THE MINUTES OF THE 607TH STATED MEETING OF THE PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

FRIDAY, 8 MARCH 2013
ROOM 18-029, 1515 ARCH STREET
SAM SHERMAN, CHAIR

PRESENT
Sara Merriman, Vice Chair, Commerce Department
Richardson Dilworth III, Ph.D.
Dominique Hawkins, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP
JoAnn Jones, Esq., Office of Housing & Community Development
Rosalie Leonard, Esq., Office of City Council President
Michael Maenner, Department of Licenses & Inspections
John Mattioni, Esq.
Joseph Palantino, Department of Public Property
R. David Schaaf, RA, Philadelphia City Planning Commission
Robert Thomas, AIA
Betty Turner, M.A.

Jonathan Farnham, Executive Director
Randal Baron, Historic Preservation Planner III
Erin Coté, Historic Preservation Planner II
Jorge Danta, Historic Preservation Planner II
Rebecca Sell, Historic Preservation Planner II

ALSO PRESENT
Mike Black-Smith
Kim Miller, Drexel University
Roberto Sella
Michael Sklaroff, Esq., Ballard Spahr
Caroline Boyce, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia
Kevin McMahon, Powers & Co.
Maryanne Huha Finegan, Esq.
Ben Leech, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia
Robert Powers, Powers & Co.
Carey Jackson Yonce, CANNO Design
Kevin Aires, BLT Architects
John Weckerly, Box wood Architects

CALL TO ORDER
Ms. Merriman called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Commissioners Dilworth, Hawkins, Jones, Leonard, Maenner, Mattioni, Palantino, Schaaf, Thomas, and Turner joined her.

MINUTES OF THE 606TH STATED MEETING OF THE PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION
ACTION: Ms. Turner moved to adopt the minutes of the 606th Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission, held 8 February 2013. Ms. Jones seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

DRAFT

THE REPORT OF THE ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE, 19 FEBRUARY 2013

Dominique Hawkins, Chair

CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. Farnham introduced the consent agenda and explained that it included two applications, 345 N. Front Street and 2419 Spruce Street. Ms. Merriman asked if any Commissioners had comments on the Consent Agenda. No one offered comments. Ms. Merriman asked if the audience had comments on the Consent Agenda. No one offered comments.

> **ACTION:** Ms. Jones moved to adopt the recommendations of the Architectural Committee for 345 N. Front Street and 2419 Spruce Street. Mr. Schaaf seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

AGENDA

ADDRESS: 2003 DELANCEY PL

Project: Construct basement entry, replace railings
Review Requested: Final Approval
Owner: Roberto and Francine Sella
Applicant: Michael Sklaroff, Ballard Spahr LLP
History: 1865; rehabbed in Colonial Revial style, 1912
Individual Designation: 1/6/1972
District Designation: Rittenhouse Fitler Residential Historic District, Contributing, 2/8/1995
Staff Contact: Jorge Danta, jorge.danta@phila.gov, 215-686-7660
ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval of the basement entrance, with the staff to review details; and denial of the replacement of the railings on the steps, pursuant to Standards 2 and 4.

OVERVIEW: This application proposes a new basement entrance and the replacement of railings at the front of this townhouse. The house was built in 1865 as part of a row. The property was altered in the Colonial Revival style in 1912 by the prominent firm of Stewardson & Page. The Commission approved an application in July 2011 that included the restoration of the front façade and the addition of a garage at the rear. In February 2012, the applicant presented a proposal to alter the front steps and construct a new basement entrance. The applicant withdrew the application before the Commission reviewed it.

The applicant has redesigned the basement entrance, reducing its scope and complexity. The revised design proposes a smaller opening at grade; the retention of the marble steps in place; and the elimination of a previously-proposed planter. The new design for the entrance would involve the removal of small section and the replacement of a small section of marble on the side wall of the steps. The stair well would be enclosed by a simple metal railing.

