

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

**TUESDAY, 27 JANUARY 2009
COMMISSION CONFERENCE ROOM, ROOM 578, CITY HALL
DAVID AMBURN, CHAIR**

PRESENT

David Amburn, Chair
John Cluver
Nan Gutterman
Dan McCoubrey
Suzanne Pentz

Jonathan Farnham, Executive Director
Randal Baron, Historic Preservation Planner III
Jorge Danta, Historic Preservation Planner II
Rebecca Sell, Historic Preservation Planner II
Karen Gonski, Administrative Technician

ALSO PRESENT

Sabra Smith, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia
John Gallery, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia
Vera Kiselev, WRT
Julie Disston, WRT
Antonio Fiol-Silva, WRT
Robert Cugini
James Curry
Richard Stange
Jennifer Arnoldi, Martin J. Rosenblum
Robert Koochagian
Margo Todd
Charles Todd
Martin Rosenblum
Steven Weixler, Society Hill Civic Association
Mary Schaheen
Paul Thompson, BluPath Design
Jason Thompson
Lee Dennis
Rachel Schade, Schade & Bolender Architects
Janet Katter, Old City Civic Association
Joe Schiavo, Old City Civic Association
Anthony Miksitz, Architect
Gerry Martin, William Proud Masonry
Brian Larson
Michael Bannagh
Richard Thom, Old City Civic Association
George Thomas, CivicVisions
Vincent Rivera, SRK Architects

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Amburn called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Mses. Gutterman and Pentz and Messrs. Cluver and McCoubrey joined him.

209-25 N. 18TH STREET, BASILICA OF SAINT PETER & SAINT PAUL

Owner: Archdiocese of Philadelphia

Applicant: Robert Koochagian

History: 1846-64, Napoleon LeBrun and John Notman; individually designated, 5/28/1957

Project: Construct ADA ramp with canopy, and elevator addition.

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to alter the north elevation of the Chapel of Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament. The chapel was constructed adjacent to the north elevation of the basilica in 1954-55. It replaced a mid nineteenth-century rectory that stood on the site. The chapel currently has two non-ADA-compliant access ramps.

The proposed alterations include the removal of the two non-compliant ramps and the removal of the original steps leading up to the side entrance of the chapel. The side entrance would be transformed into a window and the steps relocated to the new entrance four bays to the west. At this new entrance, the applicant would construct an elevator addition. The elevator addition would stand in front of the western most bay of the chapel. The elevator would only be accessible from the interior corridor and it would present a blank brick exterior. A new ramp with canopy would be constructed, which would end at a landing adjacent to the elevator addition. This ramp would run the entire length of the side or north elevation. The applicant would replace all the windows on the chapel, however that change is not included in this application and would be included in a comprehensive window replacement project for the entire cathedral complex.

The applicant presents two variations on the proposed canopy over the ramp and entrance. These variations are presented on pages A-6 and A-7. The variant on page A-6 presents an entrance door comprised of a single door with divided side lights. The canopy presented on this variant would be supported by rods that would attach to new pedestals which would extend beyond the original parapet. The canopy would extend the entire length of the ramp. The variant on page A-7 presents an entrance door comprised of a single door and undivided side lights. The canopy on this option would also extend the entire length of the ramp and it would be supported by three slender columns. Both variants propose a glass roof on the canopy. Both variants meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation; however, the variant presented in page A-7 would be more compatible and less visually intrusive.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval of either variant A-6 or A-7, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standards 9 and 10.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Gutterman recused and left the room. Mr. Danta presented the application. Robert Cugini and architects Vera Kiselev and Julia Disston represented the application.

Mr. Danta presented a revised A-7 to the Committee members. He stated that the applicant had discovered some structural issues, which led to the revision.

Mr. Cluver asked if this portion of the cathedral dated to 1954. Mr. Danta answered in the affirmative and noted that the proposed alterations would be limited to this mid twentieth-century portion of the building.

Mr. McCoubrey inquired about the proposed material for the cheeks of the ramp. Ms. Kiselev answered that it would be granite to match the water table.

Architect Antonio Fiol-Silva joined the meeting to represent the application. Mr. Cluver asked about the reasons for the projecting canopy. Mr. Silva stated that the ramp would become one of the main entry points to the cathedral complex, and that the projection would be necessary to provide shelter from the elements. Mr. Cluver asked why the canopy projected beyond the ramp but not over the stairs. Ms. Kiselev stated that it was done to make the entrance more inviting.

Mr. Cluver asked why the applicants proposed two options for the entry door. Ms. Kiselev answered that they wanted the Committee to view both possibilities. She noted that they prefer the divided sidelights, but not the entry door owing to the awkward proportions of the panes. She stated that the divided sidelights mitigate the change of the entry door in a more subtle manner. Mr. Cluver agreed that the sidelights should be divided, and stated that he prefers an entry door with undivided panes.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval with the revised variant shown on page A-7, with the undivided glass in the entry door, with the staff to review the details.

