

**NOMINATION OF HISTORIC BUILDING, STRUCTURE, SITE, OR OBJECT
PHILADELPHIA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

SUBMIT ALL ATTACHED MATERIALS ON PAPER AND IN ELECTRONIC FORM (CD, EMAIL, FLASH DRIVE)
ELECTRONIC FILES MUST BE WORD OR WORD COMPATIBLE

1. ADDRESS OF HISTORIC RESOURCE *(must comply with an Office of Property Assessment address)*

Street address: 307 S Chadwick Street

Postal code: 19103

2. NAME OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

Historic Name: Frank Weise House and Studio

Current/Common Name: _____

3. TYPE OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

Building

Structure

Site

Object

4. PROPERTY INFORMATION

Condition: excellent good fair poor ruins

Occupancy: occupied vacant under construction unknown

Current use: Private residence and architecture studio

5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Please attach a narrative description and site/plot plan of the resource's boundaries.

6. DESCRIPTION

Please attach a narrative description and photographs of the resource's physical appearance, site, setting, and surroundings.

7. SIGNIFICANCE

Please attach a narrative Statement of Significance citing the Criteria for Designation the resource satisfies.

Period of Significance (from year to year): from 1966 to 2003

Date(s) of construction and/or alteration: 1966-1974 (exterior); 1966-2003 (interior); 2005-2006 (mansard recladding)

Architect, engineer, and/or designer: Architect Frank Weise (1918-2003)

Builder, contractor, and/or artisan: Howard S. Levin (contractor)

Original owner: _____

Other significant persons: _____

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION:

The historic resource satisfies the following criteria for designation (check all that apply):

- (a) Has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth or Nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past; or,
- (b) Is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,
- (c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style; or,
- (d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen; or,
- (e) Is the work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or designer, or engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,
- (f) Contains elements of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation; or,
- (g) Is part of or related to a square, park or other distinctive area which should be preserved according to an historic, cultural or architectural motif; or,
- (h) Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or City; or,
- (i) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in pre-history or history; or
- (j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.

8. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Please attach a bibliography.

9. NOMINATOR

Organization Philadelphia Historical Commission Date July 31, 2023

Name with Title Philadelphia Historical Commission staff Email allyson.mehley@phila.gov

Street Address 1515 Arch St, 13th Floor Telephone _____

City, State, and Postal Code Philadelphia, PA 191202

Nominator is is not the property owner.

PHC USE ONLY

Date of Receipt: August 2, 2023

Correct-Complete Incorrect-Incomplete Date: August 2, 2023

Date of Notice Issuance: August 3, 2023

Property Owner at Time of Notice:

Name: GH1-LLC

Address: 307 S Chadwick Street

City: Philadelphia State: PA Postal Code: 19103

Date(s) Reviewed by the Committee on Historic Designation: _____

Date(s) Reviewed by the Historical Commission: _____

Date of Final Action: _____

Designated Rejected

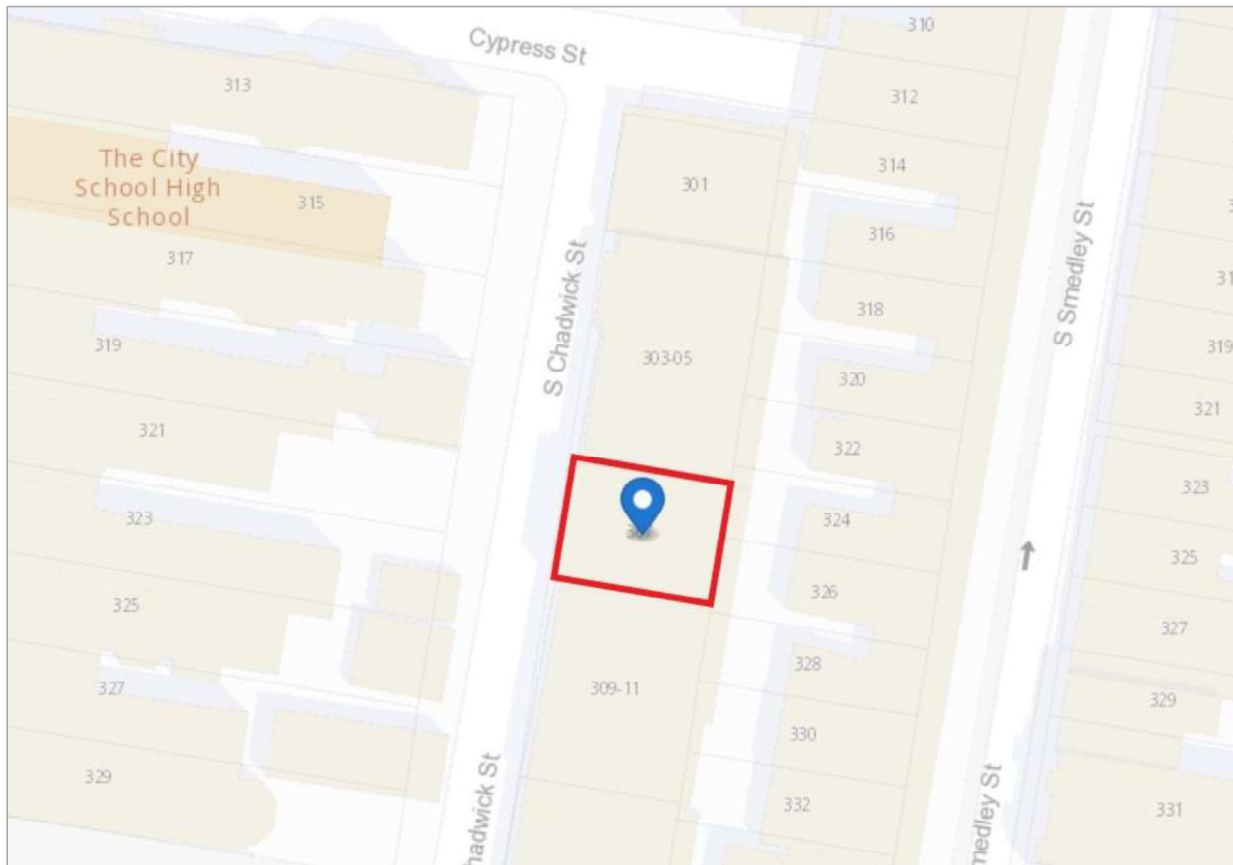
5. Boundary Description

All that certain lot or piece of ground with buildings and improvements thereon erected situate on the east side of Chadwick Street at the distance of eighty feet Southward from the South side of Cypress Street. Containing in front or breadth on the said Chadwick Street twenty-six feet eight inches and extending of that width in length or depth eastward between parallel lines at right angles to the said Chadwick Street thirty-eight feet.

No. 307 S Chadwick Street.

Being the same premises which Nan B. Meyers and Barton E. Meyers, her husband by deed dated August 14, 1958, recorded at Philadelphia in Deed Book CAB 856, page 289 granted and conveyed unto Frank Weise in fee.

Source: City of Philadelphia Records Department, PhilaDox, Document No. 51050355. Accessed 4/11/2023.



6. Description

The Frank Weise House and Studio is a three-story building¹ clad in brick, stucco, and metal. The building covers the entirety of its twenty-six-foot-wide by thirty-eight-foot-deep parcel at 307 S. Chadwick Street. Located on a residential block in the Rittenhouse Square neighborhood of Philadelphia, the building's front façade (west elevation) faces S. Chadwick Street. Its side walls (north and south elevations) share party walls with adjacent properties along S. Chadwick Street, and the building's back wall (east elevation) borders rear yards along S. Smedley Street. The building retains a high degree of integrity, and the exterior of the property appears to be well maintained. The property was designated as a non-contributing resource in the Rittenhouse-Fitler Historic District (1995) owing to its architectural style and construction period which did not meet the historic district's designation criteria.

The front façade is divided into three distinct sections: open ground floor, stacked arches at the second floor, and vertical mansard at the top level. Starting at the first floor, the ground level is open in front for a carport and main entry. A wall is recessed under the second level and contains two entrance doors, steps, picture window, and two rounded brick columns. The first-floor transitions to the second level with a section of solid red brick laid in Flemish Garden Wall bond and four tiers of rounded arches rising upward. Single light glass is recessed within each arch and grounded with a dark masonry sill. A metal cornice is cantilevered above the brick arches. The metal cornice transitions the facade to the mansard.



