also believes that he had been unfairly targeted by the violation. Commission members explained to Mr. Scherrer that by following procedures and applying for a permit from the Department of Licenses and Inspections, individuals learn whether or not they need approval from the Historical Commission. Also Mr. Baron explained that others on the same block received violations and indeed many others who installed these same vinyl windows have violations pending before the Commission. Mr. Scherrer stated that several contractors told him he did not need a permit to replace window sash. Mr. McLaughlin confirmed that the Department of Licenses and Inspections requires permits for sash replacement on historically designated buildings but not on many types of non-historic buildings. Several Commission members expressed concern about the need for better notice to owners of individually designated historic properties. Mr. Thomas noted that other property usage restrictions do not appear on deeds. He also commented on the homeowner's responsibility to know which restrictions apply to their property.

Mr. Baron stated that Mr. Scherrer received notice of the building's designated status prior to the completion of the window replacement via an earlier violation for a storm door and through oral notification by himself on the street as Mr. Scherrer installed the first two windows on the ground floor. Mr. Scherrer denied this, and claimed that he installed the windows before he called Mr. Baron in April 1997. Mr. Scherrer also stated that he did not recognize that it was Mr. Baron who spoke to him the evening he installed the windows. He objected to Mr. Baron addressing him on the street and for contacting the realtors handling his property.

Mr. Zecca asserted that Mr. Baron acted fully within the scope of the law and his duties for the Commission. Mr. Sklaroff stated that the seller must, under the law, inform the realtor and buyer of any violation on the property, so Mr. Baron did not disclose any extraneous or privileged information.

Mr. Wilds made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation to deny the proposal. Mr. McLaughlin seconded the proposal which carried with six votes. Mr. Sklaroff, Ms. Merhige, Ms. Kaplan, Ms. Lawrence and Mr. Ward dissented.

Commission members discussed at length issues regarding notifying property owners of their building's historically designated status. Mr. Brownlee made a formal request to include this issue on next month's agenda. Commission members agreed.

7127 Germantown Avenue

M. Bonstein and P. Pinola, Owners

DATE: c. 1790; altered c. 1860 and c. 1890

PROPOSAL: Porch infill

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval.

Mr. Thomas described the proposal to legalize the infill of a visible side porch. He explained that several years ago the firm occupying this house infilled the rear side porch to provide more office space without a permit. To legalize that work, the Committee and Commission approved a compromise to install large windows between the height of the old porch rail and the fascia of the porch roof. The staff approved a drawing and a permit to that effect, but the contractor completed the work in a manner that does not conform with the compromise, in that the windows do not reach the roof fascia of the porch. Mr. Thomas stated that Committee members agreed that this work affects only non-historic material on a secondary facade, and recommended approval.

Ms. Wolf made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation.

Ms. Merhige seconded the motion which carried with ten votes.

Mr. Wilds abstained.

1017 Pine Street

Gloria Toll, Owner/Applicant

DATE: 1841

PROPOSAL: Legalize vinyl windows and aluminum covering on cornice

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Denial of legalizing the vinyl windows and aluminum covering on the cornice.

Mr. Thomas explained that the applicant installed vinyl windows with snap-in muntins, and constructed a new cornice and covered it with aluminum. The new features do not match the design or materials of the originals.

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

Valley Green Inn

Fairmount Park Commission, Owner

Thomas Ryan/Friends of the Wissahickon, Applicant

DATE: 19th Century

PROPOSAL: Reconstruct stable

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval.

Mr. Thomas described the proposal to reconstruct a livery stable that once existed on the site. He clarified that the

stone base of the structure still exists, and that the proposed reconstruction does not entail rebuilding the wooden doors in two bays of the long elevation of the shed or the wood side walls.

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

237-247 South 18th Street, Barclay Hotel

Philip Seneschal, Owner

Alan Heilman, Applicant

DATE: 1928

PROPOSAL: Install iron balcony and french doors

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Denial.

Mr. Thomas described the proposal to cut down windows into french doors and build a new metal balcony on the north-facing wall of the Barclay Hotel. Although the proposed location on a secondary facade mitigates its visibility, the public does have a clear view of this wall when looking up from Locust Street at the Curtis School of Music. Mr. Thomas explained that Committee members objected to the proposal because of the building's existing, orderly rows and columns of windows and fire escape balconies, and that this proposal would disrupt that visual continuity. Mr. Baron pointed out that it also entails the removal of historic fabric. Commission members agreed with the Committee that approving this balcony would create a precedent for balconies on this and other buildings. Philip Seneschal, the owner, and Alan Heilman, the architect and applicant, commented on other balconies with windows cut into doors on the building, and stated that they designed the proposed balcony to match the existing fire balconies. Commission members informed Mr. Seneschal and Mr. Heilman that the other balconies added after the building's construction pre-date designation, and therefore did not require approval from the Historical Commission.

Mr. Brownlee made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation to deny the proposal. Mr. Wilds seconded the motion which carried with ten votes. Mr. McLaughlin dissented.

1921 Walnut Street

T. C. Lei, Owner/Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1897

PROPOSAL: Awnings

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Denial.

Mr. Baron stated that the applicant withdrew the application and intends to resubmit a new design scheme.

1509 Walnut Street

Apple South, Inc., Owner
Gordon Karns, Architect/Applicant
DATE: 1902

PROPOSAL: Remove steps; rebuild door for ADA; awning; signage

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval of removing the front steps to provide an accessibility ramp, reinstalling a decorative transom above the door, constructing a lengthened door, and installing a sign, but to deny approval of the rails.