250 S. 20TH STREET

Owner: Archdiocese of Philadelphia

Applicant: Richard Stange

History: 1911, architects Lafarge and Morris; significant to RFRHD, 2/8/1995

Project: Install gates on front steps and chapel

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to install three double-leaf gates, constructed of metal bars, on the steps between the columns, and one double-leaf gate at the side entrance of the church. The proposed gates would alter the spaces and spatial relationships that characterize the grand entrance of the church. It is not clear how the gates would work with the existing railings.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Denial, pursuant to Standards 2 and 9.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Sell presented the application to the Architectural Committee. Architect Richard Stange and James Curry represented the application.

Mr. Curry explained that the church is seeking to deter skateboarders and homeless people from using the steps inappropriately. Mr. Curry stated that homeless people have started fires on the steps on more than one occasion. He stated that the pastor prefers the simple design with the Celtic cross, a theme that is seen throughout the church. He stated that the gate would be open during the day, but closed about 7:00 p.m. nightly.

Ms. Sell stated that the staff is concerned that the gates will awkwardly extend out over the stairs when open. She also stated that the relationship between the gates and the handrails is very confusing. They do not appear to be compatible with one another. Mr. Stange acknowledged that the design needs refinement. He asked the Committee for its guidance. Mr. Curry stated that there would be continuous railings from the sidewalk to the top of the steps when the gates are open. Mr. Amburn agreed that the design is awkward. He opined that the relationship between the gates and the columns has not been fully thought out. Mr. Curry stated

a sliding option was considered but rejected because it would require a top rail. He also noted that folding gates was not a desirable option to the pastor because the stacked gates would occupy space on the portico needed for funeral processions and many types of reception lines. Mr. Amburn stated that the side gate was acceptable; it has no impact on the historic architecture. Ms. Gutterman concurred. Mr. Culver asked if a fence that would fold against itself could be located at the top of the stairs. Mr. Curry stated that that option is not acceptable; it would not preclude the homeless from sleeping behind the columns on the top steps. Ms. Gutterman suggested a bi-fold gate system. Mr. Cluver suggested a gate in the shadows at the top steps with a fixed piece to stabilize it. He asserted that the proposed gate was very tall and obtrusive. Mr. Amburn suggested a gate in line with the top riser.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval of the side gate, with the staff to review details, but denial of the main gates, pursuant to Standards 2 and 9.

2025 DELANCEY PLACE

Owner / Applicant: Patrick J. Keenan & Mary Schaheen

History: c. 1865; individually designated, 1/6/1972; contributing to Rittenhouse Fitler Residential Historic District, 2/8/1995

Project: Construct rear addition, install roof deck.

OVERVIEW: This application proposes alterations to the rear of the property facing Cypress Street. This block of Cypress is a service street. This block of Cypress Street is characterized by a profusion of garages and garden walls on both sides. The applicant proposes to demolish the ground floor portion of a two-story bay. The two-story bay is an original feature of the building and the only unaltered bay on this row of three townhouses. In its place, an addition would be constructed that would enlarge the floor plan of the residence and create a family room. The addition is presented as a simple cubic mass with a balcony and decorative pergola. The addition would be finished in stucco with metal railings. The basement of the property would be excavated to create a garage. The most visible alteration would be the construction of a rear wall with a roll-down gate and person door that would enclose the rear yard.

The other proposed alteration is the construction of a pilot house and roof deck on the roof of the main block of the residence. The location of the pilot house is predicated on the interior staircase. The pilot house would provide access to a roof deck. The deck would be located towards the front façade of the residence facing Delancey Place. The applicant submitted a sight-line study. The study shows that, as proposed, the deck would be visible from Delancey Place. A mock up should be constructed to gauge the visibility of the proposed deck. Roof decks should be inconspicuous when located along secondary facades, but they should, in nearly all cases, be invisible from the main façade of the property. Owing to the location of this property within a historic district, the protection of the streetscape is an important factor of the review. This block of Delancey Place is one of the most significant streetscapes in the district and a visible roof deck along this prominent street wall would have an adverse effect on the integrity of the district.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Denial of the rear addition as proposed, and denial of the roof deck on the main block, approval of the rear gate, provided the roll-down gate is wood, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standards 2, 9, and 10.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Danta presented the application to the Committee. Property owner Mary Schaheen and architects Marty Rosenblum and Jennifer Arnoldi represented the application.

Mr. Danta distributed photographs depicting the mock ups from several angles. He stated that, at a 5'-6" set back, the railing of the deck became invisible from the sidewalk across the street and from the top step of the stairs to the houses on the south side of Delancey Place. He acknowledged, however, that a 6'-tall person on the deck would still be visible from both locations along the length of the block.

Mr. Amburn asked if the deck could not be placed at the rear to eliminate any impact on Delancey Place. Mr. Rosenblum answered that the client preferred the view to the south. Mr. Rosenblum then displayed photographs of many neighboring properties showing decks as well as mechanical equipment on the main blocks of rowhouses. Mr. Danta rejected the photographs as evidence, stating that the applicant provided no information about the other decks, which may be illegal or grandfathered.