Figure 1: View looking north along S. Chadwick Street. The brick section of the façade stops below the cornice and is at the height of neighboring brick buildings. The majority of buildings on the west side of S. Chadwick Street are former stable buildings constructed in the late nineteenth century. *Figures 1-10 were photographed on April 26, 2023, by Historical Commission staff.*

¹ Approved building plans, 1966, Nov 11 and 1967, Oct 24, Container 254.III.21-31, Frank Weise Collection, Architectural Archives of the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA. The approved floorplans show three stories with two interior mezzanines. For this reason, the nomination describes the building as three stories.

The mansard encloses the building's third floor and is clad with standing seam metal. The vertical seams accentuate its height and massing. The front plane of the mansard contains two rows of oversized window openings with circular window openings on the first row and three large pentagonal window openings on the second row. Similar to the rounded arches, single light glass is recessed within the window openings. A metal pulley lift bar projects out of the mansard façade. The mansard's roof is flat with a rear mezzanine and deck area. A chimney stands near the northwest corner. The roof mezzanine is the highest point of the building. The mansard roof and cornice in 2023 is a dark gray standing seam metal that was installed 2005-2006. The standing seam roof originally installed by architect Frank Weise was red.²

The first and second floors of the north façade share a party wall with 309 S. Chadwick Street. The upper floors of the north elevation are clad with stucco and standing seam metal. The most prominent feature on the north wall is a projecting Juliet balcony that extends two feet over the neighboring roof. Two rectangular windows of varying sizes are also located on the north façade. The south façade has a projecting Juliet balcony that mirrors the one on the north elevation. Three windows are varying shapes and sizes are present on the south façade. The most prominent window is a large port hole type window that is visible from S. Chadwick Street. The rear wall of the building is clad in brick, stucco, and metal with a small number of window openings. The rear façade is not visible from the public right-of-way.



Figure 2: View looking south down S. Chadwick Street. The mansard rises prominently above the neighboring buildings. The chimney, Juliet balcony, and roof mezzanine on the building's north wall are visible from street level.



Figure 3: The mansard's front façade features oversized window openings made up of a one row of circles and an upper row of pentagons. A port hole type window on the south façade was a later alteration by the architect.

² ConnectEXPLORER, accessed April 26, 2023, <https://explorer.eagleview.com>. Images for year 2004-2006 show roof work being completed to building. The red standing seam metal was coated or replaced with gray material.



Figure 4: A full view of the front façade. Weise's skill with Modernist residential design is seen on the first floor. He sets the wall and entrance back to create a shadowed area at the building's base. This encourages a visual illusion of the upper levels floating above.



Figure 5: View looking north up S. Chadwick Street toward the intersection with Cypress Street. The east side of the street was developed in the nineteenth century primarily with two-story stables. The original stable at 307 S. Chadwick Street was never fully demolished. Party walls and floors (and joists) appear to have been incorporated into the altered building.

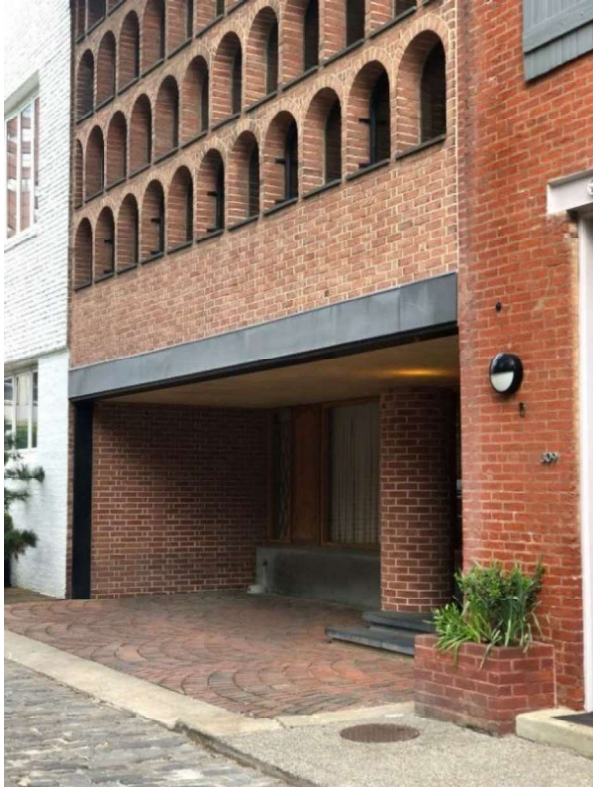


Figure 6: View of the carport. Columns delineate the parking space from the entrance area.



Figure 7: The two entrances are accessed by blue stone steps. The entry doors are wood with circular windows. Separate entryways for the studio and living areas allowed for privacy between the spaces.



Figure 8: The recessed open space on the first floor was designed as a carport and main entrance area. The inset wall contains a picture window and two entry doors. It is not clear from research if the semi-circle paving pattern was originally installed by the architect or a later alteration.



Figure 9: The front of the mansard features oversized circular and pentagonal window openings. A pulley system is installed and projects outward. While the pulley may have been a practical tool for moving large items to the upper levels, it is also a nod to the past.



Figure 10: Brick laid in Flemish Garden Wall bond is visible above the first floor. Four rows of tiered rounded arches rise up toward the cornice. A patterned, cantilevered cornice tops the brick arches. Patterned lines accentuate the appearance of the cornice pushing (and slightly curving) away from the façade.



Figure 11: Aerial view south elevation. The Juliet balcony extends over the adjacent property. *Images 11-14 from ConnectEXPLORER. Accessed April 26, 2023. <https://explorer.eagleview.com>.*

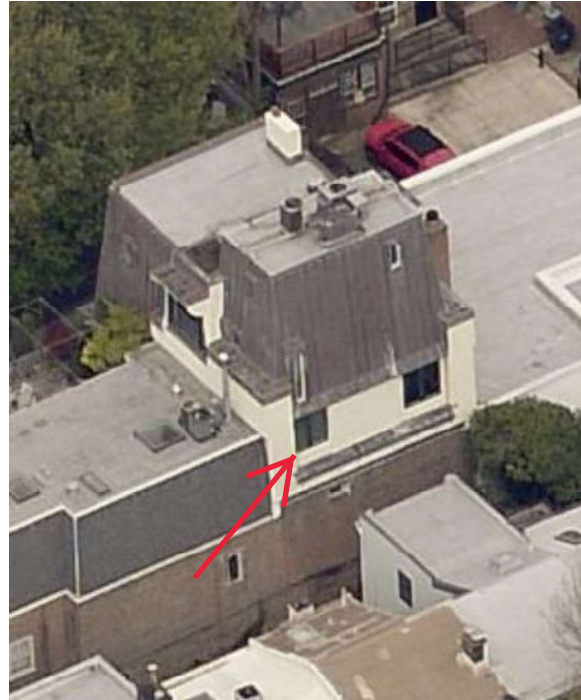


Figure 12: View showing the rear (east) elevation. The rear wall of the building is not visible from the public right-of-way.



Figure 13: The north elevation has a projecting balcony matching the one on the south elevation of mansard.



Figure 14: A view showing the top of the front facade and roof mezzanine. The top of the mansard has a flat roof.

7. Significance

The Frank Weise House and Studio at 307 S. Chadwick Street was designed by the architect in 1960 and constructed starting in 1966. The final design for the building marked the architect's shift away from a purer form of Modernism in the mid-twentieth century, toward an aesthetic that thoughtfully considered and integrated historic forms and elements. Weise's 1960 design to convert the former stable into a house and studio, represents an early expression of Postmodernism in Philadelphia. The architect's schematic drawings of the building from 1957 through 1960 document a period of transition from the tenets of late Modernism toward an exploration of concepts that were more inclusive of the past. Frank Weise, an often-underappreciated Philadelphia architect of the Post-World War II period, owned the property from 1958 to 2003. Weise continued to work on the building throughout his 45 years of ownership. 307 S. Chadwick Street represents his most significant work and one that allowed him to evolve as a designer. It therefore merits individual listing on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, meeting the following criteria for historic designation as set forth in the Philadelphia Historic Preservation Ordinance 14-1004(1):

- (c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style.
- (d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen.
- (e) Is the work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or designer, or engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth or Nation.



Figure 15: Frank Weise at 307 S. Chadwick Street. He used the second floor as his studio. The former stable's party wall and rafters are visible in this photograph taken circa late 1960s.
Undated photograph, Frank Weise Collection, Architectural Archives of the University of Pennsylvania.