Mr. Thomas explained that this proposal involves removing the front steps to provide an accessibility ramp. The applicant found the historic decorative transom in the basement, and proposes to reinstall it above the door, and to construct a lengthened door to accommodate the additional space created by removing the steps. The proposal also includes installing decorative iron rails on either side of the door. Mr. Thomas stated that Committee members recommended eliminating the rails completely, so as not to disrupt sidewalk traffic.

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

1729 Walnut Street

Talbot's, Owner
Paul Calvert, Architect/Applicant
DATE: c. 1970s
PROPOSAL: New awning; signage; banner

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval of the flat wall signage and banner, and to recommend denial of the proposed awnings and hanging signage.

Mr. Thomas described the proposal for new awnings, signs and a banner on the Talbot's store. Talbot's occupies one quarter of the building and Border's Books has the rest. He explained that the existing scheme unifies both stores' awnings in scale and shape, though not in color. The shape of the proposed awnings does not match the existing. The Commission agreed with Committee's comments that the proposed awnings and hanging signage would introduce a new design element that interrupts the unity of the facade.

Ms. Wolf made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Mr. McLaughlin seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

1734 Pine Street

Oscar Soldano, Owner/Applicant
DATE: 1845
PROPOSAL: Seal door, install new french door and deck at rear

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval.

Mr. Thomas explained that this proposal involves work to the rear of the building facing a service alley. The public can see some portions of the building's rear from 18th Street. He stated that the work includes closing up a doorway with brick, creating new french doors and a railing and deck.

*Mr. Wilds made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation.
Ms. Wolf seconded the motion which carried unanimously.*

1600 Spruce Street

Ursula Hobson, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1855

PROPOSAL: Cut down window

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Denial.

Mr. Thomas described the proposal to cut down one window on the 16th Street facade eight inches to make it symmetrical with a new window on the same facade for which the applicant had received permission to create at last month's Commission meeting.

Because the applicant intends to use the windows to display merchandise, she also wants to lower the window for greater visibility. Mr. Thomas explained that Committee members expressed concern over the loss of historic fabric required to cut down the window.

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

251 South 21st Street

Mark Fink, Owner

Steven Pavlis, Applicant

DATE: c. 1880

PROPOSAL: Reface sign

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval

Mr. Thomas explained that the owner installed a new plastic face on an existing sign box. Mr. Baron stated that he recently learned that the owner actually replaced the entire Art Deco-type sign, with a new larger sign, which conflicts with the information provided for the Committee. Judith Eden of the Center City Residents Association stated that several individuals from that neighborhood have complained about the new sign because of its internal illumination. Mr. Brownlee suggested having the applicant submit a new proposal to legalize an entirely new, internally-illuminated sign. Steven Pavlis, the applicant, offered to remove the lighting mechanism if the Commission will approve the new sign. Commission members agreed that the new

sign resembles the original enough to merit approval.

Mr. Sklaroff made a motion to approve the new sign, conditional upon the removal of the lighting. Mr. Wilds seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

320 Race Street

Jeffrey Casnoff, Owner

Frank Conlin, Applicant

DATE: c. 1895

PROPOSAL: Roof deck; penthouse; alter door and storefront

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval.

Mr. Thomas explained that this proposal calls for converting this empty warehouse building to apartments. The applicant plans to install an elevator with a rooftop penthouse and roof deck. The proposal also includes alterations to a door and a previously altered storefront.

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

Mr. Spilove excused himself from the rest of the meeting and turned the chair over to Ms. Wolf.

1900 Mount Vernon Street

Todd Lowell, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1855

PROPOSAL: HVAC units and vents

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval of installing HVAC units and vents on the roof but to deny the through-wall scheme.

Mr. Thomas explained that the applicant wishes to install HVAC units and vents. He would prefer to cut the vents through the brick and disguise them as star bolts, but agreed to submit an alternate plan to run the units to the roof.

Mr. Wilds made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Mr. Thomas seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

**The Report of the Activities of the Historical Commission Staff
April 1998, Richard Tyler**

Mr. Tyler noted a few highlights from the staff report.

Certified Local Government: National Register Comment

Mr. Tyler described the nomination of the Fair Hill Burial Ground on Germantown Avenue for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. He explained the Cemetery's social and historical significance as the burial site of several important civil rights leaders of the nineteenth century, including Lucretia Mott, Robert Purvis and Sarah Pugh. He asked the Commission to recommend the nomination. Mr. Wilds commented on the interest the neighboring community has taken in the preservation and maintenance of the burial ground, as well as documenting the history of those interred.

Mr. Wilds made a motion to recommend the nomination. Mr. Ward seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Old Business

200 North 9th Street, a.k.a. 901 Race Street
Yu Man Chiu, Owner/Applicant
DATE: c. 1855
PROPOSAL: Partitions visible from exterior

At last month's meeting the Commission voted to table this proposal to build interior partitions inside a wrap-around greenhouse addition, owing to confusion created by an address discrepancy. A previous owner acquired a building permit and built the addition, but was not informed of the building's historically designated status because the Commission listed only one of the two possible addresses.

Mr. Tyler related the building permit history of the property known as 200 North 9th Street or 901 Race Street, as requested at last month's Commission meeting. As almost all of the permits were issued under 901 Race Street, and the property is designated under 200 North 9th Street, Mr. Tyler concluded that the previous owner acted in good faith when he built the wrap-around greenhouse addition.

Mr. Wilds made a motion to approve the proposal. Mr. Thomas seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Harry A. Batten Memorial Fund

Mr. Tyler asked the Commission to approve an expenditure of \$23.85 for the Architectural Committee lunches.

Ms. Merhige made a motion to approve the expenditure. Mr. Ward seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

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

The meeting adjourned at 12:30 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

R. Scott Jacob
Executive Secretary