

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

15 September 1982

Herbert W. Levy, A.I.A., Chairman

Present: Herbert W. Levy, A.I.A., Chairman, Architectural Advisor to the
Commission
Theodore T. Bartley, Jr., A.I.A., Preservation Committee, American
Institute of Architects, Philadelphia Chapter
Penelope H. Batcheler, Architect for Independence National Historical
Park
John Dickey, F.A.I.A.
Janet Klein, Vice Chairman of the Commission
Russell Milnor, A.I.A., Architect for the Philadelphia Redevelopment
Authority
Frank Thomas, Esq., Deputy City Solicitor, Law Department
Richard Tyler, Historian
Patricia Siemiontkowski, Architectural Historian

Also: David W. Maxey, Esq. of Drinker, Biddle & Reath; Richard H.
Dilshamer, Locust Development Corporation; Stephen Goldner,
SMGA-Architects; Henry Taglinger and Robert Taglinger, owners
of 1631-1633 Locust Street; Rhoda W. Richards, Emergency Aid
of Pennsylvania; Christopher Stouffer, Esq., representing
Emergency Aid of Pennsylvania and Center City Residents
Association; Richard Frey, Friends of Furness concerning the
properties 1631-1633 Locust Street and 1635-1637 Locust Street,
a.k.a. 235 South 17th Street.
Irving Shapiro, Architect to present his proposal for the
restoration of 707 Pine Street.
Stanley Taralla, Adaptive Design, and Mort Bell, owner, to
present plans for the restoration of the facade of 150 North
2nd Street.
John Konig, Architect; Andrew Rota, owner; and neighborhood
residents regarding the proposed rehabilitation of 2304-2316
South Broad Street.
Larry Dichter to present drawings for the proposed reconstruction
of the front facade of 432 Pine Street.

REMISSIONS FOR ALTERATIONS

707 Pine Street, Irving Shapiro, Architect. Mr. Shapiro presented
to the Committee for its consideration plans for the rehabilita-
tion of 707 Pine Street, a three-and-a-half story, Greek Revival
house.

Following a review of the plans, the Committee agreed to recommend an approval of Mr. Shapiro's proposal subject to several minor revisions. On the front elevation, the members asked that four over four, double-hung window sash be installed in the dormer and that the meeting rails of the third floor shutters be lowered below the center rails of the windows. In addition, the Committee asked that the architect research the original treatment of the basement windows and revise the drawings in accordance with his findings. Finally, the Committee suggested the elimination of the single window at the second floor level on the rear elevation. If light and air are desired at the second floor rear, windows to match and align with those above and below should be used.

The Committee directed the architect to revise his drawings and present them to the Commission staff for a final review and approval.

150 North 2nd Street, Stanley Taxilla, Architect. The members of the Committee reviewed the elevation drawing, submitted by Mr. Taxilla, for the restoration of the front facade of 150 North 2nd Street, a two-and-a-half story, eighteenth-century house with a commercial ground floor.

Following a discussion of the project, with both the architect and the owner of the building, the Committee voted to recommend its approval subject to the restoration of the brick watertable and the submission of details for the new entrance door. In addition, Mrs. Batcheler agreed to visit the site with the architect to examine the building and determine an appropriate design for the cornice and pent eave. The 1845 insurance survey for 150 N. 2nd Street in the Commission file reports that the building had "plastered covers to the front house." The Committee further determined that the construction of a new brick facade would be permitted if the existing brickwork proved to be in poor condition and unsalvageable. The new facade, of course, must match the original brickwork in size and color of brick, bonding, method of pointing, placement and size of openings, etc.

2304-16 South Broad Street, John Konig, Architect. Mr. Konig appeared before the members of the Architectural Committee with his client, Andrew Rota, to present his resubmission for alterations to the carriage house, 2304-16 S. Broad Street, and to discuss the deteriorated condition of the structure.

Mr. Konig presented to the Committee members a series of photographs illustrating the exceptionally poor condition of the brickwork on the structure. He further reported that, as a result of construction on the interior, a large section of face brick on the Broad Street elevation pulled away from the building and fell to the ground. Approval for interior work

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only and the installation of outriggers to support the second floor greenhouse structure was granted Mr. Rota to avoid causing any undue delays on the project. According to the building contractor, Tom Mazza, the over-sized, Roman face brick did not tie into the back-up brick wall at any point. The architect explained his concern for the maintenance of the structural integrity of the building. To achieve this, Mr. Konig proposed the reconstruction of the wall. Unfortunately, such a reconstruction could not be achieved properly owing to the lack of a sufficient number of face brick. Mr. Rota presented to the Committee samples of the face brick taken from the building site.

Following an examination of the sample bricks and current photographs of the building, the Committee agreed to recommend to the Commission that 2304-16 S. Broad Street be removed from the Commission's list owing to its significantly deteriorated condition and substantial loss of integrity.

432 Pine Street, Larry Dichter, Applicant. Mr. Dichter presented for the Committee's consideration an elevation drawing for the reconstruction of the front facade of 432 Pine Street, a three-story, brick house erected c. 1805. As a result of basement excavation work on the adjoining lot, the facade of 432 Pine Street suffered some damage and now is in need of replacement.