History of property and building

Nineteenth century development of 300 block of Chadwick Street

In the 1850s, the area where 307 S. Chadwick Street will eventually stand is open land used as a lumber yard.³ By 1875, this land is actively being developed and a numerous parcels have been plotted and created. A street named Cooke Street now runs north to south on this land and is parallel to S. 17th Street. A full block of stately brick row homes now stands to the west of Cooke Street and construction of stables is well under way on the east side of the street. To meet the needs of a growing community and their families, a public-school building has also been constructed at the northwest corner of Cooke and Pine Streets. The future 307 S. Chadwick Street remains undeveloped in 1875.⁴ In 1892, this vacant parcel is sold to F. Swayne for \$15,000⁵ and within a short period a two-story stable is constructed on the parcel.⁶ In 1897, the City of Philadelphia changes the name of Cooke Street to Chadwick Street.⁷ At the turn of the twentieth century, most of the buildings on the east side of the 300 block of Cooke Street are two-story stables.



Figure 16: 1858-1860 Philadelphia Atlas, Hexamer & Locher.

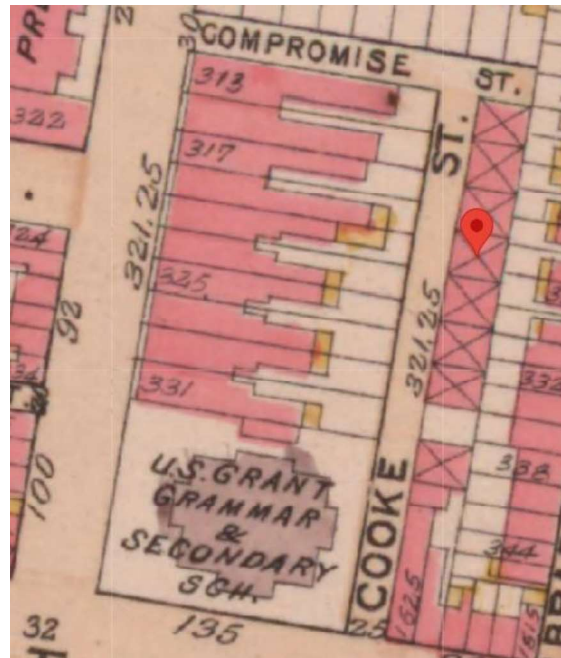


Figure 17: 1895 Philadelphia Atlas, G.W. Bromley.

³ "1858-1860 Philadelphia Atlas, Hexamer & Locher," accessed July 29, 2023, Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network, <https://www.philageohistory.org/geohistory>.

⁴ "1875 Philadelphia Atlas, G.M. Hopkins," accessed April 13, 2023, Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network, <https://www.philageohistory.org/geohistory>.

⁵ "Description of sale on Oct 8, 1892," accessed May 10, 2023, Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders Guide, <http://philageohistory.org/BuildersGuide>.

⁶ "1895 Philadelphia Atlas, G.W. Bromley," accessed April 13, 2023, Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network, <https://www.philageohistory.org/geohistory>.

⁷ "Search on name change for 307 S Chadwick St," accessed 20 July 2023, Philadelphia Historic Streets Index, <https://www.phillyhistory.org/HistoricStreets/default.aspx>.

1953-Early 1960s

When architect Frank Weise first encountered 307 S. Chadwick Street in the early 1950s it has ceased use as a stable and has been converted to a two-story garage building⁸. He leased the building in 1953⁹ and purchased it five years later in 1958 from owners Nan and Barton Meyers for \$16,400.¹⁰



Figure 18: No photographs of the stable at 307 S. Chadwick Street have been located. 317, 319, and 321 S. Chadwick Street are shown in undated photo, circa 1960s.



Figure 19: 301 S. Chadwick Street in undated photograph. Circa 1960s.

⁸ "Permits Issued Yesterday," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, December 20, 1911, Newspapers.com.

⁹ Library of Congress, accessed multiple days in July 2023, <https://www.loc.gov/>. Searched the Philadelphia White Pages directories in the early 1950s. The Philadelphia White Pages shows the architect address at 1004 Pine St in 1952. Philadelphia White Pages lists him at the Chadwick Street address in 1954. "Design Contest Won by Weise," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, August 11, 1953, Newspapers.com. This brief newspaper article lists 307 S. Chadwick Street as architect's address.

¹⁰ City of Philadelphia Records Department, PhilaDox, Document No. 51050355. Accessed April 11, 2023.

Weise began imagining the potential for the building in late 1953 or early 1954 and filed a zoning permit to expand the building footprint and increase the height and add an additional floor. The initial zoning permit was refused. Thus begins a five-year period of numerous applications to the Philadelphia Department of Licenses and Inspections that culminated in 1959 with a zoning approval to raise the height of the building to 44 feet. Early drawings for a future home and studio reflect the architect's developing stylistic ideas for the project. Archived schematic drawings and sketches produced during 1957-1960 show a dramatic evolution of Weise's plans for the building.

1957

Prior to purchasing the building, Weise filed zoning permits seeking to increase the square footage of the building. At this point, he does not own the building so it is unclear if he is pursuing the permits for Nan and Barton Meyers or if he has an agreement with them to purchase the property. A side elevation dated 23 April 1957 shows the existing garage building with a third-story addition that would provide additional studio space. The design includes a combination of modern details such as a projecting sunshade, narrow glass inserts, and metal screening counterbalanced by traditional slate or wood shingles on the side walls.

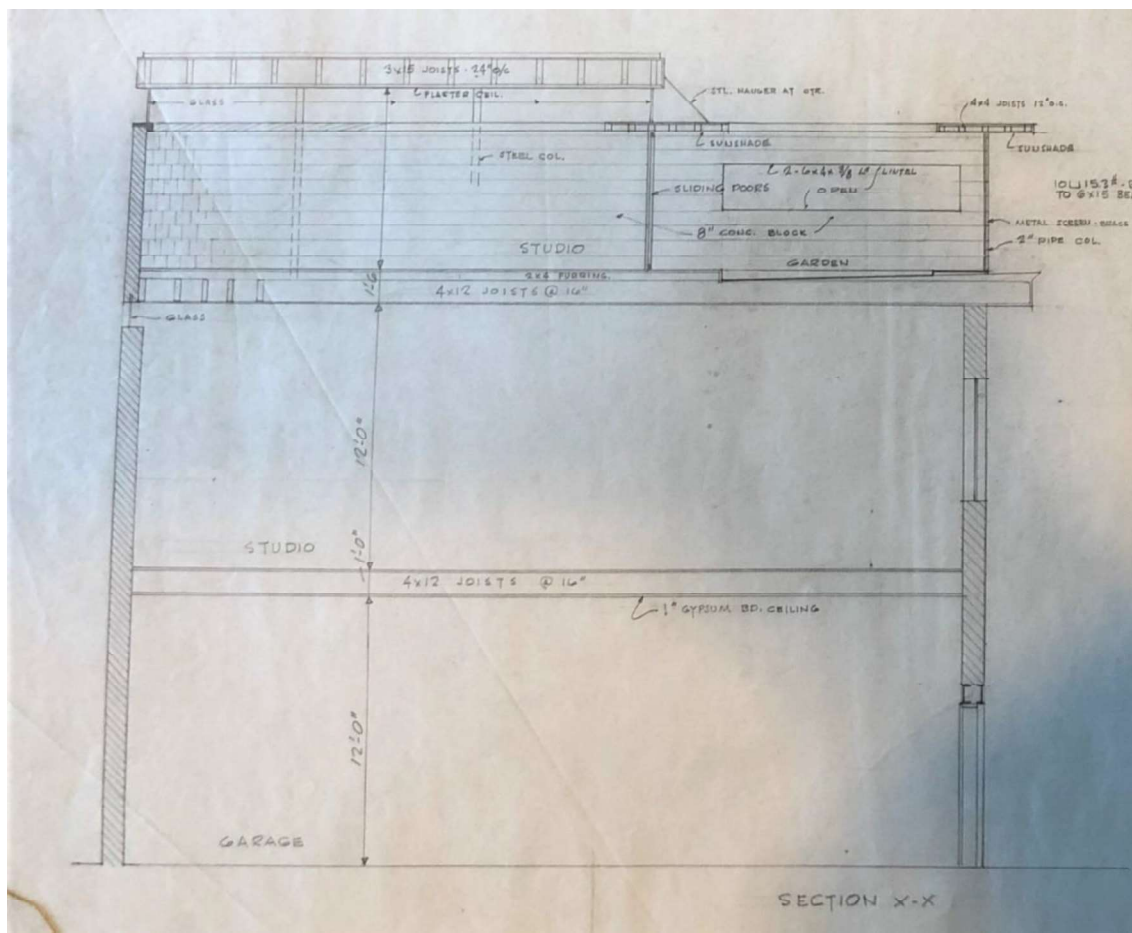


Figure 20: 1957 elevation drawing of proposed alteration.

Frank Weise Collection, Architectural Archives of the University of Pennsylvania.

