

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

**TUESDAY, 17 NOVEMBER 2015  
ROOM 578, CITY HALL  
DOMINIQUE HAWKINS, CHAIR**

**PRESENT**

Dominique Hawkins, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP, chair  
Nan Gutterman, FAIA  
Suzanne Pentz  
Dan McCoubrey, AIA, LEED AP BD+C  
Amy Stein, AIA, LEED AP

Jonathan Farnham, Executive Director  
Randal Baron, Historic Preservation Planner III  
Kim Broadbent, Historic Preservation Planner I  
Laura DiPasquale, Historic Preservation Planner I  
Meredith Keller, Historic Preservation Planner I

**ALSO PRESENT**

Robert Nydick  
Kate Robinson  
Jeffrey King, Jeffrey M. King, Architect, LLC  
Lorna Katz Lawson, Society Hill Civic Association  
Kim DeStratis, Friday Architects  
Ryan Tighe, Friday Architects  
Leonard F. Reuter, Esq., The Reuter Law Firm

**CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Hawkins called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Mses. Gutterman, Pentz, and Stein and Mr. McCoubrey joined her.

**ADDRESS: 631 ADDISON ST**

Project: Construct third-floor addition, reface front façade in brick

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Robert Nydick & Katie Robinson

Applicant: Jeffrey M. King, Jeffrey M. King, Architect LLC

History: 1970; Robert W. Hill, architect

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Society Hill Historic District, Contributing, 3/10/1999

Staff Contact: Randal Baron, randal.baron@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

**OVERVIEW:** This application proposes to add a third story on this two-story house. The stucco front façade would be replaced with a brick façade with historically proportioned windows and door. The property is classified as contributing in the Society Hill Historic District. The inventory for the district dates this building to 1950, but newly discovered documents irrefutably date it to 1970. Simultaneous with this building permit application, the applicants are proposing to reclassify the property as non-contributing to the historic district. The Committee on Historic Designation will consider that request on 2 December 2015 and the Historical Commission will consider both the reclassification request and the building permit application at its 11 December 2015 meeting.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** If the property is reclassified as non-contributing, the staff recommends approval, provided that the windows have external muntins and the brick is compatible with its context, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standard 9. If the property retains its contributing classification, i.e. its classification is not amended, the staff recommends denial, pursuant to Standards 2, 9, and 10.

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Baron presented the application to the Architectural Committee. Property owners Robert Nyack and Kate Robinson and architect Jeffrey King represented the application.

The applicants presented a modified design with more modern windows after having met with the Society Hill Civic Association.

Ms. Hawkins asked about the evidence for the new dating of the building. Records show the building was transferred from the RDA in 1969, the property was subdivided in 1970, and a new gate was approved in 1975. Ms. Gutterman asked about the building's context and said it would be important to provide photographs of the streetscape. She commented that the proposed design of the first floor did not look balanced and recommended that there be two bays on the upper floors rather than three. Ms. Stein asked if they could move the façade forward. The applicants said they could not afford to move the whole kitchen which sits behind that first-floor wall. Mr. King said that he will be demolishing the wall to the right of the parking area. The Committee members opined that the second-floor windows were too low and the parapet looked too high. The architect replied that the windows are already at floor level. The parapet exists to slope the roof backward for drainage. Ms. Hawkins requested that the architect provide a section of the front façade to clarify the proposed design. She then asked if the applicants would be willing to change the review to amend their application to request a review in concept rather than a final approval, in which case the Committee would offer comments on the proposed design. The applicant said that they would be willing to withdraw the application and resubmit to the Committee at a later date.

The Committee members commented that the building should remain stuccoed and not have a brick façade, since it would be unsupported at the first floor. If the building were to remain

designated as contributing, the Committee members noted that any rooftop addition would need a substantial setback. If the building were to be deemed non-contributing, a third-floor addition could be constructed to align with the existing wall. The Committee members commented that the side walls of the front court could be softened and made part of the design.

Lorna Katz Lawson of the Society Hill Civic Association commented that the association's zoning and preservation committee was split on the question of stucco versus brick. It did recommend a more modern design and thought there was a lot of freedom because this block contains a cacophony of designs.