The application also proposes the replacement of the metal railings on the steps leading to the front door. The application claims that the railings are “modern,” but no documentation of their age is provided. The Commission’s files contain a photograph from 1963 that shows the railings in place. The railings do not date to the original construction of the house in 1865, but may date to the Stewardson & Page alteration. Unless the railings are shown to be a non-historic addition, they should be retained or replicated in kind. The new railing for the basement entranceway could be designed to match the existing railings.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Danta presented the application to the Commission. Attorney Michael Sklaroff and property owner Roberto Sella represented the application.

Mr. Sklaroff stated that they are delighted that the Architectural Committee has endorsed all aspects of the proposal except the replacement of the railing. He stated that the railing does not date to 1865 or 1912; it is a later, non-historic railing. He added that architectural historian George Thomas had looked at the railing and confirmed that it post-dates 1912. Mr. Sklaroff explained that railings of that period tend to be bulkier and of thicker iron. He pointed out that they have submitted a photograph that shows that the railing was not present in more recent times. Mr. Sklaroff agreed with Ms Pentz's opinion of the railing, who stated at the Committee meeting that the railing does not date to either of the two important historic periods of the building and does not have historical significance. He stated that his client intends to propose a railing at a later time that will be respectful of the historic nature of the building. He noted that several Committee members had expressed their preference for the current railing for aesthetic reasons. He asserted, however, that aesthetics alone does not make the railing historically significance. He reiterated that there is no evidence that the railing was present in either historic period. He asked that the Commission approve the application with the installation of a new railing that would be designed in consultation with the staff and respectful to the historic façade.

Ms. Jones asked if the railings shown in the drawings submitted with the proposed basement entrance are the proposed railings or merely a place holder. Ms. Sklaroff answered that the architect would design a new railing, which the staff could review to verify that it is consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Ms. Jones stated that the minutes from the Architectural Committee meeting alluded to a design. Mr. Sklaroff clarified that they do not have a design yet and hoped to work with the staff on the final design. Ms. Jones asked the staff if the railings on front steps were specifically noted during the designation of the district. Mr. Danta answered that railings are certainly part of the streetscape, but that they were not pointed out in the nomination of the district.

Ms. Merriman asked if the staff has the authority to review the new railings. Mr. Farnham answered that the staff has the authority and routinely reviews railings for compatibility. He stated that, in this particular instance, the staff had questioned whether the extant railings dated to the 1912 alteration of the façade. He explained that the staff decided that this question would better be answered by the Committee and the Commission. He stated that, personally, he does not believe that the extant railings date from 1912. He suggested that they are much later replacements. He noted, however, that there is no documentation to confirm his suspicion.

Mr. Thomas noted that many facades in the Rittenhouse Square District have changed over time, but asserted that the façade in question does not appear to have been radically modified in 1912. Mr. Danta explained that certain elements of the façade were added, such as the marble door surround and new cornice with mansard, but that most of the alterations took place on the rear façade. He conceded that the front façade remains similar to its 1860s configuration. Mr. Mattioni asked for a clarification on the proposal under consideration. Ms. Merriman answered that the application proposes the construction of a basement entrance. As part of the project, the applicants would like to replace the existing step railings to match the new railing at the basement entrance. The applicants have not completed the design of the new railings and would like the Commission to authorize the staff to review the final design for the railings. She clarified that Mr. Farnham had contended that the existing railings are not historic fabric.

Mr. Thomas asked about the period of significance of the historic district. Mr. Farnham answered that the Commission did not explicitly define a period of significance when it designated this district, making these sorts of questions about historical significance difficult. Mr. Sklaroff stated that the district is fascinating. He pointed out that Delancey Street is not uniform, but is the result of many changes over time. He noted that this property was individually designated before the creation of the district and that the staff could also review the new railings within the context of this individually designated house. He clarified that the new railings should be reviewed relative to the historic building, not the streetscape.

> **ACTION:** Ms. Jones moved to approve the installation of the basement entrance and the replacement of the railings, with the staff to review details. Mr. Mattioni seconded the motion, which passed by a vote of 10 to 1. Ms. Hawkins dissented.