1958

Weise purchased the building from the Bartons in August 1958. Since the architect will soon be the owner rather than a tenant, his design approach radically changes from minor intervention to full scale transformation of front facing elevation. The design embodied aesthetics of the post-war period and Weise's professional experience in the 1950s. The drawing, dated 16 July 1958 includes an open first floor with carport and building entrance. A glass and steel window wall covers the front of the second floor and mezzanine. A third floor rises above the neighboring properties and is faced with a screen wall.

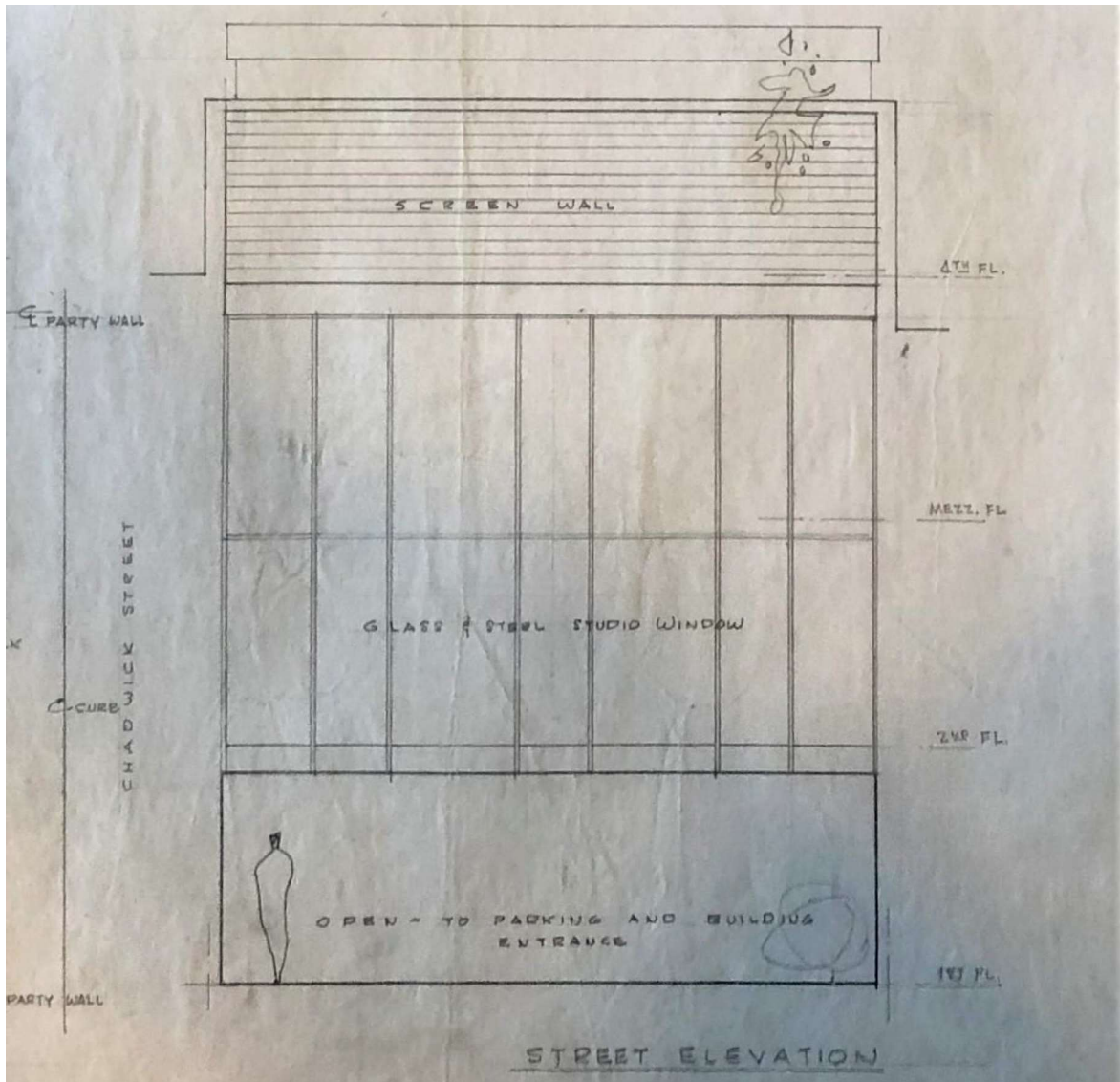


Figure 21: Front façade elevation drawing dated 16 July 1958.

Frank Weise Collection, Architectural Archives of the University of Pennsylvania.

1959

The architect continued to explore ideas for the front façade. Drawings dated May 1959 (and undated similar drawings likely completed around the same time) demonstrate another visual shift in Weise's ideas. The first floor open scheme remains the same but the second floor glass and metal wall is now replaced with rounded rectangular metal or glass panels containing geometric or organic forms. Annotations on the drawings describe them as "operational panels." Moving up the façade, the third level returns to simpler forms and lines. At the top of the building the suggestion of a mansard roof appears for the first time in his schematic drawings for the building.

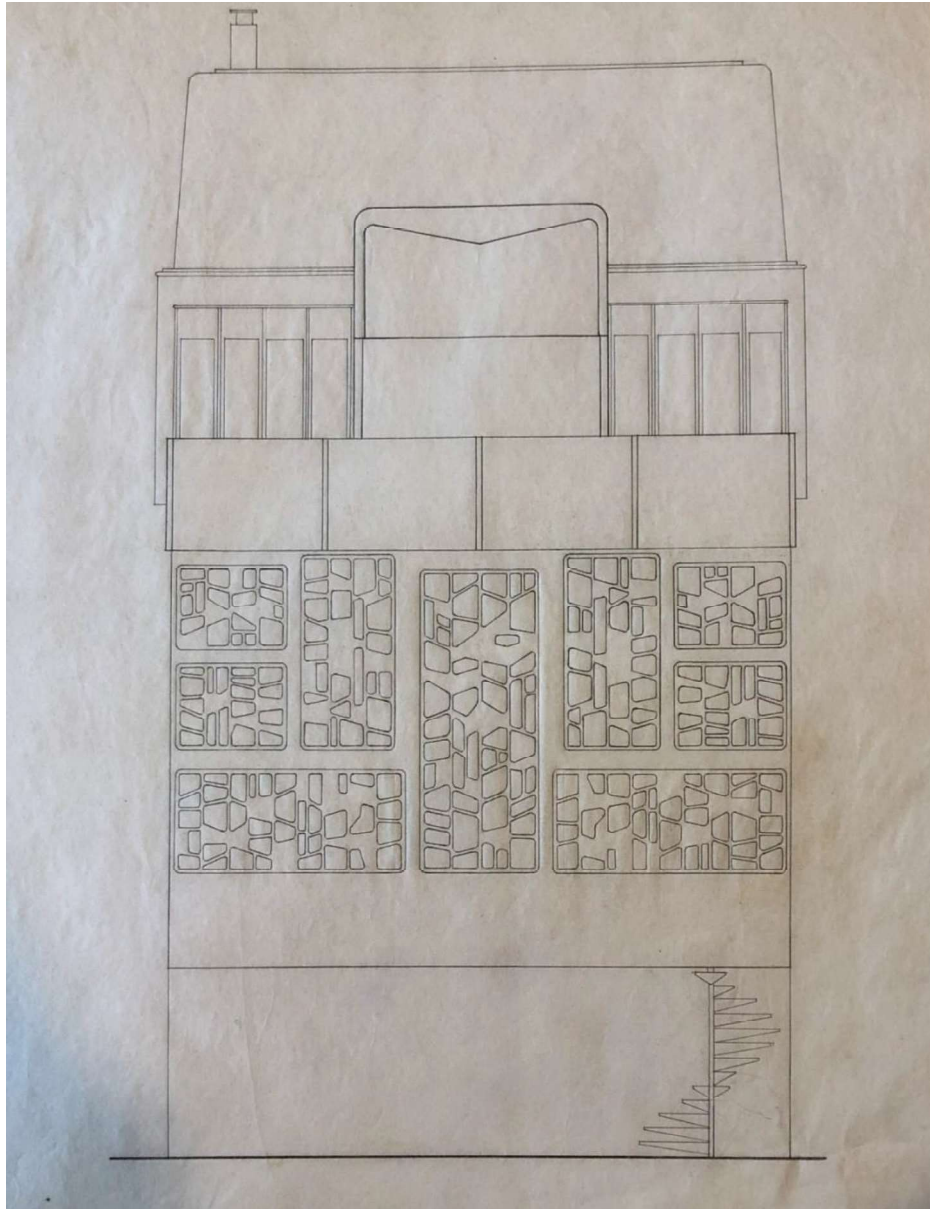


Figure 22: Front façade elevation drawing, May 1959.
Frank Weise Collection, Architectural Archives of the University of Pennsylvania.