Mr. Cluver asked about the visibility of the pilot house from the public right-of-way. Mr. Rosenblum assured Mr. Cluver that it would not be visible from Delancey Place or Cypress Street. Mr. Danta agreed that the pilot house would not be visible from the public right-of-way.

Ms. Pentz expressed great concern about the loss of historic fabric with the demolition of the original bay window. She asserted that no convincing arguments had been presented to justify the loss. Ms. Arnoldi stated that the owner is taking great pains to restore the interior to the original historic plan, and that alteration would make the house more livable. Mr. Rosenblum showed a series of rear views that showed that every other house on the block had altered rear facades. He opined that, once the gate is constructed, the ground floor gate would be minimally visible. He also pointed out that the enlarged volume under the bay respects the hierarchy of the interior spaces. He noted that the addition would line up with the two main rooms in the ground floor, the front parlor and the dining room, and that it would maintain all the circulation and the service spaces on the side hall. He noted the adjoining property, 2027 Delancey, where similar alterations have already been undertaken. He stated that he responded to this neighboring rear façade with his design and creating a complementary bookend.

Mr. Amburn noted that the Commission recently reviewed a similar application for the property 1300 Spruce Street. It proposed the alteration of a rear bay and the construction of a three-story addition. The Historical Commission approved it.

Mr. Cluver asked if the roof deck could be set back 5'-6" to make it completely invisible to the public. Mr. Rosenblum stated that it could and he would set it back to that point. Mr. Cluver stated that he could accept the proposed rear bay alteration. He stated that such changes are part of the evolving nature of properties over time. He opined that some of the detailing on the new construction could be more refined. Mr. Amburn agreed and felt the staff could work out the details with the applicant.

Mr. McCoubrey questioned the height of the parapet on the new addition. Mr. Rosenblum stated that he was matching the height of the parapet on the addition at 2027 Delancey. Mr. McCoubrey stated that the parapet should be lowered to make the second-floor bay more visible from the alley. The rest of the Committee members concurred with the suggestion.

Mr. Danta stated that the staff had suggested that the roll-down gate be wood, not metal. Mr. Rosenblum answered that he had not been able to locate a manufacturer of a wood roll-down

gate that would guarantee an exposed installation. Mr. Amburn suggested a more see-through gate with a mesh, instead of a solid roll-down gate.

Ms. Pentz once again objected to the loss of historic fabric and stated that she would vote against any recommendation supporting the demolition of the original bay.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval of the deck and pilot house, provided both are invisible from Delancey Place; approval of the rear addition, provided the parapet is reduced to the minimum height; and approval of the rear wall with roll-down gate, provided the gate is see-through, not solid; with the staff to review details.

332-334 S. 4TH STREET

Owner: Charles and Margo Todd

Applicant: Paul Thompson, AIA

History: 1811, altered 1880, rehabilitated 1960

individually designated 4/30/1957; contributing to Society Hill Historic District, 3/10/1999

Project: Legalize exterior alterations and install solar panels

OVERVIEW: An earlier version of this application was presented to the Historical Commission in November 2008. That application proposed to legalize a series of alterations to the rear ell, including the demolition and reconstruction of the two-story section of the rear ell with paired, double-hung windows at the second story and installation of stucco on wire mesh over the entire rear ell. That application was in response to violations and a stop work order for illegal work issued in July 2008. The application also proposed to install windows and doors on the façade and rear ell and solar panels on the roof of the main block and rear ell. The Historical Commission voted to deny that application, pursuant to Standard 9.

After the denial and meeting with the Historical Commission staff, the applicant revised the design to address concerns raised at the Architectural Committee and Historical Commission meetings. The applicant now proposes the following:

1. Three options for installation of the photovoltaic solar collectors:
 - Option A: Installation of solar panels on the rear of the main block and rear ell per the original proposal.
 - Option B: Installation of a painted wood trellis to raise and support the photovoltaic solar collectors in lieu of installing them on the main block.
 - Option C: Installation of a combination of both Option A and B.
2. Installation of exposed gutters and barge boards at the three phases of construction at the rear ell, as suggested by staff.
3. Installation of barge board and coping cover at the roofline of the main block as part of the roof replacement.
4. Installation of brick with slate topped chimney dampers in the historic design rather than leaving the chimney caps exposed as initially proposed.
5. Infill of one of the double windows created in the rear. The applicant would prefer to retain the double window, but would concede to the infill if the Commission requires it.

The remainder of the work is unchanged from the original application. The applicant proposes to install previously approved windows in the façade and rear ell, replace wooden gate on 4th Street, replace roofing materials, flashing, and gutters, install a HVAC and unit solar hot water and photovoltaic panels on the roof of the rear ell, and infill an existing swimming pool.

The staff has determined that the rear first story is not visible from the public right-of-way. The second story and above are visible. The pitches of the roofs of the rear ell are very low. The rear of the roof of the main block is visible from the far end of a greenway leading to Green's Court. The full extent of the visibility of the proposed equipment from the public walkway remains unknown.