ADDRESS: 2535 S 19TH ST
Project: Remove hairpin fence, install parking pad and gate
Review Requested: Final Approval
Owner: Linda and Matthew Carrafiello
Applicant: Anthony Bruttaniti, Bruttaniti Architecture
History: 1909; James H. and John T. Windrim, architects
Individual Designation: None
District Designation: Girard Estate Historic District, Contributing, 11/10/1999
Staff Contact: Rebecca Sell, rebecca.sell@phila.gov, 215-686-7660
ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial, pursuant to Standards 2 and 9.

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to install a parking pad at this corner property. The parking area would be paved and a portion of the original hairpin fence around the side yard would be removed and a swing gate would be installed.

In July 2008, the applicant proposed a nearly identical project in-concept. The Commission denied the application. In August 2008, the applicant appealed the Commission's decision to the Board of License & Inspection Review. In September 2009, the Board affirmed the City and upheld the Commission's decision.

The Statement of Significance in the nomination of the Girard Estate Historic District specifically identifies the open green space as part of the district's significance. The district is historically significant because it was an experimental proposal for an alternative form of development to the typical rowhouse form, which offers little to no green space. Communal garages were constructed with this development as a place for vehicles in order to maintain the open, unencumbered, green experience.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Mattioni recused from the review because his law firm represents the applicants in this matter. Ms. Merriman stated that the applicants would be requesting a one-month continuance. Attorney Maryanne Huha Finegan and property owner Matthew Carrafiello presented the continuance request. Mr. Carrafiello thanked the Commission for its efforts to preserve Philadelphia's historic resources.

> **ACTION:** Ms. Hawkins moved to continue the application for 2535 S. 19th Street for one month, to the April 2013 Commission meeting. Mr. Schaaf seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

ADDRESS: 3509 SPRING GARDEN ST
Project: Renovate house and carriage house, remove link, construct link
Review Requested: Final Approval
Owner: Drexel University
Applicant: Kevin Aires, BLT Architects
History: 1860; James P. Bruner House
Individual Designation: 4/30/1963
District Designation: None
Staff Contact: Jon Farnham, jon.farnham@phila.gov, 215-686-7660
ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial, owing incompleteness. The Committee authorized Ms. Hawkins to review the revised plans at the Commission meeting based on the Committee's expressed concerns and update the recommendation at that time if warranted.

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to renovate a grand Italianate house and large carriage house at 3509 Spring Garden Street as part of the Dana and David Dornsife Center for Neighborhood Partnerships, through which Drexel University will interact with the surrounding community. It will be funded with a $10 million gift to the University. The complex occupies the entire city block bounded by Spring Garden, 35th, 36th, and Brandywine Streets. The mid twentieth-century school building at the western edge of the block will be incorporated into the Center, but is not designated as historic and is therefore not part of this review.

The grand Italianate house was constructed in the 1850s for textile manufacturer James. P. Bruner. The very large carriage house, which is referred to as a stable and coach house in early deeds, was constructed soon thereafter, probably in the 1860s. A one-story link was constructed between the house and carriage house at some point between 1927 and 1939.

This application proposes to restore the exterior envelopes of the two buildings. The restoration would include masonry repair, window replacement, and the removal of a fire escape and non-historic shed addition on the house. The restoration of the missing cupola on the carriage house is proposed as an option. The one-story link between the house and carriage house would be removed. In December 2010, the Commission approved a proposal to convert the two historic buildings to residential use. At that time, the Commission determined that the removal of the link would not constitute a demolition in the legal sense. The 2010 project was not executed. A small Italianate portico at the rear of the house may also be removed.

A two- and three-story link building with an elevator and stair would be constructed between the house and the carriage house to provide ADA access and egress for the complex. Limited historic fabric would be removed where the link would connect to the house and carriage house. The link would be visible from the public right-of-way, but would not adversely impact views of the primary facades of the buildings.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Dilworth recused, owing of his employment at Drexel University. Mr. Baron presented the application to the Commission. Architects Michael Prifti and Kevin Aires, preservation consultants Kevin McMahon and Robert Powers, and Kimberley Miller of Drexel University represented the application.