1960

In a drawing dated 14 July 1960, Weise developed elevations similar to the final constructed design. The plan for the first level remains unchanged with a carport and main entry. The front wall of the second floor and mezzanine shift away from minimal modern lines and toward classical forms with four tiers of rounded arches. On the third floor of the building, an imposing mansard roof stretches upward. Oversized, rounded arch and trapezoidal window and door openings dramatically contrast with the smaller tiered arches below. In this scheme, Weise created a façade where elements of Modernism, Romanesque, and Second Empire architecture remain distinct but successfully integrate as a whole.

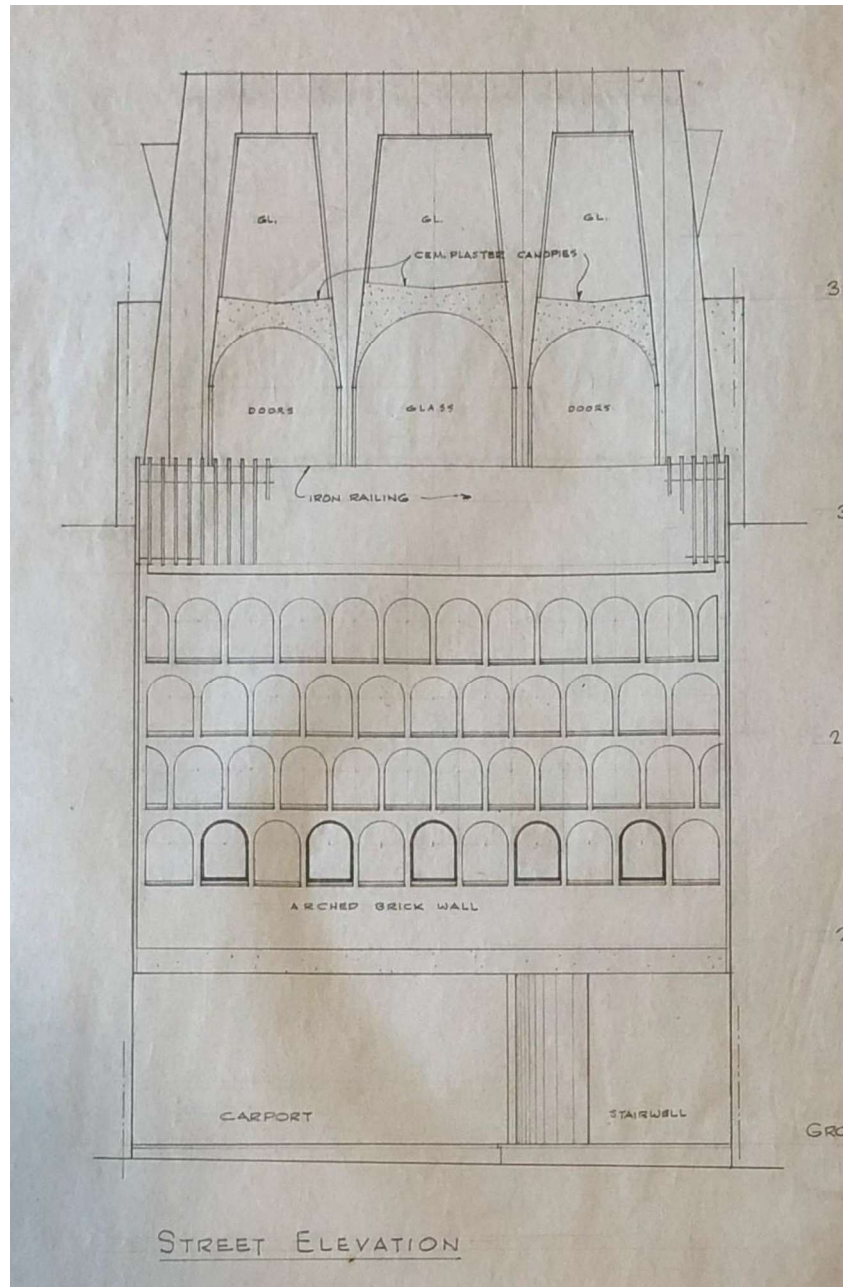
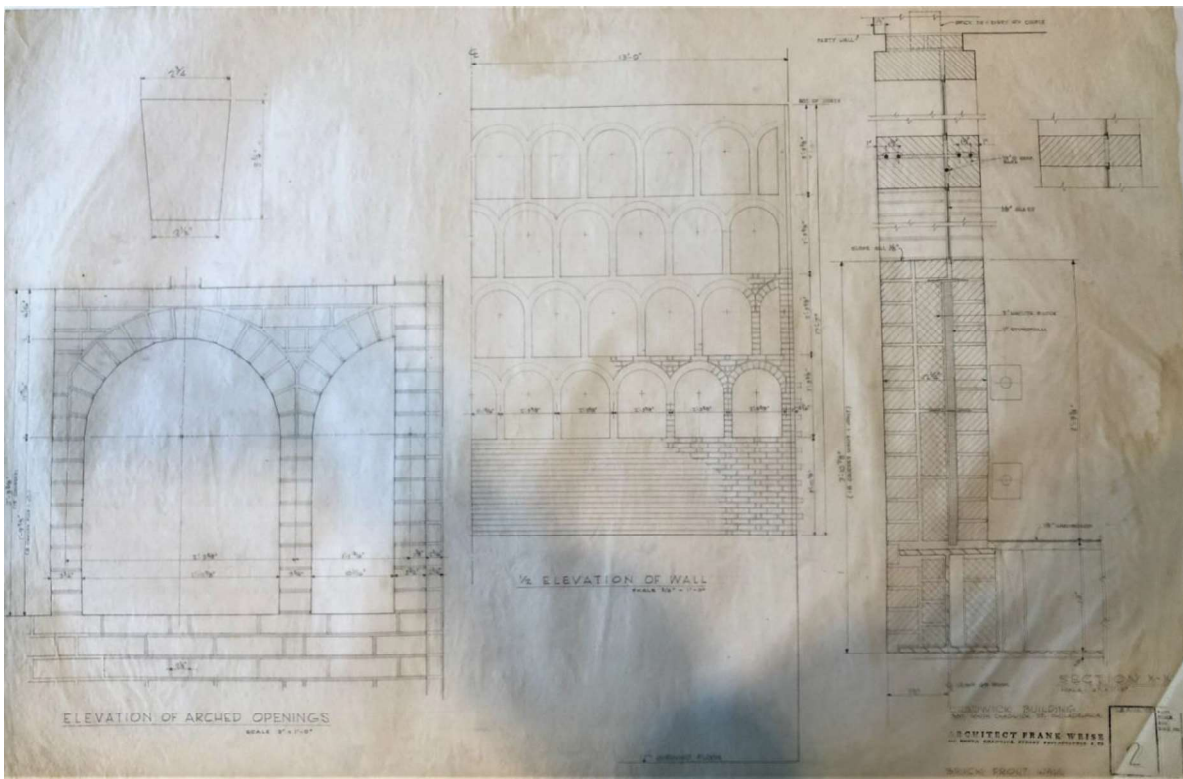
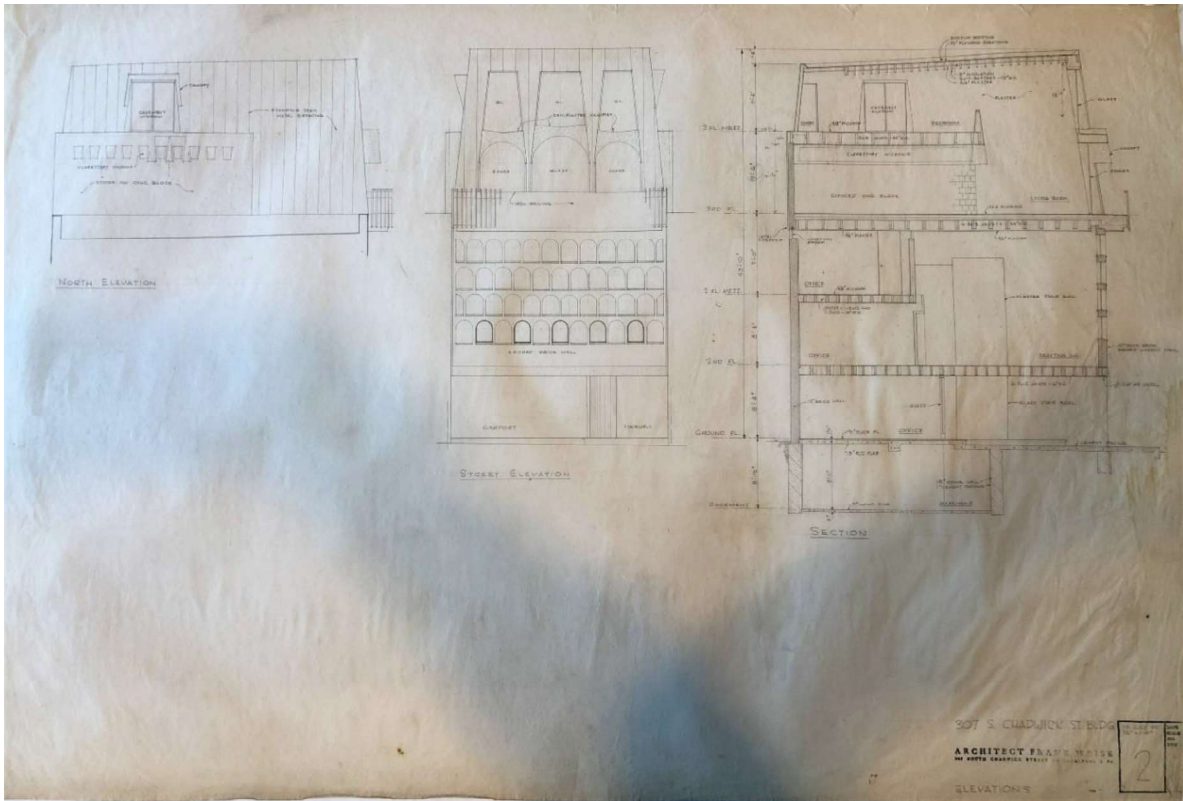