After a meeting onsite with the solar panel contractor, applicant, owners, and Commission staff, it was determined that there are two options for a successful solar panel installation:

1. construct a rear trellis to raise the panels and gather the necessary sunlight, thereby eliminating the solar panels on the rear of the main block; or
2. the initial proposal, install the solar panels on the roofs of the rear ell and rear of the main block.

The staff reviewed these options and determined that construction of a trellis with solar panels elevated on top would create a high level of visibility from 4th Street, the main and highly trafficked public-right-of-way. Panel installation directly on the low roofs and rear of the main block would have a much lower impact on visibility from 4th Street, isolating the most visible portions to a vantage point along the greenway. Therefore, the staff supports the initial proposal.

Additionally, the staff contends that removing the new stucco and mesh may do more damage to the building than leaving it in place.

Finally, the staff is in favor of either option to allow the double windows to remain or infill one on each pair.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval of the initial proposal, Option A, for solar panel installation on the roofs of the rear ell and main block, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standard 9. Approval of installation of exposed gutters and barge boards at the three phases of construction at the rear ell, barge board and coping cover at the roofline of the main block as part of the roof replacement, and brick with slate topped chimney dampers in the historic design rather than leaving the chimney caps exposed as initially proposed, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standard 9. Approval of either the double window or single window option at the two-story section of the rear ell, pursuant to Standard 9.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Sell presented the application to the Architectural Committee. Charles and Margo Todd, the owners, and Paul Thompson, the architect, represented the application.

Mr. Thompson discussed the three options for solar panel installation. He explained that it is important to have the units have the same access to the sun the ten units so that they all generate the equal amounts of electricity. Ms. Todd stated that Options B and C would require heavy pruning of a large tree in the side yard. The owners prefer Option A.

Mr. Baron stated he met several times with the applicants. He noted that the application was denied by the Commission in November 2008 and explained that he was exploring options to address concerns of the Committee and Commission. He stated that there was discussion of removing some stucco to reveal the sides of some original window frames on the rear ell. Upon further investigation by the applicant, it was discovered that side pieces of the frame do not exist and that the new stucco was put on top of old stucco and brick in those areas. Mr. Baron addressed the new stucco installation at the cornice level of the rear ell, stating that the applicant proposed to remove some stucco and install the correct cornice once its design is

determined. Mr. Baron stated that the rear portion of the rear ell was rebuilt without a permit and two double windows were created where there would have been two single windows.

Mr. Baron stated that the Commission did not voice an objection to the solar panel installation in particular. Mr. Baron opined that he believes that it is important to leave the roof of the historic main block unaltered. He explained that he tried to work with the applicant to move the solar panels off of the main block by finding a space that would give them an equal amount of light. Therefore, he explained that he developed the idea of creating a trellis to raise and support the solar panels. He presented an example of a house on the other side of the greenway that has a false deck hiding air conditioner units. He explained that decks were traditionally on the rear and often visible. He opined that, because a portion of the rear ell has been rebuilt, it is much less historically significant. Mr. Baron told the Committee members that he was not present when the staff voted, but that he is personally opposed to locating solar panels on the roof of the main block. He suggested a location with less significance instead. Mr. Baron noted that there is a building of equal height to the south of this property, on the other side of the walkway. He opined that the trellis would not be highly visible from 4th Street.

Mr. Danta informed the Committee that Mr. Baron was not present when the remainder of the staff developed its recommendation. He explained that the remainder of the staff had unanimously agreed on the recommendation. He asked Ms. Sell to elaborate on the decision. Ms. Sell told the Committee that she contributed in the development of the trellis concept. However, after viewing the site from 4th Street, she believed that the trellis topped with solar panels would be highly visible from 4th Street. She added that the staff supported the applicant's initial proposal because the solar panels would be isolated to two sections of the rear ell and main block and only be perceived from a section of the greenway. Mr. Danta noted that this decision was made after looking into the effect on the district and house. He asserted that the alteration to the rear of the main roof would be easily reversible and satisfies the Standards. The installation of the panels on a rear trellis would have an adverse effect on the streetscape and the district. He reiterated that the staff unanimously supported the panels on the rear slope of the main block.

Ms. Pentz asked about the weight of the panels and whether it would be necessary to reinforce the existing roof framing to hold the equipment. Mr. Thompson said the panels are not heavy; the historic roof would be capable of supporting them.

Mr. Cluver asked if any studies were done on the return on the investment into the equipment. Mr. Thompson answered that this is a \$36,000 to \$40,000 investment over a long time period. Ms. Todd added that she is seriously concerned about the environment. She acknowledged that the project would not be financially beneficial if only the middle two sections were installed. She opined that the trellis option was unsightly. She contended that Option A allowed the original roofline to be perceived and is more aesthetically pleasing.

