

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

11 February 1988

David Hollenberg, Chairman

Present: David Hollenberg, Chairman
Penelope Batcheler, Historical Architect for Independence
National Historical Park
David DeLong, University of Pennsylvania, Preservation Program
Herbert W. Levy, A.I.A.

Richard Tyler, Historic Preservation Officer
Patricia Siemiontkowski, Assistant Historic Preservation Officer
Randal Baron, Preservation Planner

Also: Ellen Friedman, Preservation Coalition of Greater Philadelphia
Marianna Thomas, Thomas and Newswanger Architects
Mark B. Thompson, Mark B. Thompson Associates, Architects
Randy Henkels, Mark B. Thompson Associates, Architects
David Marohn, Venturi, Rauch and Scott Brown
Nancy Lewis
Scott Find
Susan Bailey
Kevin Boyle, Lawyer for St. Augustine, Roman Catholic Church
Reverend William Krupa, St. Augustine, Roman Catholic Church
James McDevitt, St. Augustine, Roman Catholic Church
Alex Generalis
Tom Miles
Frank Weiss, Architect
Bill Vessal
John Hollander
Andre Peek
Gary Shaber
Thomas Singer

SUBMISSIONS FOR ALTERATIONS

2129 Chestnut Street, Mark B. Thompson Associates, Architect. Mr. Thompson presented plans for the adaptive reuse of the former Swedenborgian Church as commercial office space. This Gothic Revival brownstone church stands as one of the most significant works of the important Philadelphia architect Theophilus P. Chandler. Members of the Committee made a site visit to discuss the proposed work with Mr. Thompson on 14 October 1987. The proposal calls for dividing the sanctuary into several floors while maintaining a meeting room space at the site of the altar which would maintain the original height of the room. Proposed changes to the exterior include replacing sections of stained glass window with transparent glass to allow a view out of the building. The new sections of glass will maintain the leaded cane pattern of the original windows. The original glass will be stored in the building. Other changes include cleaning the brownstone,

replacing broken pieces of roof slate with slate to match, and installing several new all glass doors. The most controversial proposal was the installation of a large air conditioning unit approximately eight feet tall on the tower between the church and the rectory. This unit will be highly visible from the entryway courtyard of the church. After considering a number of alternative positions for the unit this was determined to be the least intrusive. The committee recommended approval of the project as a whole with the provision that the housing of the air-conditioning unit should be restudied and reviewed by the committee after detail changes.

Furness Library, University of Pennsylvania. David Marohn of Venturi, Rauch and Scott Brown Inc., Architect. Mr. Marohn presented plans for the rehabilitation of the book stack section of the Furness Library. This phase calls for replacing the original iron and glass book stacks with a new closed book stack structure that will be much safer in case of fire. A small portion of the old book stacks will be restored and retained behind the circulation desk. Additionally, an elevator, a new interior stair tower, sprinklers and new climate control will be installed. On the exterior the six part roof that was originally glass but has since been covered over will be rebuilt in standing seam lead-coated copper. A strip of glass skylights will be installed near the cornice of each roof section to bring in light and recall the former all glass roof.

The Committee recommended approval of this proposal.

257 S. Hutchinson Street, Anthony Paul Owner. The applicant proposes to remove the present one-over-one wooden windows and frames and install new one-over-one aluminum windows. The committee advises the Commission to require that the window be constructed out of wood and would advise but not require the owner to install six-over-six pane true muntin windows. One-over-one windows are acceptable since that is the present condition. The committee recommends the removal of the original frames only if the staff finds them to be in poor condition. Subsequent to the Committee meeting, members of the staff visited the site and found the existing frames to be badly deteriorated and in need of replacement. It was further noted that the frames appeared to be replacement frames of no special significance.

St. Augustines Church, corner of 4th and New Streets. Reverend William Krupa, O.S.A., and James McDevitt. Last year the Commission allowed the removal of a sheet metal sheathing around the tower of St. Augustine's Church because it was falling off and constituted a dangerous condition. At that time the staff expressed concern about the tower being open to the weather and asked the church to protect the building and consider a restoration of the tower based on an historical photograph in our files.

Messers. Krupa, and McDevitt presented a proposal to the Committee to sheath the now open portion of the tower in plywood and apply a waterproof coating. In addition, they propose to reinstall the louvers that are missing from a lower stage of the tower in order to make it weathertight. This whole proposal was presented as a temporary solution for five or six years until money can be raised to restore the tower. The Committee recommended approval of this proposal.

123 Queen Street, Carl Zucker, Attorney and Salvatore LaRussa, Owner. Mr. LaRussa through his attorney, Mr. Zucker, asked for a second continuance until the next meeting. Mr. LaRussa was required to appear in court that day and was unable to attend the committee meeting.