Figure 23: Front façade elevation drawing dated 14 July 1960.
Frank Weise Collection, Architectural Archives of the University of Pennsylvania.



Figures 24 and 25: Figure 24 (top) shows three elevation drawings. In addition to the front façade, an elevation of the mansard and building section were completed on 14 July 1960. As shown in Figure 25 (bottom), an elevation drawing, details of arched openings, and a wall section related to the 1960 scheme were studied in the same time period.
Frank Weise Collection, Architectural Archives of the University of Pennsylvania.

1966-1970: Construction

A building permit for construction was issued by the Philadelphia Department of Licenses and Inspections on November 11, 1966¹¹. The planned use for 307 S. Chadwick Street was listed as a one-family residence and architectural office. The proposed mansard was not drawn in fine detail but suggests that Weise's ideas for this area of the building have changed since July 1960. The construction drawings approved in 1966 show a mansard very different than the one eventually built.

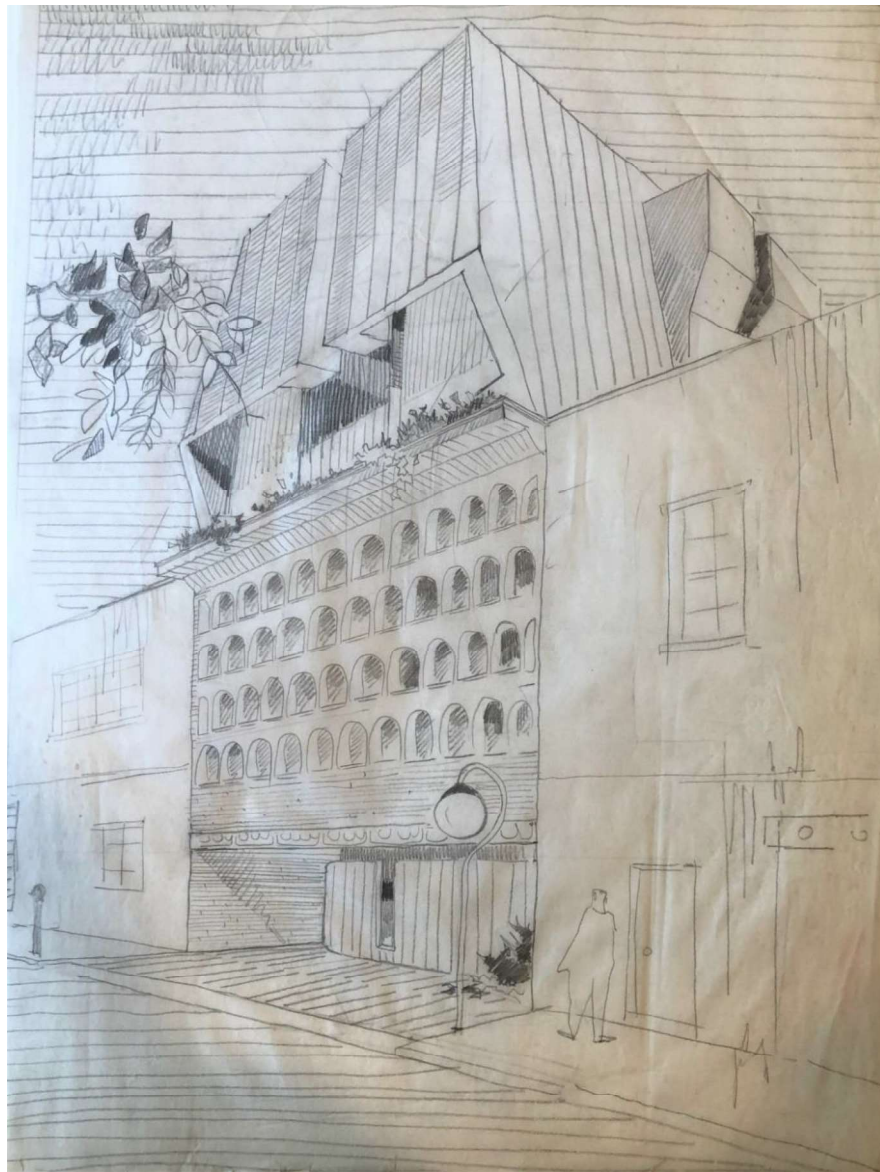


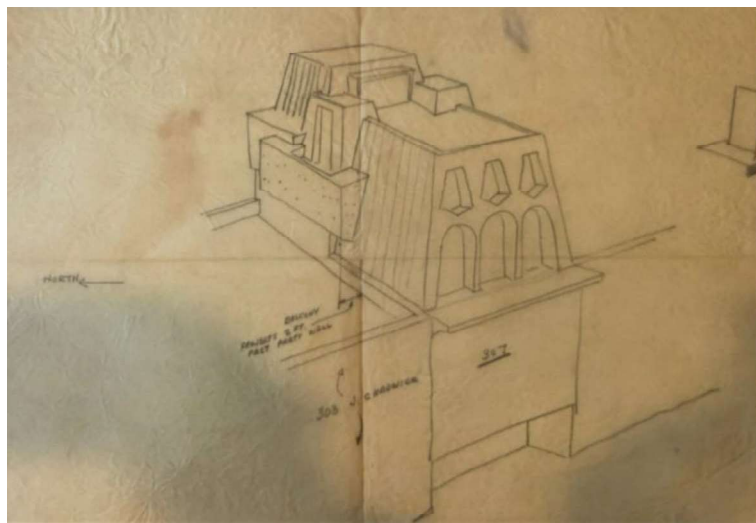
Figure 26: Hand drawing by Frank Weise, undated.
Frank Weise Collection, Architectural Archives of the University of Pennsylvania.

¹¹ Building permit and plans, 1966, Nov 11, Frank Weise Collection.

Construction begins and the exterior of the first two levels are completed.



On October 24, 1967, another building permit is approved for the mansard and overall roof design.¹² The 1967 stamped construction drawings closely match the exterior of the building as it appears today. The architect has revised the drawings for the mansard area of the building and provided greater detail for its construction. Weise proposes a mansard similar to the July 1960 scheme but with the addition of a roof mezzanine.

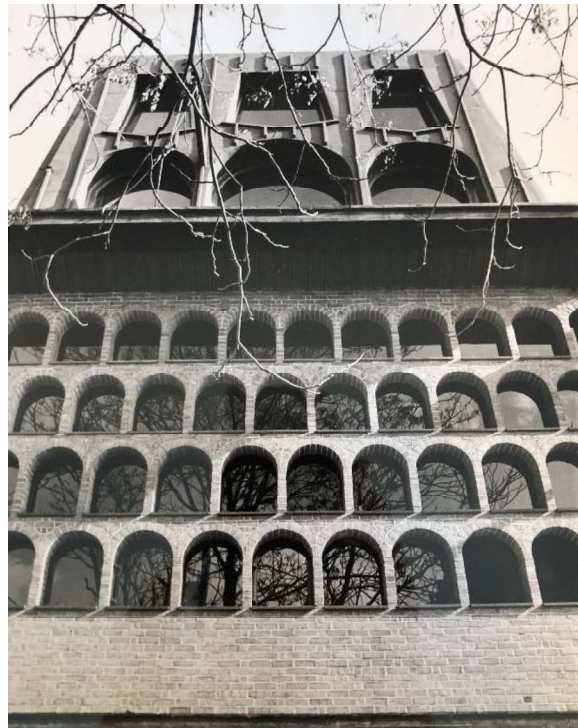


Figures 27, 28, and 29: Clockwise from top. Figures 27 and 28 are photographs taken when the exterior construction of first and second levels complete construction. These undated photographs were likely taken around 1967 or 1968. Figure 29 is an undated hand drawing by Weise showing another version of the mansard and roof mezzanine. This is similar to final construction except the lower mansard windows became circular window openings rather than arched.