Ms. Merriman stated that she was confused by the Committee's recommendation that the application was incomplete. She contended that the application materials were very detailed. She asserted that the proposed revision to the orientation of the windows in the link, as suggested by the staff, was a relatively minor change that should not hold up this application.

Mr. Baron explained that the applicants had submitted revised drawings that clarified the questions raised at the Committee meeting. Ms. Hawkins stated that the design had evolved between the initial submission of the application and the Committee meeting and asserted that the drawings reviewed by the Committee did not entirely represent the evolving design for the project. Ms. Hawkins stated that she understands that there are time constraints associated with this review. Therefore, the Committee had asked her to consider the revised drawings at the Commission meeting and update the Committee recommendation if warranted.

Mr. Aires explained that the revised drawings should provide the necessary clarifications. He stated that the design revisions were undertaken at the request of Randal Baron of the Historical Commission's staff. He stated that they are relatively minor in nature. He explained that the windows and panels in the link had been revised to have a vertical, rather than a horizontal, orientation. He stated that the awnings on the link have been removed to indicate that the front door of the house, not the link, is the main entry to the complex. He stated that they have added detail to the third-floor section of the link in response to requests from the Committee members. He pointed out a new axonometric drawing that better explains that section of the link. He noted the additional detail about the cladding materials for this part of the link, glazing and metal panels. He added that this part of the link is needed for egress and allows for the removal of the fire escape. He also explained that they have refined their color scheme for the house to better match the original colors.

Ms. Hawkins opined that the vertical orientation of the windows is an improvement. She asked about the retention of the horizontal orientation of the panels where they intersect with the historic house. She suggested that glazing might be more appropriate at this location. Mr. Aires explained that they shifted to a solid panel because of the need for a fire rated connection. He added that they also sought to attach below the brackets of the cornice, which the solid panels facilitated. Ms. Hawkins opined that there are better solutions to the connection. Mr. Aires countered that the brick and quoins of the house have a horizontal orientation and this shift in the panels acknowledges that orientation. Ms. Hawkins contended that the design is not fully developed.

Ms. Merriman said that, because of the time sensitivity of the project, she hopes that the Commission will move toward a final approval with any necessary conditions. Mr. Mattioni described the revised proposal as "excellent." He stated that he finds the proposed link differentiated yet compatible as required in the Standards. Mr. Schaaf asked if they could shift from panels to glazing at the connection with the house. Mr. Aires responded that he is still working with the Department of Licenses & Inspections on the question of fire rating at the link. He offered to substitute glass for panels if the fire rating requirements are reduced. Mr. Mattioni advised that the Commission should not place a requirement on the project that conflicts with the fire safety requirements. Mr. Thomas suggested that the details such as the connection could be refined with assistance of the staff.

Ms. Hawkins objected to any approval at this time, stating that the design was not complete and approving it in its incomplete state would not set a good precedent.

> **ACTION:** Mr. Thomas moved to approve the application, provided the rear portico is documented before removal and a copy of the documentation is submitted to the Historical Commission, with the staff to review details including shop drawings and samples of materials. Ms. Leonard seconded the motion, which passed by a vote of 9 to 1. Ms. Hawkins dissented.

ADDRESS: 345 N FRONT ST
Project: Construct four-story, four-unit residential building
Review Requested: Final Approval
Owner: Anthony Soprano
Applicant: Plato Marinakos, Plato Marinakos Jr Architect LLC
History: 1950
Individual Designation: None
District Designation: Old City Historic District, Non-contributing, 12/12/2003
Staff Contact: Rebecca Sell, Rebecca.sell@phila.gov, 215-686-7660
ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standard 9.

