ADDRESS: 323 ARCH ST
Proposal: Install mural
Review Requested: Final Approval
Owner: Holly Anne James
Applicant: Kate Jacobi, Mural Arts Program
History: 1850; West elevation stuccoed 1968
Individual Designation: 11/30/1965
District Designation: Old City Historic District, Contributing, 12/12/2003
Staff Contact: Meredith Keller, meredith.keller@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

BACKGROUND:
Originally part of a row of four-story buildings, 323 Arch Street is now a free-standing building adjacent to the fountain court of a fire station constructed in 1967. The west party wall of 323 Arch Street features a stucco ghost of a building that predated the four-story structure demolished in the 1960s. Historic photographs indicate that the building’s west party wall once contained a mural painted onto plywood and attached in the location of the current proposed mural.

SCOPE OF WORK:
- Install painted cloth mural on stuccoed portion of party wall using acrylic gel adhesive.
- Seal mural with clear coating and UV protectant coating.

STANDARDS FOR REVIEW:
The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and Guidelines include:
- Standard 9: New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment. The proposed mural would be applied only to the existing stuccoed portion of the party wall and would be compatible with the historic structure and its context.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval, pursuant to Standard 9.
MAPS & IMAGES:

Figure 1: 2018 Parcel Map
Figure 2: 321 to 335 Arch Street (mislabeled in photograph), 1959. Only 321 and 323 Arch Street, at right, remain. Philadelphia Historical Commission files.

Figure 3: 101-15 N. 4th Street with fountain court (left) and 323 Arch Street with stucco ghost. Source: Cyclomedia, 2018.
Figure 4: Fire station at 101-15 N. 4th Street with a mural partially visible on the party wall of 323 Arch Street, 1977. Philadelphia Historical Commission files.

Figure 5: 323 Arch Street in 1977, with the mural backing visible on the western elevation.
APPLICATION FOR BUILDING PERMIT

ADDRESS OF PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION:
323 Arch St

APPLICANT:
City of Philadelphia Mural Arts Program - Kate Jacobi

COMPANY NAME:
Mural Arts

PHONE #: (215) 685-0750  FAX #: (215) 685-0757

PROPERTY OWNER'S NAME:
Holly Anne James

PHONE #  FAX #

ARCHITECT/ENGINEER IN RESPONSIBLE CHARGE

ARCHITECT/ENGINEERING FIRM:

PHONE #  FAX #

CONTRACTOR:

CONTRACTING COMPANY:

PHONE #  FAX #

LICENSE #  E-MAIL:

PROPERTY OWNER'S ADDRESS:

LICENSE #  E-MAIL:

ARCHITECT/ENGINEERING FIRM ADDRESS:

CONTRACTING COMPANY ADDRESS:

USE OF BUILDING/SPACE
Commercial/residential

ESTIMATED COST OF WORK
$ 55,000.00

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF WORK:
We would like to install a mural on cloth material to be glued with acrylic gel to the stucco portion only of the west-facing wall of 323 Arch St adjacent to Ladder 2 firehouse and a small park.

The mural is focused on the history of the Philadelphia Fire Department. An artist is working on a design that, upon approval, will be later painted through the summer and fall, then later installed on the wall in late fall 2019. The mural wall would be primed, cloth installed, then sealed with a UV protectant coating added.

TOTAL AREA UNDERGOING CONSTRUCTION: 1,350.00 square feet

COMPLETE THESE ITEMS IF APPLICABLE TO THIS APPLICATION:

# OF NEW SPRINKLER HEADS (suppression system permits only):

LOCATION OF SPRINKLERS:

# OF NEW REGISTERS/DIFFUSERS (hvac/ductwork permits only):

LOCATION OF STANDPIPES:

IS THIS APPLICATION IN RESPONSE TO A VIOLATION? ☐ NO ☐ YES VIOLATION #:

All provisions of the building code and other City ordinances will be complied with, whether specified herein or not. Plans approved by the Department form a part of this application. I hereby certify that the statements contained herein are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. I further certify that I am authorized by the owner to make the foregoing application, and that, before I accept my permit for which this application is made, the owner shall be made aware of all conditions of the permit. I understand that if I knowingly make any false statement herein I am subject to such penalties as may be prescribed by law or ordinance.