Frank Weise Collection, Architectural Archives of the University of Pennsylvania.

¹² Building permit and plans, 1967, Oct 24, Frank Weise Collection.

Construction continues and the mansard, side balconies, and roof mezzanine are constructed. The exterior of the building is mostly complete by 1970.



Figures 30, 31, and 32: Clockwise from top. Photographs show exterior almost completed.
Frank Weise Collection, Architectural Archives of the University of Pennsylvania.

1971-2003

During the 1960s and 1970s, Frank Weise continued to work toward finishing the building. Financial challenges along with his own high standards for quality workmanship slowed down and delayed the work.¹³ The architect continuously renewed his original 1966 and 1967 building permits in an effort to keep the construction going.¹⁴ He refinanced the property multiple times to access funds for construction. A 1971 appraisal report described the unfinished condition of the building's interior and estimates a significant financial commitment will be required to complete it.¹⁵ As the years progressed, Weise completed work but continued to make changes and alterations. After Weise died in 2003, it was reported that some of the interior remained unfinished.¹⁶



Figures 33: Interior photograph showing Frank Weise during construction on the third-floor interior. Undated photograph.

Frank Weise Collection, Architectural Archives of the University of Pennsylvania.



Figures 34: 1971 Photograph. The first level in front is still boarded up and appears unfinished.

Frank Weise Collection, Architectural Archives of the University of Pennsylvania.

¹³ Frank Weise to Marion Granger, February 23, 1970 and Frank Weise to Richard C. Gatzmer, April 8, 1974, Frank Weise Collection.

¹⁴ Richard Gatzmer to Frank Weise, April 26, 1974, Frank Weise Collection.

¹⁵ Allan P. Baumholtz, Property Appraisal for 307 S. Chadwick Street, November 18, 1971, Frank Weise Collection.

¹⁶ Inga Saffron, "Frank Weise, 84, architect who influenced I-95," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, February 3, 2003, Newspapers.com.

Architect Frank Weise

Frank Weise was born in Brooklyn, New York in 1918 and moved to Philadelphia as a young child. He grew up in the city and graduated from Simon Gratz High School.¹⁷ Weise pursued degrees in architecture, receiving a B.A. with honors from the University of Pennsylvania in 1942 and an M.A. from Harvard University in 1945 studying under Walter Gropius. Soon after graduating from Harvard, he continued his design studies at the progressive Black Mountain College.¹⁸



After graduation from the University of Pennsylvania, he worked for a short time for George Howe and Louis I. Kahn on war housing projects. After graduating from Harvard, Weise settled in Chicago and worked under planner Reginald Isaacs and architects Skidmore, Owings & Merrill and Loeb, Schlossman & Bennett. During his time in the office of Loeb, Schlossman & Bennett, Weise worked on the design of Park Forest, IL, a planned residential and commercial community for veterans of World War II and their families.¹⁹ He returned to Philadelphia in the late 1940s and established his own office. Weise initially focused on residential architecture, designing homes in Washington Square West, Rittenhouse Square, Fairmount, Roxborough, and the suburbs. He produced around 30 single family residential commissions between 1949 and 1962.²⁰

In the early 1960s, Weise viewed a model of the planned Interstate 95 highway and was concerned with what he saw. Weise warned City officials that the plan would cut off Philadelphia's waterfront and block future development opportunities. Weise organized a group called the Philadelphia Architects' Committee composed of a group of progressive designers. They produced a detailed alternate design for the expressway that would lower and cover the roadway as it passed through Center City.²¹ They produced a detailed plan and successfully convinced officials to sink the highway to maintain visibility of the river but in the end only two sections of the highway were capped leaving the majority of the roadway visible.²²

In the 1960s and 1970s, completed a renovation of Head House Square in Society Hill and in the 1980s was involved with the consideration of how to repurpose the Eastern State Penitentiary in Fairmount since closing as a prison in 1971.²³ In addition, he was a founding member of the Wilma Theater and the Theater of Living Arts and continued to serve on their boards for many years. Frank Weise died in 2003.

¹⁷ Saffron, "Frank Weise."

¹⁸ Emily Cooperman, "Frank Weise Biography," accessed April 13, 2023, *Philadelphia Architects and Buildings*, https://www.philadelphiabuildings.org/pab/app/ar_display.cfm/18955.

¹⁹ Cooperman, "Frank Weise."

²⁰ Fred B Adelson, "The House That Booze Built," *AIA New Jersey*, February 11, 2010, <https://aia-nj.org/blog/2010/02/11/historically-speaking-the-house-that-booze-built>.

²¹ Gregory Heller, *Ed Bacon: Planning, Politics, and the Building of Modern Philadelphia*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016), 154-55.

²² Saffron, "Frank Weise."

²³ Cooperman, "Frank Weise."

Early work, 1951-1968

Frank Weise returns to Philadelphia in the late 1940s and opens his own office. His early residential commissions focus primarily on suburban homes. Weise's early 1950s houses were strongly influenced by his 1940s design education and early employment with Modernist architects such as Walter Gropius and Howe & Kahn. Residential commissions constructed between 1951 and 1955 (Figures 35-39) show a designer skillfully working within the boundaries of late Modernism using simple box-like forms, steel framing, ribbon or plate glass windows, and minimal ornamentation. He used a range of exterior materials such as brick, metal, stone, and concrete block. Weise's early buildings were thoughtfully planned in their suburban landscapes. On the interior, his designs featured a variety of custom built-in furniture such as closets, dressers, and kitchen cabinets often stained in warm tones.

The 1958 façade elevation drawing for 307 S. Chadwick Street was completed the year Weise purchased the property and could be interpreted as an extension of his early 1950s work. Once the concept of ownership sank in, he likely recognized the freedom it offered him to explore his own evolving ideas. The 1959 and 1960 drawings for 307 S. Chadwick show a distinct departure from his early 1950s work. This movement away from Modernism and toward a philosophical consideration of context and tradition is evident in Weise's buildings beginning in the early 1960s (Figures 40-44).

1951-1955



Figure 35: Bernhard Weise House, 1951. 1709 Meadowbrook Rd, Abington PA.
Photo credit: Philadwellphia, <https://www.philadwellphia.com/project/bernard-weise-residence>.



Figure 36: Carner Residence, 1951. 5501 Houghton Rd, Philadelphia PA.
Photo credit: Philadwellphia, <https://www.philadwellphia.com/project/carner-house>.