Steven Wexler of Society Hill Civic Association disagreed with the staff regarding the installation of solar panels on the main block. He stated that the Association encourages investigations into installing green technology in the historic district. He recommended that the Committee find ways to introduce these devices into historic contexts. He opined that the Association could support placing the solar panels in the center of the rear ell. He elaborated on the importance of maintaining historic main blocks and gables and claimed that approving installation on these features would set a negative precedent.

Mr. Cluver stated that he did not like the trellis and opined that it would be a strong presence

demanding attention. He asked why the trellis was necessary. Mr. Thompson, the architect, explained that the panels needed to be raised to avoid the shade; the trellis was devised to raise them above the roof of the two-story section. Mr. Wexler stated that, with the size of the house and the desired capacity of the homeowner, the presence of the numerous alternative energy devices would establish a precedent for them on historic fabric. Mr. Cluver stated that the Committee is charged with the building's preservation, rather than environment's preservation. He stated that he cannot support the panels on the main roof. He stated that there are other ways to obtain environmentally efficient energy that would not require alterations to the building such as purchasing wind-generated electricity.

Ms. Pentz stated that she views eighteenth-century roofs as rare survivors and feels an obligation to protect and preserve them. She stated she could not agree with the panels on the main roof. She preferred the trellis option, but acknowledged that it would be more visible from the public right-of-way. She opined that, given the move towards green energy sources, it will have a positive impact on the district by encouraging others to install alternative energy devices.

Mr. Amburn agreed with the recommendations of the Society Hill Civic Association. He stated that adding panels to the main block has not been studied sufficiently. He favored a design that would support the panels on the extreme rear of the ell. Mr. Cluver stated that he favored the trellis redesigned as a porch with a traditional ceiling that would block views of the bottom of the equipment.

Ms. Pentz asked for clarification on the proposal to leave the stucco in place with the exception of the area at the roofline of the rear ell. Mr. Thompson stated that he researched other buildings in the area where stucco had been removed from the façades; he distributed photographs of them. Using one building as an example, he explained that the brick was damaged with the removal of the stucco. Ms. Sell explained that the building he was referring to had a smooth coat of stucco that was later removed, rather than wire mesh nailed into the brick. She explained that removing the wire mesh stucco would further damage the brick.

Ms. Pentz did not object to the double windows and stated she was in favor of leaving the new stucco in place and rebuilding the rear cornice based on field conditions for the staff to review. She stated she was not in favor of solar panel installation on the rear roof of the main block. She recommended that the trellis be designed as a porch, as suggested by Mr. Cluver, and used to support the solar panels.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval with the Option B solar panel installation and the double windows at the two-story rear ell, provided the structure to support the solar panels on the two-story rear ell is redesigned as a porch with a 4/12 pitch roof rather than a trellis, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standard 9.

274 S. 3RD STREET

Owner: Lee & Geoff Dennis

Applicant: Jason Thompson

History: 1813, James Lundall, house carpenter; alterations, 1964; individually designated 4/30/1957, contributing to Society Hill Historic District, 3/10/1999

Project: Enlarge rear window into a French door with balcony, replace front dormer window.

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to enlarge a double window on the rear façade of this townhouse and convert it into a French door with balcony. The application also proposes to replace the window in the front dormer with either a wood true-divided-light, or a simulated-divided-light window.

The rear facade shows evidence of masonry alterations around the window openings. The double window is not a typical Federal window type and it most likely dates from an early twentieth-century alteration or perhaps as part of the 1964 restoration of the property. This is not a character defining feature of the property and its removal is consistent with the Standards.

The applicant proposes two options for the replacement window in the front dormer facing 3rd Street. Both units are manufactured by Marvin windows and both are constructed of wood. The units have identical light patterns and dimensions. The true-divided light sash would be singled glazed, and the simulated-divided light sash would have insulated glass. The replacement sash would be installed within the existing frame of the window. However, it should be noted that dormer windows were not historically installed in the same manner as windows in masonry walls. The window frame in a dormer opening usually serves as the structural armature for the dormer cladding. This makes the weight pocket very small and leaves very little room for the addition of a sub frame. The staff should work with the applicant to ensure that the proposed installation would not build-down the opening and that it would be compatible for this location. Furthermore, the window must be arched-top as per the historic photographic evidence.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval of the French door and balcony and approval of either the true-divided light or simulated-divided light replacement sashes provided it does not build down the historic opening of the dormer, it is arched-top, and that it replicates the aesthetics of the original, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standards 6 and 9.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Danta presented the application to the Committee. Lee Dennis and Jason Thompson represented the application.

Mr. Amburn opened the review with comments from the public. Stephen Wexler of the Society Hill Civic Association spoke and commended the applicants for their great preservation efforts. He noted two main concerns, the installation of simulated-divided light windows in front facades, and the enlargement of windows into a French door.

He stated that the association is opposed to simulated-divided light windows on the principal facades of buildings in the district. He noted the objection stems from the flatness of the muntins, and the lack of shadow lines. Mr. Cluver inquired about the proposed muntin configuration. Mr. Thompson answered that the application proposes a putty sloped muntin that would have depth and would cast a shadow. Mr. Wexler acknowledged that, if the replacement appropriately replicated the shadow lines and configurations of a true-divided-light window, then association would not be in opposition. He stated that they feared the proliferation of inappropriate flat muntins in significant eighteenth-century buildings.

