

**THE MINUTES OF THE 617<sup>TH</sup> STATED MEETING OF THE  
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

**FRIDAY, 10 JANUARY 2014  
ROOM 18-029, 1515 ARCH STREET  
SAM SHERMAN, CHAIR**

**PRESENT**

Sam Sherman Jr., Chair  
Richardson Dilworth III, Ph.D.  
Anuj Gupta, Esq.  
Joann Jones, Esq., Office of Housing & Community Development  
Rosalie Leonard, Esq., Office of City Council President  
Michael Maenner, Department of Licenses & Inspections  
Sara Merriman, Commerce Department  
Joseph Palantino, Department of Public Property  
R. David Schaaf, RA, Philadelphia City Planning Commission  
Robert Thomas, AIA  
Betty Turner, M.A.

Jonathan E. Farnham, Executive Director  
Randal Baron, Historic Preservation Planner III  
Kim Broadbent, Historic Preservation Planner I  
Erin Coté, Historic Preservation Planner II  
Laura DiPasquale, Historic Preservation Planner I

**ALSO PRESENT**

Joan Kleinbard, 319 S. 6<sup>th</sup> Street  
Jonathan Kleinbard, 319 S. 6<sup>th</sup> Street  
Matt Golas, PlanPhilly  
Jane Golas, PlanPhilly  
Jonathan Doran, Atrium Design Group  
Darwin Beauvais, Esq.  
Eric Leighton, Cecil Baker & Partners  
Cecil Baker, Cecil Baker & Partners  
Andrew Kamins, Conservatory Group USA  
Kevin McMahon, Powers & Co.  
Philip Alperson, 321 S. 6<sup>th</sup> Street  
Mary Hawkesworth, 321 S. 6<sup>th</sup> Street  
Liz Zimmers, Zimmers Associates  
Lorna Katz, Society Hill Civic Association  
Paul Boni, Boni Law  
Rob Armstrong, Philadelphia Parks and Recreation  
Patsi Sauri

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Sherman called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Commissioners Dilworth, Gupta, Jones, Leonard, Maenner, Merriman, Palantino, Schaaf, Thomas, and Turner joined him.

**MINUTES OF THE 616<sup>TH</sup> STATED MEETING OF THE PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

**ACTION:** Ms. Merriman moved to adopt the minutes of the 616<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission, held 13 December 2013. Ms. Turner seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**THE REPORT OF THE ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE, 17 DECEMBER 2013**

Dominique Hawkins, Chair

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Mr. Farnham introduced the consent agenda and explained that it included two applications: 113 and 121 Church Street and 17 Longford Street. Mr. Sherman asked if any Commissioners had comments on the Consent Agenda. No one offered comments. Mr. Sherman asked if the audience had comments on the Consent Agenda. No one asked any questions.

**ACTION:** Mr. Schaaf moved to adopt the recommendations of the Architectural Committee for 113 and 121 Church Street and 17 Longford Street. Mr. Thomas seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**AGENDA**

**ADDRESS: 2109 AND 2111 WALNUT ST AND 2108 AND 2112-14 SANSOM ST**

Project: Demolish non-contributing building, renovate buildings, construct nine townhouses

Review Requested: Final approval

Owner: Andrew Kamins/Conservatory Group USA

Applicant: Eric Leighton, Cecil Baker & Partners

History: 1950

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Rittenhouse Fidler Residential Historic District, Non-contributing, 2/8/1995

Staff Contact: Laura.DiPasquale@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

**ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:** The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval, provided that the historic carriage houses are restored as discussed, the carriage door of 2108 Sansom is located in the historic plane, and the Walnut Street façade is revised to improve the pedestrian experience, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standards 6 and 9.

**OVERVIEW:** This application proposes the redevelopment of a large parcel at the intersection of Van Pelt and Walnut Streets. The new parcel will consolidate several smaller parcels with varied improvements upon them and different classifications in the inventory of the Rittenhouse Fidler Residential Historic District. The consolidated parcel will include 2108, 2110 and 2112-14 Sansom Streets as well as 2109 and 2111 Walnut Streets. Carriage houses stand on the parcels on Sansom Street. The properties at 2108 and 2112-14 are classified as Contributing to the historic district; 2110 is Non-contributing. The parcels on Walnut Street are occupied by a one-story commercial building and a surface parking lot, which are classified as Non-contributing. The application proposes the demolition of the Non-contributing commercial building and the construction of nine townhouses, in addition to the rehabilitation of the carriage houses on Sansom Street.