309-315 S. Chadwick Street, Alex Generalis and Tom Miles, Developers; Frank Weiss, Architect. Messers Generalis and Weiss presented a proposal for rehabilitation and additions to the two story brick, Italianate carriage houses at 309-315 S. Chadwick Street. The proposal calls for building a third story addition on the roof of the building pulled back 10 feet from the front facade, installing a deck with a decorative railing in front of the addition and numerous window and door opening changes on the front facade. In part, these changes would be restoring openings to their original shape and size as indicated by evidence in the brick work. Other openings such as a garage door on 315 do not seem to have an historical basis.

The committee recommended approval of the third story addition and deck but asked that more complete evidence be gathered concerning historical openings in the facade before approval of any changes to that portion of the building.

122 Fitzwater Street, Andre Peek, Owner. Mr. Peek presented drawings for the installation of six-over-six wooden windows and new window and door frames for his 18th century brick house at 122 Fitzwater Street. Additionally, he presented drawings for shutters.

The committee recommends approval of these plans with minor alterations to the drawings of the windows, and panelled rather than louvered shutters at the second floor level.

528 Spruce Street, Gary Shaber, M.D. Owner; Thomas Singer, Architect. The house at 528 Spruce Street was constructed in approximately 1790 and altered around 1830 with a new doorway, and again in the late 19th century with brownstone lintels, sills, watertable and a pressed metal cornice. The applicant proposes to restore the house to its 1830 appearance like many of its neighbors on the street based on an insurance survey and physical evidence left on the building. The applicant showed pictures of how the Victorian alterations had deteriorated and been changed as well as the evidence of what the

building used to look like.

The committee was sympathetic to restoration in this particular case because of the damage to the Victorian alterations and the level of documentation of the 1830s condition. However, they recommend rejection of the proposal for now on the grounds that, in terms of the Secretary of the Interior Standards, the Victorian alterations are old enough to have acquired significance and that the documentation was not quite complete enough to describe the 1830 condition. The Committee indicated, however, that if more documentation or physical evidence could be found that they might reconsider their recommendation in the future.

900 Pine Street, Bill Vessal and John Hollander, developers. The applicants had previously received a permit for interior work on these two c.1840 Greek Revival rowhouses at 900-902 Pine Street. Subsequent to that they exceeded the permit by removing the windows, installing anodized aluminum storm windows, stripping a wooden bay on the side of the building of its shingles, rebuilding it and covering it with vertical siding, as well as rebuilding the cornice. Licenses and Inspections at staff request stopped all work on the project.

The applicants came, to the meeting with plans to show the work that they proposed for the exterior of the buildings and photographs to show what they had already done. The applicants explained that the windows that they removed were almost entirely one-over-one aluminum replacement windows and not the original six-over-six wooden windows. They proposed having new six-over-six wooden windows milled to match the originals to be installed on the front of the building behind the aluminum storm windows. The committee expressed dismay over the look and finish of the storm windows and asked if they could be reinstalled on the interior. The applicants explained that this was not possible due to the location of the interior shutters. The committee also recommended that the side bay be recovered either with shingles or horizontal siding and that the windows on the bay be lengthened to the original size.

The committee meeting had run over one hour late and the next committee meeting was not going to be held for seven full weeks. Considering the developers urgent need to have the stop work order lifted so that they could continue work, the staff was asked to investigate the conditions at the building and help plan an acceptable solution to the issues that were raised.

Subsequent to the meeting the staff visited the buildings and determined that:-

1. these storm windows could not be installed on the interior;
2. that the wooden window frames were reusable;

3. that several old aluminum windows still remained on the side of the building.

The staff worked with the applicants to come up with total rehabilitation plans for the building which include the following conditions:

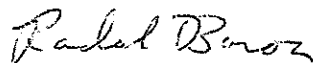
For 900 Pine Street

1. The applicants will remove the storm windows on the front facade and the side of the full width portion of the building and will reinstall six-over-six true muntin wooden windows. The exceptions to this are at the basement and dormer level where the applicants claim that the windows were boarded up when they purchased the building. They have installed aluminum sliding windows in those locations. The stained glass window will be reinstalled in the dormer behind the new window.
2. A new piece of molding will be affixed to the rebuilt cornice to match the original cornice.
3. The side bay will be recovered in weathered-wood color shingles, and the window openings will be recut to match the original size.
4. The aluminum windows will be allowed to remain on the side since evidence was found that this was an existing condition. The original wooden frames will be retained.
5. The applicants will remove an 1940s rear stair tower and a cinder block fence and replace it with a wrought iron fence.
6. A missing section of the chimney will be rebuilt using matching brick.
7. The building will be cleaned and repointed to Philadelphia Historical Commission specifications.

On 902 Pine Street the dormer, cornice and transom over the door will be restored, the aluminum windows will be replaced with six over six true muntin wooden windows and the building will be cleaned and repointed to Philadelphia Historical Commission specifications.

The staff recommends the approval of this proposal.

Respectfully submitted,



Randal Baron
Preservation Planner