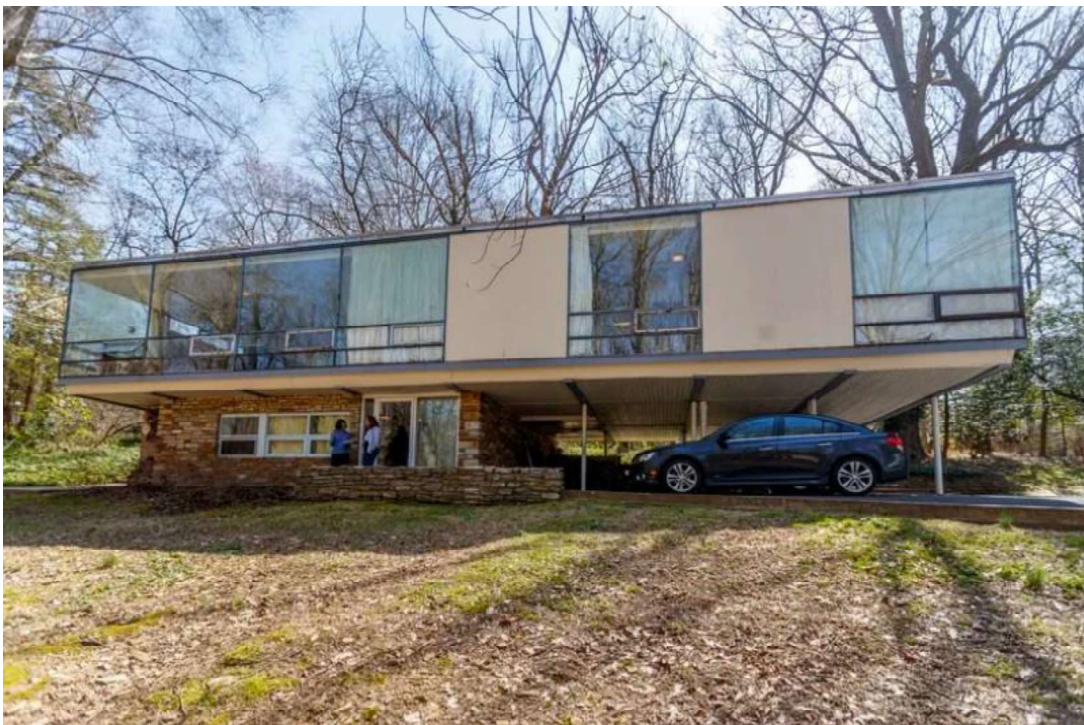


Figure 37: Sheppard Residence, 1953. 765 Moredon Rd, Abington Township, PA.
Photo credit: Philadelphia Inquirer, <https://www.inquirer.com/real-estate/home/architect-frank-weise-houses-philadelphia-meadowbrook-abington-20190423.html>.



Figure 38: Charles Oller Residence, 1955. 4101 Apalogen Rd, Philadelphia. *Photo credit: Elfant Wissahickon, <https://ewrhomes.seehouseat.com/public/vtour/display/1898957#!>*



Figure 39: Weisbard Residence, 1955. 881 Spring Valley Rd, Doylestown PA. *Photo credit: Long and Foster, <https://www.longandfoster.com/homes-for-sale/881-Spring-Valley-Road-Doylestown-PA-18901-281060117>.*

1960-1968



Figure 40: Camac Village, 1963. 423-29 Camac St, Philadelphia PA. Photo credit: Google Street View.



Figure 41: Camac Village, 1963. 1201-1203 Lombard St, Philadelphia PA. Photo credit: Compass Real Estate: <https://www.redfin.com/PA/Philadelphia/1201-Lombard-St-19147/home/38169950>.



Figure 42: Camac Village, 1963. 1205-1213 Lombard St, Philadelphia PA. *Photo credit: Google Street View.*



Figure 43: Carriage House, 1965. 1311 Lombard St, Philadelphia PA. *Photo credit: Hidden City, <https://hiddencityphila.org/2018/03/a-mid-century-mirage-at-13th-lombard>.*



Figure 44: Rowhouse block, 1965. 208-26 Pine St, Philadelphia PA.
Photo credit: Google Street View.

Context: New Formalism and early Postmodernism

The span of time between Weise's late 1950s designs for 307 S. Chadwick Street and the start of construction in 1966, represents a period of late Modernism when architects sought out ideas beyond heroic and future oriented architecture that avoided the past with its complications and contradictions. As an individual who grew up in Philadelphia and was living in Center City, Weise could not avoid the past even though his early 1950s work embodied Modernism. As the 1960s approached, Philadelphia struggled with the tension between the richness of its historic built environment and the promise of full-scale urban renewal. One imagines that Weise was actively reading, listening, and conversing with his peers about the future of Philadelphia during this time period.

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, late Modernism began to give way to smaller movements within such as New Formalism as represented in the work of architects Edward Durrell Stone and Minoru Yamasaki.²⁴ Stone was featured on the cover of *Time* magazine in 1958 that highlighted the construction of the United States Embassy in New Delhi, India (Figure 45).²⁵ During the same year, Yamasaki's McGregor Memorial Conference Center in Detroit, Michigan (Figure 46) completed construction. Both buildings incorporate symmetry, ornament, patterned, and monumental scale. Forms and pattern of these buildings recall architecture of much earlier eras and styles (Figure 47).²⁶ Both architects continued to explore these concepts into the 1960s (Figures 48 and 49).



Figure 45: U.S. Embassy New Delhi, India. Completed 1959. Architect Edward Durrell Stone.
Photo credit: Docomomo US, <https://www.docomomo-us.org/register/u-s-embassy-in-new-delhi>.

²⁴ "New Formalism, 1955-1975," accessed July 31, 2023, Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, <https://dahp.wa.gov/historic-preservation/historic-buildings/architectural-style-guide/new-formalism>. "New Formalist," accessed July 31, 2023, Docomomo, <https://www.docomomo-us.org/style/new-formalist>.

²⁵ "Art: More Than Modern," *Time Magazine*, March 31, 1958, <https://content.time.com/time/covers/0,16641,19580331,00.html>.

²⁶ Robert Venturi, *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*, 64-65.



Figure 46: McGregor Memorial Conference Center, Detroit, Michigan. Completed 1958. Architect Minoru Yamasaki. *Photo credit:* <https://travel.sygic.com/en/poi/mcgregor-memorial-conference-center-poi:32966651>.



Figure 47: Lucca Cathedral, Lucca, Italy. Constructed beginning in the eleventh century. *Photo credit:* https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lucca_Cathedral.



Figure 48: Perpetual Savings, Los Angeles, California. Completed 1962. Architect Edward Durrell Stone. *Photo credit: <https://www.ojb.com/news/the-architects-newspaper-highlights-edward-durrell-stone-building>.*



Figure 49: Wayne State University, College of Education, Detroit, Michigan. Completed 1960. Architect Minoru Yamasaki. *Photo credit: Paul Ritz, Wayne State University College of Education website.*



Figure 50: Disneyland's Main Street. Opening day July 1955. Anaheim, California.
Photo credit: Life Magazine, 1955.

As architectural ideas such as New Formalism were explored by architects in the 1950s, debates about the future of aging buildings in American downtowns were happening at the same time. In July 1955, Walt Disney opened Disneyland in Anaheim, California. One of the features of the new park was a Victorian Main Street modeled after Disney's childhood hometown in Missouri. Visitors flocked to Disneyland and its Main Street complete with replicas of Victorian buildings adorned with gingerbread detailing and prominent mansard roofs. This fascination with a sanitized version of downtown was at odds with the common American disdain for older architecture during the 1950s. For many, Disneyland's Victorian Main Street reminded people what already existed on their Main Streets, and the feelings of familiarity and nostalgia invoked by these traditional building forms.²⁷

²⁷ Leland M. Roth, *American Architecture* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2001), 468-469.

In Philadelphia during the late 1950s and 1960s discussions of preservation and urban renewal, especially in Society Hill, were well underway. Philadelphia architect Robert Venturi, a contemporary of Weise and educated during the same time period, designed a house for his mother in Chestnut Hill in 1959 (constructed 1964).²⁸ The design was profoundly influenced by Venturi's study and travel in England, France, and Italy. The Vanna Venturi house became an anti-Modernist statement with its gable roof, arches, window muntins, and central chimney. With the construction of Venturi's design for Guild House in 1966, he confirmed his status as an important young architect. Venturi's design work and writings (with partner Denise Scott Brown) defined his role as one of the founders of Postmodernism, a movement that finally broke Modernism's hold on American architecture.²⁹



Figure 51: Vanna Venturi House, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Constructed 1964. Architect Robert Venturi.
Photo credit: <https://www.archdaily.com/62743/ad-classics-vanna-venturi-house-robert-venturi>.



Figure 52: Guild House, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Constructed 1966. Architect Robert Venturi.
Photo credit: <http://venturiscottbrown.org/pdfs/GuildHouse01.pdf>

²⁸ Leland M. Roth, *American Architecture*, 483-486. Nomination. Kathleen Abplanalp and Philadelphia Historical Commission, *Nomination for Vanna Venturi House; Mother's House*, October 29, 2015.

²⁹ Jonathan E. Farnham and Philadelphia Historical Commission, *Nomination for Guild House*, April 8, 2004.

Conclusion

The Frank Weise House and Studio at 307 S. Chadwick Street fully satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, and E. Weise's 1960 design embodies a period when architects were questioning the limits of Modernism. Although Postmodernism is not formally named for almost two decades, Frank Weise created a nascent design for his House and Studio that embodied the spirit of Postmodern architecture during the same period as fellow Philadelphia architect Robert Venturi was designing the Vanna Venturi House and Guild House. The design of the Frank Weise House and Studio simultaneously integrated traditional forms from the past without losing its sense of place in the mid-twentieth century, therefore meeting Criterion C as it reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style and Criterion D as it embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen. Architect Frank Weise significantly influenced the historical, cultural, and cultural development of Philadelphia through his work as an architect, planner, and community organizer in the second half of the twentieth century, therefore meeting Criterion E.

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