Unlike the previous submission in July 2013, this application proposes updating the facades of the existing carriage house buildings, including the replacement of all existing windows with new metal clad wood windows with profiles to match existing. The drawings submitted for the Architectural Committee meeting did not depict windows with the appropriate pane configurations and other details, however the staff met with the applicants prior to the meeting to discuss these details, and the applicant revised the plans to reflect the staff's recommendations. Some of these changes included the retention of the wood frames for the arched windows along Sansom Street, the use of casement windows to replicate hay loft doors, and the use of simulated divided light windows with appropriate pane configurations for the corner property at 2114 Sansom. The submitted plans also called for the opening of the transoms and replacement of the front and side doors of 2114 Sansom with flat doors, but the applicant has since altered their drawings to depict appropriate paneled doors, per staff suggestions. Due to staff concerns over the potential widening of the side door of 2114 Sansom, the applicant conducted exploratory demolition on the interior of the door frame, and amended their proposal to use a 30-inch wide door that will not require the cutting of any historic brick. The proposed replacement door is a paneled door with transom, similar to that on the Sansom Street façade.

Other significant updates include the replacement of the second floor windows on the non-historic portion of 2110 Sansom Street with sliding doors and the installation of a Juliet balcony railing, as well as the replacement of an existing overhead garage door with vehicle and pedestrian access gates. The application also proposes the replacement of two metal, overhead garage doors on the historic carriage houses at 2108 and 2112 with new metal overhead garage doors. The staff recommended replacing the metal overhead garage doors with carriage-style doors, and the applicant complied. However, the application also proposes to recess the carriage door at 2108 Sansom Street by several feet to accommodate an entrance into the unit. The staff did not feel that this setback was in keeping with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, and asked the applicant to explore alternative placements.

The submitted application also proposed removing the applied wood banding/trim from the historic facades, and changing the paint color scheme. During the meeting with the staff, the staff recommended retaining the red paint scheme, as it indicates the underlying brick material for the historic Sansom Street properties. The applicant was amendable to this change, and updated the plans to reflect a more subtle red color.

The proposed new construction townhouses along Van Pelt and Walnut Streets are contemporary in style and would not replicate the historic Second-Empire townhouses that once stood on the site facing Walnut. The townhouses would be oriented towards the west and face Van Pelt Street, not Walnut, as the historic townhouses once did. They would be five stories tall, as opposed to the previously proposed four stories. Parking would be accessed from Sansom and located at the rear of the townhouses. The facades of the proposed new construction are composed of brick, cast stone, and fiber cement panel veneers that resemble limestone/sandstone and brownstone in color and scale.

The height and materials of the proposed new construction are appropriate to the district, as is the placement of garages at the rear of the properties. The orientation of the townhouse at the corner of Van Pelt and Walnut Street, which was the primary issue raised at the July 2013 Historical Commission meeting, remains somewhat problematic. Although the placement of a door along the Walnut Street façade is an improvement, the proposed façade lacks the ground floor fenestration recommended previously by the Historical Commission.

Excerpts from the July 2013 Historical Commission meeting minutes read as follows:

“Ms. Merriman opined that the redesign of the Walnut Street elevation was not successful. She asked Mr. Leighton to explain the design changes. She specifically asked him to explain why the corner house could not be oriented towards Walnut Street. Mr. Leighton explained that the project is conceived as a Van Pelt address project. He stated that they would like all of the houses to have the same address...Ms. Merriman asked if the placement of the corner house was based on symmetry and circulation. Mr. Leighton stated that it was more than circulation; it was also the project identity. He noted that keeping the houses uniform is important to the scale and feel of the development. Ms. Merriman noted that typically residential properties at corners throughout the district have entrances along their long facades. Mr. Thomas concurred and stated that the pattern is not only seen in individually designed houses, but also in speculative row developments. He noted that having a corner house that engages both streets is a benefit to the district. He noted that there is no reason why the house could not have a Van Pelt address and still fully engage Walnut Street, even if the entrance was kept on Van Pelt. Mr. Thomas stated that the proposed floor-to-ceiling windows along Walnut Street are not appropriate. He noted that the future owner would likely want more privacy and request that those windows be blocked or reduced in size. Mr. Thomas noted that the blank bay window, as proposed for Walnut Street, is very common in the side elevation of houses with very narrow side-yards. He explained that the bays are mostly blank for practical reasons owing to the proximity of the two houses, which is not the case along Walnut Street. Mr. Thomas stated that the interior rooms of the house could benefit from more windows in the bay. He also noted that Walnut Street is south-facing which would ensure good light in this corner house. Mr. Thomas strongly encouraged more fenestration in the Walnut Street elevation and noted that the main entrance can remain on Van Pelt Street. He stated that the revised façade is still too blank and needs more refinement. He suggested looking at infill redevelopment-era houses in Society Hill to better understand how a corner house should address both streets successfully.