Mr. Wexler also cited the accelerated trend of enlarging window openings. He acknowledged that these were primarily on the rears of properties, such as the proposed. However, he voiced opposition to the enlargement and stated that it was not appropriate to enlarge it. He noted that the impact on the district, the change to the rhythm and scale of openings throughout Society Hill, was the reason for his concern. He opined that it was inappropriate to allow an historic window of another style, such as a French window, in Georgian or federal architecture. He opined that the French door should be two single-light doors, undivided, and that the material should not be wood. He opined that something less historical in appearance would be more appropriate for the neighborhood.

Mr. Danta stated that the proposal is for a sash kit replacement, which would involve a track liner installed within the weight pocket of the frame. Mr. Danta expressed concern that the weight pocket may not be big enough to accommodate the tracks. He also stated that the staff must review the shop drawings or samples of the proposed window to ensure that the muntins have depth and cast shadows. He agreed with Mr. Wexler that inappropriate flat muntins are not an acceptable replacement in the district.

Mr. Amburn voiced no objections to the alteration to the opening since it was part of a previous alteration, but agreed with Mr. Wexler's opinion on the divided lights. Ms. Gutterman concurred. Mr. McCoubrey also agreed, and stated that the frame on the transom should be reduced in size to be more like a sash.

Mr. Danta asked about the proposed finish of the railing. Mr. Thomson stated that it would be painted black. Mr. Cluver noted that a 36"-inch railing for the balcony would be more appropriate for a residential installation. Messrs. Amburn and McCoubrey agreed.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval of the French door with balcony, provided the glass is undivided, with a 36"-inch railing and simplified transom; and approval of the simulated-divided light sash replacement, provided it is an arched-top window, fits within the historic opening, and replicates the appearance of the historic sash, with the staff to review details.

3615 CHESTNUT STREET

Owner: Ralston House

Applicant: Rachel Schade

History: c. 1890, individually designated 2/23/1971

Project: Replace ADA ramp on side façade, replace front entrance canopy.

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to replace the ADA ramp with canopy on the side of the building with a new ADA ramp and canopy on the same location. The applicant also proposes to replace the canopy over the main entrance to the building along Chestnut Street.

The building currently has an ADA ramp on the west side of the property. This ramp discharges onto a parking lot. The applicant proposes to replace the existing wood ramp with a steel ramp. The landing of the ramp would be covered by a steel and glass canopy. The location of the entrance door directly adjacent to an octagonal bay makes it a very difficult location for the installation of a canopy. The applicant proposes to utilize the arch of the window in the bay as a guiding element and presents a curved canopy that follows the radius of the arched window. The canopy would be anchored to the wall and supported by a cable.

The main entrance to the building along Chestnut Street currently has an unsympathetic cloth canopy. The applicant proposes to install a more compatible canopy of steel and glass. The canopy would fit the width of the opening and it would be supported by two slender columns. However, it is unclear how it would connect to the wall above the entrance door. The door has a decorative spandrel. The staff can not comment on the attachment, or compatibility of the connection at the lintel owing to lack of details.

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

DISCUSSION: Mr. Danta presented the application to the Committee. Architect Rachel Schade represented the application.

Ms. Schade distributed photographs of the west entrance with the existing ramp. Ms. Schade explained that the ramp is now too narrow for wheelchair access and the owner would like to replace it. The chapel is presently used for seniors and disabled citizens for classes. Mr. Cluver stated that the underside of the ramp should be covered with a skirt. Ms. Schade did not object to this suggestion.

Mr. Amburn requested clarifications on the installation details of both canopies. Ms. Schade explained that the final attachment details had not been confirmed yet. She added that the intent is to make the decorative metal piece over the front main entrance remain visible. She noted that this is the reason why the glass canopy slopes towards the building. She added that the canopy will be free standing, with a gutter to protect the façade from water run-off. The details have not yet been developed. Mr. Cluver objected to a canopy that would shed water towards the building. He also asserted that the canopy would obscure the fine architectural ornament above the door.

Ms. Pentz stated that the Committee should review the final attachment details. She noted that the attachments had not been fully developed and opined that a final decision could not be rendered until the plans were fully developed. Ms. Gutterman agreed. The Committee members decided that they could recommend approval in concept of the canopies, but not final approval until they had reviewed the attachment details.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval of the ramp, provided a skirt is installed to hide the underside of the ramp, with the staff to review details, and approval in concept of the canopies.

2506 S. 22ND STREET

Owner: Greg Tenuto

Applicant: Anthony Miksitz

History: c. 1912; contributing to GEHD, 11/10/1999

Project: Demolish rear dormer, construct rear addition

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to demolish the rear dormer and construct a second-floor addition atop a non-historic first-floor addition. Both additions would be parged in stucco. A false dormer clad in fiber cement siding is proposed for the rear of the second-floor addition. The addition would be minimally visible from 22nd Street, through the gap between the twins. It would not be visible from a public right-of-way from the rear. Please note that there is no record of approval for the white vinyl fence seen in the photographs.