APPLICANT’S SIGNATURE: [Signature]

DATE: 5/13/19

(81-3 Rev 5/04)
PROJECT NARRATIVE & TIMELINE

Project Manager: Kate Jacobi  
Artist: Eric Okdeh  
Mural Title: *History of the Philadelphia Fire Department*

The History of the PFD mural, by Philadelphia-based artist Eric Okdeh, is a project collaboration between the Philadelphia Fire Department and the Mural Arts Program. The west-facing wall (of 323 Arch St) situated within Girard Fountain Memorial Park is a stucco wall that is in need of a visual improvement to brighten up a park in Old City that is frequented by neighbors and visitors when passing through on tours, lunch breaks, etc. The wall, a rough stucco material, has grown dirty over the years and a mural would improve its appeal and general aesthetic to the park. A mural specifically tied to themes acknowledging its proximity being next door to an active firehouse (Ladder 2) located at 4th & Arch Streets and one block from where Benjamin Franklin is buried also ties into the statue at the end of the park which is a bust of Benjamin Franklin. The mural location is approximately 2 blocks from the Fireman’s Hall Museum which houses exhibits, artifacts and historic apparatus from Philadelphia’s past as well as some pieces used regionally before the formal establishment of the PFD as an official city department.

The new mural (still being designed) will feature historical images of apparatus, help tell the story of the Philadelphia Fire Department’s history dating back to the 1730s when Benjamin Franklin formed the Union Fire Company (the first organized volunteer company in the country), and will showcase milestones and depictions of our “everyday heroes” that provide public safety and first-response services to our city. The First Responders within this city have been featured in other murals throughout the city but those have typically been limited to murals of our Fallen Heroes when one (or more) have died in the line of duty while protecting the citizens of Philadelphia. This mural aims to celebrate and honor all of our First Responders “from Ben Franklin through the 21st Century” in a mural that will be painted by hundreds around the city. It is a mural to highlight the tremendous dedication and selfless service from the Philadelphia Fire Departments and share their history with the public in new and exciting ways.

**Installation:** The wall would be cleaned (hand-washed and lightly powerwashed), primed with an exterior primer, mural cloth installed, then sealed with a clear coat finish and finally a UV-protective varnish treatment would be added as the final coat which allows it to stand up to any sunlight wear-and-tear over the years.

**Timeline:** The project will take several months to produce, and will aim to be installed in the fall of 2019. Significant research time has been invested over the past year by the
artist, reading about the history, interviewing individuals and groups who are local experts in specific subject matter, and by researching and sifting through thousands of archived photos. The mural design concept will be ready in early-to-mid June as final stages of research and design layout are currently underway.

**Budget:** The project budget is $55,000 and is funded by multiple sponsors, with the largest contributions from Wawa, Inc., the City of Philadelphia, and other PFD-related organizations and private donors.

**Review timeline:** We are asking to be reviewed with a design concept for the June 14, 2019 date so that we are meeting early on with the Historical Commission. We intend to re-visit in the July 2019 meeting, if deemed necessary, with a more finalized design, as there will still be elements added to the design as the process continues. We were required by one of the funders (Wawa, Inc.) to share a “design concept” during a public unveiling event as it pertains to Wawa Welcome America this July. At this time, on July 3rd as part of Welcome America’s “Go 4th and Learn Series” we will announce the project and overall partnership with the public, share a presentable design concept and engage hundreds of kids in fire safety and prevention activities as part of the programming with Welcome America’s aim to educate children and the public through hands-on engagement.
City of Philadelphia
MuralArtsProgram

HISTORY OF THE PFD MURAL

Mural Artist: Eric Okdeh
Project Manager: Kate Jacobi

Wall Location: 323 Arch Street
West-facing wall adjacent to Ladder 2 Firehouse

Philadelphia Historical Commission
For Review: June 14, 2019
City of Philadelphia
Mural Arts Program

History of the Philadelphia Fire Department Mural Project

Background of Partnership & Artist Statement for Proposed Mural

Project Manager: Kate Jacobi

Artist: Eric Okdeh

PFD History: The Philadelphia Fire Department is one of the nation’s oldest fire departments and has been serving Philadelphia for over 280 years, first as an organized volunteer firefighting service created by Benjamin Franklin as the Union Fire Company (in 1736) then becoming a professional fire department in 1870. Since then, the PFD has become a national leader in the firefighting service and is the 5th largest fire and emergency services department in the country.