Mr. Schaaf stated that the solution to the corner house was developed 250 years ago in Society Hill. He explained that corner houses in the Georgian period had the main entrance along their long façade and centered directly below the gable with windows on either side on all floors. He stated that the solution to the corner house is more fenestration along the long façade. Mr. Thomas stated that the Walnut Street elevation could have two bays instead of punched windows. He reiterated that the south-facing rooms along Walnut Street would benefit tremendously from the light...

Mr. Thomas suggested that the bonus room could also be transformed into a commercial space. He encouraged the applicant to consider a mixed-use space. Mr. Leighton stated that they had already considered that option and that a small professional office with an appointment only business may be a good solution for this corner house. Mr. Kamins agreed that it would be a good solution, yet he expressed his hesitation on detracting from the residential character of the development. He reiterated that the development is foremost a residential townhouse development. He pointed out that a mixed-use development is a different business model, which lenders are hesitant to finance...

Mr. Schaaf asked if they had considered two houses facing Walnut Street, rather than one house facing Van Pelt Street. Mr. Schaaf noted that Van Pelt and Sansom Streets are small secondary streets and that Walnut is one of the primary streets of the city. He opined that two houses that fully addressed Walnut Street would greatly enhance the project. Mr. Leighton

answered that they were approaching the project as a whole, and that two houses on Walnut would fragment the project. He also stated that the houses on Walnut would be much smaller than the proposed Van Pelt Street houses. Mr. Schaaf agreed that the houses would be smaller, but stated that they could be made taller...Mr. Schaaf noted that the current proposal presents a secondary elevation on Walnut Street. He contended that, if the project were to have two smaller houses facing Walnut, they could create a grand gesture on Walnut Street. Mr. Leighton stated that a single house facing Van Pelt could also create a grand gesture. Mr. Schaaf agreed, but reiterated that he would prefer two houses and a better scale..."

**DISCUSSION:** Ms. DiPasquale presented the application to the Commission. Architects Eric Leighton and Cecil Baker and developer Andrew Kamins represented the application.

Mr. Sherman noted that Ms. Hawkins, Chair of the Architectural Committee, was not present, but that it appeared that the applicants had incorporated the suggestions of the Architectural Committee into their revised plans. He asked if any Commission members had comments. Mr. Thomas noted that in the earlier plans received by the Commission members, the watertable along the proposed Walnut Street façade extended the full length of the façade, whereas in the revised version it did not. He stated that he believed that the extended watertable was more in keeping with the proportions, materials and relationships of the street. Most of the buildings along Walnut Street, Mr. Thomas stated, have a special relationship with the ground—a base—and asked whether there was any relief to the brick as it hits the ground. Mr. Leighton noted that in the current plans, the brick would come to the sidewalk. Mr. Thomas suggested that some reference to the ground plane, whether in brick or by extending the cast stone watertable, would help to give the building more weight and fit in with the neighboring buildings. Mr. Baker stated that he had no problem with this suggestion.

Mr. Sherman asked if there were any additional comments. Mr. Thomas suggested that the design could be approved if the watertable in some way was expressed along the entire Walnut Street façade.

Mr. Sherman opened the discussion to the public. Patsi Sauri, a resident of 124 Van Pelt Street, and neighbor of the proposed project area, stated that she was representing the neighbors, who feel that the project is wrong for the area. Ms. Sauri stated that one of the concerns of the neighbors is the height of the proposed new townhouses. She noted that the applicant has made concessions to set back the third and fourth floors so the neighbors would not be faced with a large mass, but expressed concern over the buildings being described as five stories.

The second issue Ms. Sauri noted was the width of Van Pelt Street, which she considered to be too narrow, with a distance of 18.5 feet between the existing homes and the proposed development. She stated that the neighbors have requested that the City widen the street. Mr. Sherman asked about the feasibility of widening the street, questioning the minimum requirements for sidewalk width, but stated that issues of zoning and street width are not germane to the Historical Commission. He further noted that it appeared that the proposed townhouses were designed to minimize any traffic along Van Pelt Street given that the garages are accessed from Sansom Street. Ms. Sauri stated that the street is so narrow that cars have to drive on the sidewalk, and residents of the proposed townhomes would risk being hit by a car. Darwin Beauvais, attorney for the developer, came forward and stated that they had been in contact with the Streets Department, and that it was not feasible to widen the street to along its eastern side.