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

DISCUSSION: Ms. Sell presented the application to the Committee. Architect Anthony Miksitz represented the application.

Mr. Miksitz explained that the buff stucco is intended to unify the addition with the rest of the house. Mr. Amburn opined that the proposal is consistent with other rear additions that the Commission has approved in the Girard Estate Historic District.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval, pursuant to Standard 9 and 10.

52 N. 2ND STREET

Applicant: William Proud

Owner: Ken Hayward

History: c. 1840, storefront added circa 1875

individually designated 1/6/1977, contributing to Old City Historic District 12/12/2003

Project: Demolish and rebuild rear façade, cut new window openings in side facade

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to install six-over-six wood windows in the façade, cut five new window openings with stone sills and install six-over-six windows in the side elevation, and demolish and rebuild the rear façade in brick. The rear facade is in poor condition and an engineer's report states that it is pulling away from the building. It has one door and one window opening at each of the three floors. Several of the openings have been significantly altered. The new façade would reflect the new interior program of the building. It would have French door with railing at the second floor and a balcony at the fourth floor.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval, provided the sills of the newly cut window openings are of a different material than the historic sills, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standards 3 and 9.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Sell presented the application to the Architectural Committee. Gary Martin of William Proud Masonry represented the application.

Mr. Martin explained that the rear elevation is in structural disrepair. Ms. Pentz asked if the star bolts were installed to correct the condition. Mr. Martin replied that he did not know when the star bolts were installed.

Ms. Pentz inquired why the staff recommended new sills in a different material than the existing historic sills. Ms. Sell replied that the staff recommendation was intended to comply with Standard 3, which states that new additions should not create a false sense of history. She explained that contrasting sills would allow the viewer to perceive that the new openings were not created at the same time as the original openings. Mr. Martin stated that his intention was to use salvaged marble, but would concede to using a modern material. Ms. Sell stated she could work with the applicant on the choice of material. Mr. Culver stated that he did not prefer the use of contrasting material. Ms. Amburn agreed.

Ms. Gutterman asked if the proposed balcony on the fourth story could be flipped with the proposed window one bay to the north, pulling it away from the edge of the building and

reducing its public visibility. Mr. Martin stated that was a possibility, but that the architect had good reasons for the balcony location. Ms. Sell recalled a previous discussion with the owner during which he had asserted that the interior program of the building would not support a door in that location. However, the owner was not present to confirm this assumption.

Mr. Cluver opined that the window openings in the rear appear to have been altered over time. Ms. Sell concurred and stated that the window openings and door openings have been significantly altered since the time of construction.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval of window installation on the façade; approval of new window cuts on the side elevation, provided the windows closest to the front façade are pulled back four to five feet from the edge; and approval of the reconstruction of the rear elevation, provided the proposed fourth-story window and door are flipped and a door is installed in the northern bay to maintain the historic appearance of the elevator shaft; with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standard 9.

249, 251, 253, 255, 257, 259 MARKET STREET, AND 3-5 N. 3RD STREET

Owner: Marvin Ginsberg

Applicant: Avi Nechemia

History: 249: c. 1970; non-contributing to OCHD, 12/12/2003

251: c. 1840; individually designated, 11/4/1976; contributing to OCHD, 12/12/2003

253: c. 1840; individually designated, 11/4/1976; contributing to OCHD, 12/12/2003

255: c. 1865; individually designated, 11/4/1976; contributing to OCHD, 12/12/2003

257: c. 1865; individually designated, 11/4/1976; contributing to OCHD, 12/12/2003

259: c. 1830; contributing to OCHD, 12/12/2003

3-5: c. 1915; non-contributing to OCHD, 12/12/2003

Project: In concept: Demolish and reconstruct seven buildings for mixed-use complex

OVERVIEW: This in concept application proposes to demolish and reconstruct seven buildings for a residential/commercial complex at the corner of 3rd and Market Streets in Old City. Four of the seven buildings are individually designated. Five of the seven are classified as contributing to the Old City Historic District. Two, 249 Market Street and 3-5 N. 3rd Street, are not individually designated and are listed as non-contributing in the district. The application proposes to reconstruct six of the seven buildings to their historic appearances. However, the architectural drawings do not depict accurate reconstructions.

The applicant claims that the buildings must be demolished and reconstructed because they cannot be feasibly, adaptively reused. He claims that the buildings are degraded and that the floor plates are not appropriate for contemporary retail and residential needs. The historic preservation ordinance precludes approval of the demolition of any contributing building without a finding of financial hardship or necessity in the public interest, or an Imminently Dangerous declaration by the Department of Licenses & Inspections. The developer, who is a prospective owner, not the current owner, has not submitted a financial hardship application to justify the demolitions. Moreover, any hardship claim would be unconvincing because the developer does not yet own the buildings. To avoid any potential hardship, he could simply decline to purchase the buildings. The applicant likewise makes no claim of necessity in the public interest. Moreover, any public interest claim would be unpersuasive; this would be a private, for-profit development. Finally, the applicant provides no evidence that the buildings are dangerous.