Mural Arts – PFD Partnership: Since 2012, Mural Arts has been working with the Philadelphia Fire Department and the PFD Family Association on creating tribute murals to honor firefighters who were more-recently lost in the line of duty. In 2013, we created a mural honoring Lt. Robert Neary and Firefighter Daniel Sweeney who perished in a Kensington-factory fire in April 2012. In 2015, the collaboration continued with a tribute mural honoring Battalion Chief Michael Goodwin who perished in a fire on Fabric Row in April 2013. In 2017, we completed a tribute mural honoring Lt. Joyce Craig (the first PFD female line of duty death) who perished in a house fire in December 2014. Through this meaningful partnership, Mural Arts has been able to tell the stories of these heroes through public art – portraying these individuals as the heroic civil servants they were and always will be remembered as and helping unify first responders, their families and civilians through unique public programming and community participation opportunities. During each of these past projects and during the dedication ceremonies, all first responders and veterans have been honored and acknowledged. By extension, each mural project has offered opportunities for public outreach about fire prevention and public safety.

Proposed Mural: Mural Arts and the PFD plan to continue this unique partnership with a mural honoring the unmatched history of the Philadelphia Fire Department featuring Ben Franklin’s involvement in creating the Union Fire Company, dozens of fire apparatus dating back to colonial times to modern apparatus, including fire stations built over 100 years ago showcasing their intricate architectural details, and highlighting the profound role that firefighters and other first responders play in the evolution of a city’s development and its substantial involvement in public safety. Firefighting tools and equipment, fires marks, helmets, uniforms, fire dogs and horses will all have their place in the visual narrative of PFD history in this one-of-a-kind mural. Another critical element of the mural is showing how the evolution of technology changed the firefighting industry from early innovations in safety equipment, first response technology being introduced, how fire building codes changed public safety, and how the use of computers and technology drastically changed and continue to shape the fire service industry.
Mural Arts would lead this citywide project to tell the story of the PFD’s history and its origins with Ben Franklin. The location of the proposed mural wall is at 4th & Arch Streets where there is a historic fire station (Ladder 2) located next to Girard Fountain Memorial Park where a statue of Ben Franklin is situated. The park underwent significant renovations in 2016 which offered more public access, more visibility from the street, and created more public seating within a community garden setting. The park has become a destination spot in this historic neighborhood and a mural about PFD history would undoubtedly increase the significance and attraction of the site for Philadelphians as well as visitors from all over. This mural location is along popular tour routes in Old City that connect several key sites where Ben Franklin founded many Philadelphia firsts. He is buried one block west of the proposed mural wall at Christ Church Burial Ground at 5th & Arch Streets. Approximately 2 blocks away on 2nd Street, the Fireman’s Hall Museum is located in a former firehouse and houses exhibits, artifacts and apparatus over the past centuries of Philadelphia firefighting.

**Public Programming & Fire Prevention Initiatives:** The mural project would also entail thorough public programming and community outreach initiatives to not only educate the public about the history of the city’s fire department but to create awareness around public safety concerns as they pertain to fires, extensive fire prevention outreach and education work as well as community participation for the artwork – public paint days for any age range and art activities tied to fire prevention education specifically for youth. The project would culminate in a large public dedication ceremony (date TBD).

**Project Partners:** The core project partners are the Philadelphia Fire Department, Old City District, PFD Family Association, Philadelphia Fire Fighters’ and Paramedics Union IAFF Local 22, the Fireman’s Hall Museum, and the PFD Historical Corporation.

Wawa, Inc. and Welcome America are project and event sponsors specifically focused on public engagement and fire safety programming. The project is part of the 2019 Wawa Welcome America series and will be featured on July 3rd as part of the “Go 4th and Learn Series” aiming to create public awareness around fire safety and prevention outreach.

Additional project partners involved in public programming and outreach initiatives are the Philadelphia Fire Department Foundation, the PFD Fire Prevention Division, the Philadelphia Second Alarmers Association, Red Paw Emergency Relief Team, the local Red Cross chapter, and the Philadelphia Fire Explorers and Junior Fire Program.
City of Philadelphia
MuralArtsProgram

HISTORY OF THE PFD MURAL
Mural Artist: Eric Okdeh
Project Manager: Kate Jacobi

Wall Location: 323 Arch Street
(West-facing wall adjacent to Ladder 2 Firehouse)

Philadelphia Historical Commission
For Review: June 14, 2019
City of Philadelphia
MuralArtsProgram

History of PFD Mural
4th & Arch Streets

Wall location: ‘Before’ image taken from 4th & Arch intersection
City of Philadelphia
MuralArtsProgram
History of PFD Mural
4th & Arch Streets