Mr. Sherman requested that further discussion be restricted to the purview of the Commission and not delve into zoning and other issues. Ms. Sauri stated that she felt the brick wall along Walnut Street was out of keeping with the area, and that the doorway along the Walnut Street façade appears to be a folly, put there to please the Historical Commission.

Mr. Thomas responded that in terms of material and color, there is a mix of materials and color along this portion of Walnut Street and that the proposed neutral brick material is appropriate and in keeping with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. He further noted that it is common for corner properties in the Rittenhouse district to have two entrances, and that the proposed door along the Walnut Street façade is not out of place in this regard. He also noted that, as an architect, he had designed numerous townhomes, and it is not uncommon for homeowners to reconfigure their living space to conform to their own needs; the concern of the Historical Commission is the appearance on the street and the relationship of the façade to the district.

Mr. Schaaf noted that in Old City and Society Hill, the major entrance to the building is often located on the long side of the building, immediately under the gable. He opined that the proposed new Walnut Street elevation is an echo of this traditional Philadelphia end-of-row composition, and that the proposed building is a measure of "darning and mending the fabric of Center City Philadelphia in in-fill" at this location. The proposed new construction, he continued, mediates between the adjacent large, post-WWII building to the east and the smaller, handsome limestone building to the west.

In response to Ms. Sauri, Mr. Beauvais noted that he was offended by her implication that the architects had placed a door along the Walnut Street façade to accommodate the Historical Commission, and stated that the design was well thought out in conjunction with the recommendations of the Committee and Commission and that this was the best response based on those responses.

Ms. Sauri apologized for offending him, but noted that she has a right to her opinions and comments. She again asked for clarification as to whether the proposed buildings were four or five stories. Mr. Farnham stated that the plans speak for themselves, and that the buildings could be described as four stories with a pilot house or five stories. Mr. Sherman interjected that there would be four stories of living space and a pilot house to provide access to the roof, which is zoning language is described as five stories.

**ACTION:** Mr. Thomas moved to approve the revised design as presented to the Historical Commission at its meeting of 10 January 2014, provided the watertable or base is extended across the entire Walnut Street façade, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standards 6 and 9. Ms. Jones seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**ADDRESS: 113 AND 121 CHURCH ST**

Project: Construct seven townhouses with parking

Review Requested: Review and Comment

Owner: A2Z Development LLC

Applicant: Shimshon Zakin, Atrium Design Group LLC

History: vacant lot

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Old City Historic District, Non-contributing, 12/12/2003

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

**ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE COMMENT:** The Architectural Committee voted to comment that the proposed building is compatible with the surrounding streetscape and historic district, thereby satisfying Standard 9, and suggested that the planters should be a durable material like granite, not marble.

**OVERVIEW:** This application proposes to build seven townhouses on a lot that was undeveloped at the time of the designation of the historic district. The Commission has review-and-comment jurisdiction only over this lot because it is an undeveloped site. The staff finds that the proposed structures are differentiated from surrounding structures but compatible in terms of scale, massing, and rhythms. The color of the exterior cladding is not red brick, but there are other materials like grey granite on the block and the district as a whole includes many varied cladding materials. These buildings are not part of an existing row and they are seen separately from other structures. For these reasons, the staff finds the materials compatible as well. The placement of parking at the back is very positive for the district.

**ACTION:** See Consent Agenda

**ADDRESS: 317 S 06TH ST**

Project: Construct rooftop addition, roof decks, and pilot houses; restore façade

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Cypress Court Condominium

Applicant: Jenny Wan, YCH Architect

History: 1920; c. 1970 shopfront altered to residential and pent eave cornice removed

Individual Designation: None

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

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

**ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:** The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial, pursuant to Standard 9 and the Rooftop Guidelines.

**OVERVIEW:** This application proposes to add a mansard-roof addition on top of this three-story structure. A pilothouse and roof deck would be added onto that at the fifth floor. The curved top parapet and mission-style pent eave would be restored to the façade, which would help to hide some of the addition. The new additions would be visible from 6<sup>th</sup>, Delancey, and Cypress Streets. The addition should be set back to the point where it is inconspicuous from the street and the decks placed at the fourth-floor level in front and/or behind the addition. A mock-up should be erected and a site visit conducted to determine an inconspicuous placement of the addition.

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Schaaf recused for the review. Mr. Baron presented the application to the Commission. No one represented the application.