The staff recognizes that this application has some merit; the important corner in the Old City Historic District deserves rehabilitation. The buildings are significantly degraded. All five contributing buildings have lost all historic fabric at the ground floors, where they have been altered for storefronts. The building at 259 Market has lost its upper stories and is little more than a band of historic brick at the second floor. The other contributing buildings have been significantly altered and are in poor condition. Also, the deteriorated buildings are covered with inappropriate signage that detracts from the historic district at this important corner, which serves as a gateway to the historic neighborhood north of Market. Despite these conditions, demolition is not justified. Any development proposal for this large site should include a mix of rehabilitation and new construction, unless the developer proves within the confines of the historic preservation ordinance that rehabilitation is not feasible. Historic fabric survives at several at the buildings, especially 251, 253, 255, and 257. The contributing buildings should be rehabilitated and could be integrated into new construction on the non-contributing sites. However, the staff notes that the project is appropriately massed and scaled for the historic neighborhood.

Some have suggested that the Historical Commission should protect the Shirt Corner signage. The Inquirer incorrectly reported that the signage was added in 1980. Photographs from 1974 and 1977 clearly show the signage in place. The staff advises that the Commission not seek to protect the signage without specifically determining through the designation process that it is historically significant. The Commission's meeting minute from the designation in November 1976 as well as a memorandum written by the historic preservation officer soon after the designation clearly indicate that the Commission was seeking "to maintain the historic scale and feeling of the overall blockface" with its designation of these buildings. The signage is not mentioned. Moreover, the signage was not deemed historically significant by the district designation; the district's period of significance ends in 1929, decades before the signage was installed. If anyone desires to see this signage protected as historic, she should submit a nomination to the Commission making the argument for its significance. If the Commission were to require preservation of the signage without previously finding that it is historically significant, it would violate the rights of the property owner, who should have an opportunity to participate in any such discussion.

In conclusion, the staff notes the scale and massing of the proposed development, but again suggests that the developer consider a combination of rehabilitation and new construction at this scale and massing, preserving and restoring the historic fabric that survives at the site.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Denial, pursuant to Section 14-2007(7)(j) of the Philadelphia Code: No permit shall be issued for the demolition of an historic building, structure, site or object, or of a building, structure, site or object located within an historic district which contributes, in the Commission's opinion, to the character of the district, unless the Commission finds that issuance of the permit is necessary in the public interest, or unless the Commission finds that the building, structure, site or object cannot be used for any purpose for which it is or may be reasonably adapted.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Farnham announced that the applicant had requested a one-month continuance moments ago. He stated that the staff was granting the continuance and that the application would be reviewed at next month's Architectural Committee meeting.

Joseph Shiavo of the Old City Civic Association explained that his organization had prompted the applicants to request the continuance to allow it to review the project and present its assessment to the Commission.

Mr. Farnham noted that architecture critic Inga Saffron had published an article on the project in the *Inquirer* that morning. He informed the Committee members that she had grossly misrepresented the staff's position on the project and referred them to the staff recommendation. He asserted that the staff had always, unconditionally opposed the demolition of contributing buildings that is proposed in this application.

Vincent Rivera, the architect of the proposed development, stated that he looked forward to meeting with the Committee next month.

ADJOURNMENT

The Architectural Committee adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES CITED IN THE MINUTES

Standard 1: A property will be used as it was historically or given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.

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 3: Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.

Standard 4: Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.

Standard 5: Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.

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

Standard 7: Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damages to historic materials will not be used.

Standard 9: New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new works shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

Standard 10: New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

New Additions Guidelines: Recommended: Designing a new addition in a manner that makes clear what is historic and what is new. Not Recommended: Imitating a historic style or period of architecture in a new addition.

Entrances and Porches Guideline: Recommended: Designing and constructing a new entrance or porch when the historic entrance or porch is completely missing. It may be a restoration based on historical, pictorial, and physical documentation; or be a new design that is compatible with the historic character of the building.

Entrances and Porches Guideline: Recommended: Designing and installing additional entrances or porches on secondary elevations when required for the new use in a manner that preserves the historic character of the building, i.e. limiting such alteration to such non-character-defining elevations.

Setting Guidelines: Not Recommended: Introducing a new building or landscape feature that is out of character or otherwise inappropriate to the setting's historic character.

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

Building Site Guidelines: 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.

Site Guidelines: Recommended: Identifying, retaining, and preserving buildings and their features as well as features of the site that are important in defining its overall historic character.

Windows Guideline: Not Recommended: Changing the historic appearance of windows through the use of inappropriate designs, materials, finishes, or colors which noticeably change the sash, depth of reveal, and muntin configuration; the reflectivity and color of glazing; or the appearance of the frame.