**ADDRESS: 2044 LOCUST ST**

Project: Remove rear bay, construct rear addition, renovate front facade

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Beth Chekemian

Applicant: Frank Mallas, Friday Architects/Planners, Inc.

History: 1860; altered 1912 by Baker & Dallett, 1934 by Grant Simon

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Rittenhouse Fidler Residential Historic District, Contributing, 2/8/1995

Staff Contact: Randal Baron, randal.baron@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

**OVERVIEW:** This application proposes to rehabilitate and add to a rowhouse at 2044 Locust Street.

The application proposes to renovate the front façade including replacing the windows. Most of the proposed work can be reviewed for approval by the staff. However, the application proposes new windows in subframes, which would reduce the sizes of the historic openings. Also, the proposed casements would include center posts, which would not replicate the historic French casements. The applicant should work with the staff to identify windows and other rehabilitation work that satisfies preservation standards.

The rear of the building faces Latimer Street, a narrow, dead-end alley. The rears of Locust Street buildings stand along the north side of Latimer. Small rowhouses face the south side of this end of the block. Maps show that the main block was originally three stories and the rear ell two. The house was significantly modified in the early twentieth century, probably in 1912 by the architectural firm of Baker & Dallett. The main block was increased in height to four stories and the rear ell to three. The front façade was reconstructed in a Colonial Revival style. At that time, the rear bay at the first, second, and third floors and a side yard infill addition were likely constructed. In 1934, architect Grant Simon converted the building to offices for Dr. Thomas M. McMillan Jr., adding a fourth story to the rear ell and rear bay. It appears that the rear bay was poorly reclad in metal at some point.

The application proposes to remove the four-story rear bay and construct an addition to the rear of the building. The addition would include a deck. A non-historic rear garden wall at the street would be removed to allow for parking. The application offers two alternative designs. In the first alternate design, the rear bay and side yard additions would be removed and an addition spanning the full width of the property would be constructed. In the second alternate design, the rear bay would be removed and an addition the width of the existing rear ell would be constructed.

The Historical Commission approved similar projects for rear additions at 2018 Locust in 2003 and at 2041 Locust in 2013.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Denial, pursuant to Standards 6, 9, and 10.

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Baron presented the application to the Architectural Committee. Architects Kim DeStratis and Ryan Tighe and attorney Leonard Reuter represented the application.

Mr. Baron explained the similarities and differences between the proposed work at 2044 Street and past projects at 2018 and 2041 Locust Street. He stated that this project is similar to 2018 Locust Street in that it adds a rear bay, but differs because there was no removal of historic fabric in that case; in fact, the added bay was a restoration of a bay that had been previously removed. That project also did not remove a garden or convert a yard into parking. Mr. Baron then explained that the current proposal is similar to 2041 Locust Street in that that project involved removing a rear wall and extending an addition toward the street. The project at 2041 Locust, however, differed because no character defining or architect designed elements, such as a bay, were removed. Also, the building's rear faced an alley that includes no house fronts on the block.

The Committee members first reviewed the proposed windows and façade restoration. They cautioned against using the words restore or "like new." They recommended that the applicants withdraw the front façade from the application and work with staff on more appropriate treatments for the windows. Mr. Reuter said he wanted to show the Commission that the applicants intended to restore the front façade and chose not to withdraw that part of the proposal.

In reviewing the proposed work to the rear façade, the Committee first examined a Sanborn map, probably dating to 1916, which shows the 1912 form of the rear bay as designed, perhaps by architects Baker & Dallett. This bay was later modified in 1934, probably with a design by architect Grant Simon.

Mr. Reuter stated that the bay had probably been re-clad after 1934. He also said the street was not a through street or a thoroughfare, but was instead narrow and "vestigial." He did acknowledge that the street was a legal public right-of-way. The Committee members pointed out that, although it is a secondary façade, it faces a street with many rowhouse fronts. They then concluded that the current form of the bay had significance and should be preserved.

**ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:** The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial, pursuant to Standards 6, 9 and 10.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The Architectural Committee adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

**STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES CITED IN THE MINUTES**

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 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 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.