After reviewing the drawing, the Committee agreed to recommend an approval of the proposed reconstruction of the facade of 432 Pine Street subject to some minor revisions on the drawing. The Committee asked that all window lintels be eliminated and that the new facade match that at 430 Pine Street. In addition, the Committee suggested that the cornice be returned at the west end of the building. Finally, the horizontal and vertical door rails should be equal in size - approximately 4 1/2" each.

The Committee directed Mr. Dichter to revise his drawing in accordance with the above recommendations and submit it to the Commission staff for a final review and approval.

EMOLITIONS

1631-1633 Locust Street and 1635-1637 Locust Street, a.k.a., 235 South 17th Street. Ms. Siamiontkowski reviewed briefly for the Committee members and others present the significance of the properties, 1631-1633 and 1635-1637 Locust Street, the action taken by the Commission on 1 July 1982 and subsequent developments.

Following certification of the buildings, 1631-1633 Locust Street and 1635-1637 Locust Street, by the Philadelphia Historical

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Commission on 1 July 1982, the Department of Licenses and Inspections on 19 August 1982 issued demolition permits for the properties without consulting the Historical Commission. These permits were revoked by letter of 25 August 1982 by the Department of Licenses and Inspections under Section 4-106 of the Philadelphia Building Code and the applications referred to the Historical Commission as prescribed under Section 14-2007 of the Philadelphia Zoning Code.

On 2 September 1982, the Historical Commission at its 265th Stated Meeting acknowledged the receipt of the demolition permit applications and voted to refer the issue of demolition to the Architectural Committee for its consideration and a recommendation.

Following this report, Mr. Levy welcomed all those in attendance at the Committee meeting and asked that the applicants for demolition of the Locust Street houses first present their statement.

David Maxey, attorney for Richard Dilsheimer, expressed his agreement with the account of the 17th and Locust Street issue presented by the staff but alleged his client's ignorance of certification until after the issuance of the demolition permits by the Department of Licenses and Inspections. He further explained to the Committee members the importance of timing in his client's development planning process and the risks in the marketplace which Mr. Dilsheimer must face if the project is delayed.

Stephen Goldner, architect, then presented his plan for the construction of a new high-rise tower to replace the buildings, 1631-1633 Locust Street and 1635-1637 Locust Street. Mr. Goldner presented both color renderings and a streetscape elevation illustrating the design of his 15 story high-rise office building. The structure as designed, according to Goldner, falls totally within the zoning requirements of the site and will not require any type of variance from the City of Philadelphia. Mr. Goldner described the building as one compatible with its neighbors. According to the architect, the building which was planned in two sections presents two scales. The granite base of the structure, explained Goldner, reflects the scale of the block while the glass tower, a neutral element, imposes no substantial impact on the streetscape.

Following Mr. Goldner's presentation, the Chairman asked the Taplingers, owners of 1631-1633 Locust Street, if they wished to speak. Mr. Robert Taplinger testified that the application

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for demolition of 1631-1633 Locust Street was made with the owners' full support and authorization. Mr. Taplinger expressed his belief that the buildings were economically obsolete and that a fair and reasonable profit could not be realized from them. The Taplingers who have owned the property for approximately eight years reported receiving a deficit cash flow for several years and only a 6% return on their total investment last year. Mr. Dilsheimer stated that a current fair rental value for the existing space could not exceed between \$15 and \$16 per square foot. To justify a first class restoration with the installation of an elevator, more desirable space allocations, the correction of floor levels, etc., rental fees in excess of that amount would be required.

Christopher Stouffer, attorney for the Center City Residents Association and Emergency Aid of Pennsylvania, reiterated the neighborhood's concern for the preservation of the Locust Street buildings and the ambiance of the area.

Mr. Maxey stressed once again the importance of timing in the successful realization of this project. The process of interesting persons in the building, finding lenders and completing the design of the structure continues daily. Any delay imposed, according to Mr. Maxey, could prevent the completion of the financing and the failure of the project. Mr. Maxey further explained to the Committee that Mr. Dilsheimer had no intention of demolishing the buildings immediately. Indeed, Paralegal which occupies 1635-1637 Locust Street holds a lease until 1 February 1983. Demolition of the buildings will not occur until financing for acquisition, demolition and construction is in place.

Mr. Goldner, in response to the Committee, discussed briefly his study of the existing buildings and his consideration of facade retention. It was the architect's opinion that such a solution would be forced and unacceptable. Concerning shadow effect of the new 15 story tower on St. Mark's church and churchyard, Mr. Goldner was of the opinion that it would be minimal.

Mr. Thomas, counsel for the Commission, asked Mr. Maxey to provide the Commission with copies of the agreements of sale for the Locust Street properties. Mr. Maxey attested that the agreements of sale provided for no contingency with regard to unexpected actions including financing. Mr. Maxey agreed to provide the Commission with copies provided that they are held in confidence and not made available to the public. Mr. Thomas agreed to keep the agreements and all financial information provided the Commission confidential.

At this point, the Committee adjourned into executive session to discuss their course of action and decide on a recommendation.

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Following a brief adjournment, the Committee members returned and voted unanimously to recommend that the Historical Commission withhold permission to demolish 1631-1633 Locust Street and 1635-1637 Locust Street for up to six months. They further recommended that the Commission agree to meet with the developer and the community at any time before the expiration of that six month period, ending 6 April 1983, to reconsider its action. It was the opinion of the Committee that this period would allow time for the developer and the community to discuss the proposed project and any reasonable and prudent alternatives which may exist.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Siemiontkowski
Architectural Historian