Mr. Baron stated that the applicant erected a mock-up for the revised design, which showed that it too would be visible from 6<sup>th</sup>, Delancey, and Cypress Streets. He noted, however, that the developer had not yet submitted architectural drawings depicting the revised design.

Joan Kleinbard, who owns 319 S. 6<sup>th</sup> Street, asserted that the addition would be highly visible from the street and therefore inappropriate for the streetscape. She opposed any approval.

Philip Alperson, who owns 321 S. 6<sup>th</sup> Street, objected to the proposed addition as and claimed that it would be visible from the sides as well as the front. He stated that the Society Hill Civic Association and Councilman Squilla object to this proposal. He noted that the Architectural Committee recommended denial of the proposal. He stated that the neighbors are opposed to the proposal. He showed photographs of the building and mock-ups to the Commission. He objected to the loss of light and air at neighboring properties.

Attorney Paul Boni, who stated that he represents the Krausers, owners of 535 Delancey Street, said that the additions are too large and intrusive. He stated that his clients are opposed to any addition that rises above the neighboring roofs.

Lorna Katz Lawson of the Society Hill Civic Association stated she objects to the additions, which would be highly visible from the street. She submitted a letter from the Association. She asked the Commission to comment on the change in the zoning code that allows setback roof decks. She asserted that the roof decks are not appropriate for the district. Mr. Thomas stated that the Commission applies the Secretary of the Interior's Standards to applications and not zoning criteria. He stated that the zoning process is separate from the Historical Commission's process. Ms. Katz Lawson responded that the Commission will be pressured because of the zoning allowances. Mr. Thomas responded that the Commission would not be pressured by the zoning considerations.

**ACTION:** Ms. Merriman moved to adopt the recommendation of the Architectural Committee and deny the application, pursuant to Standard 9 and the Roofs Guideline. Ms. Turner seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**ADDRESS: 17 LONGFORD ST**

Project: Move building to site in historic district

Review Requested: Review and Comment

Owner: Gina Grothe and Barbara J. Marzulli

Applicant: Liz Zimmers, Zimmers Associates

History: Vacant lot at time of district designation; house demolished after fire in 1997

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Greenbelt Knoll Historic District, 6/9/2006

Staff Contact: Kim Broadbent, Kim.Broadbent@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

**ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE COMMENT:** The Architectural Committee voted to comment that the application satisfies Standard 9.

**OVERVIEW:** This application proposes to move a one-story house to a vacant lot located within the boundaries of the Greenbelt Knoll Historic District. The lot was vacant at the time of the designation of the historic district; therefore, the Historical Commission has review-and-comment jurisdiction only over this lot. Remaining on the vacant lot is part of the former

foundation, wood fence posts, concrete rear patio, and a wood retaining wall. Parts of these elements will be incorporated into the new design, with the addition of an open porch and one-car parking space. Like the houses in the district, the house that would be moved to the site is a simple, one-story, Mid-Century Modern house.

**ACTION:** See Consent Agenda

#### **COMMENT ON NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATIONS**

##### **BROWNHILL & KRAMER HOSIERY MILL, 406-26 MEMPHIS STREET, 1421-37 E. COLUMBIA AVENUE**

**DISCUSSION:** Ms. Broadbent presented the nomination to the National Register of Historic Places for the property located 406-26 Memphis Street and 1421-37 E. Columbia Avenue. The Commissioners discussed the nomination. No one in the audience commented on the nomination.

**COMMENT:** Mr. Thomas moved that the Historical Commission endorse the listing of 406-26 Memphis Street and 1421-37 E. Columbia Avenue on the National Register of Historic Places. Ms. Leonard seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

##### **HAPPY HOLLOW RECREATION CENTER, 4740 WAYNE AVENUE**

**DISCUSSION:** Ms. Broadbent presented the nomination to the National Register of Historic Places for the property located 4740 Wayne Avenue. The Commissioners discussed the nomination. Mr. Rob Armstrong, Preservation and Development Specialist for Philadelphia's Parks and Recreation, voiced the department's support for the nomination. Mr. Thomas noted that the building is an excellent surviving example of passive cooling, with the upper windows open to let hot air out, and the top sash on the double hung windows open for ventilation.

**COMMENT:** Mr. Thomas moved that the Historical Commission endorse the listing of 4740 Wayne Avenue on the National Register of Historic Places. Ms. Leonard seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

**ACTION:** At 9:47 a.m., Ms. Merriman moved to adjourn. Mr. Schaaf seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

#### **STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES CITED IN THE MINUTES**

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.

Roofs Guideline: 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.

DRAFT