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to demolish a non-contributing, one-story garage and construct a four-story, four-unit building with a pilot house and roof decks on a vacant lot in the Old City Historic District. The existing garage is brick with a metal roll-down door and was constructed in the 1950's.

The new building would be clad in brick and have two projecting bays clad in vertical metal siding. The bays would have casement windows and Juliette balconies and would be topped with patios with a metal rails. The windows would be aluminum-clad casements.

In November 2012, the Commission reviewed and commented on an application to construct an identical building on an adjoining vacant lot at 343 N. Front Street. The lot was considered to be undeveloped and the Commission's jurisdiction was Review-and-Comment only.

ACTION: SEE CONSENT AGENDA

ADDRESS: 2120 PINE ST
Project: Construct deck with stair enclosure
Review Requested: Final Approval
Owner: Chris and Natalie Nagele
Applicant: John Weckerly, Boxwood Architects
History: 1865
Individual Designation: None
District Designation: Rittenhouse Fitler Residential Historic District, Contributing, 2/8/1995
Staff Contact: Rebecca Sell, Rebecca.sell@phila.gov, 215-686-7660
ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval, provided a mock up demonstrates that the roof alterations will be inconspicuous from the public right-of-way, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standard 9 and the Roofs Guidelines.

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to construct a roof deck with pilot house and trellis. The guard rail of the deck would be set back six feet and ten inches from the front façade. The pilot house and trellis would be set back ten feet and three inches from the front façade. A mock up should be erected to determine if the rooftop additions will be inconspicuous from the public right-of-way.

The application also includes alterations to a rear elevation. The rear elevation has been previously altered and is land-locked and not visible from any public right-of-way.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Sell presented the application to the Commission. Architect John Weckerly represented the application.

Ms. Sell explained that the mock-up had been erected and is documented with photographs in the meeting materials packet as well as in the Powerpoint presentation. She described the photographs and vantage points from the roof, Van Pelt Street, and Pine Street. She stated that the mock-up was minimally visible through a small space between the rears of buildings that front on Pine Street and an adjacent property the fronts on Van Pelt Street.

Ms. Hawkins asked if the mock-up was visible from Pine Street. Ms. Sell stated that the first photograph of the façade was taken while the mock-up was in place and it was not visible. Mr. Weckerly explained that the trellis begins behind the first chimney.

> **ACTION:** Ms. Hawkins moved to approve the application, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standard 9 and the Roofs Guidelines. Ms. Jones seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

ADDRESS: 2419 SPRUCE ST
Project: Construct deck with stair enclosure
Review Requested: Final Approval
Owner: Alison and Josh Goldblum
Applicant: Gabrielle Canno, CANNOdesign
History: 1875
Individual Designation: None
District Designation: Rittenhouse Fitler Residential Historic District, Contributing, 2/8/1995
Staff Contact: Randal Baron, randal.baron@phila.gov, 215-686-7660
ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval, provided the stair house is reduced in size and its roof is sloped to reduce visibility and the railing is transparent if visible from the street, with the staff to review a mock up and details, pursuant to Standard 9 and the Roofs Guidelines.

OVERVIEW: This application proposes installing a roof deck and stair enclosure on the main block of the rowhouse at 2419 Spruce Street. A sight-line study included in the application indicates that the deck would not be visible from the street at a point directly in front of the house. The deck may, however, be visible from the east and west on Spruce Street. The staff suggests substituting the flat roof of the stair enclosure with a sloped roof to reduce its visibility. The staff also suggests that it review a mock up of the deck and stair enclosure to ensure that they would be inconspicuous from the public right-of-way. If the mock up indicates that the railing would be visible from the public right of way, it should be implemented as a simple metal vertical picket to increase transparency and reduce visibility.

> **ACTION: SEE CONSENT AGENDA**

ADJOURNMENT
ACTION: Ms. Merriman informed the audience that the Commission would be going into executive session to discuss litigation matters. At 9:48 a.m., Ms. Hawkins moved to go into executive session before adjourning. Mr. Schaaf seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

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

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.

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.

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