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Rittenhouse Club façade to be saved

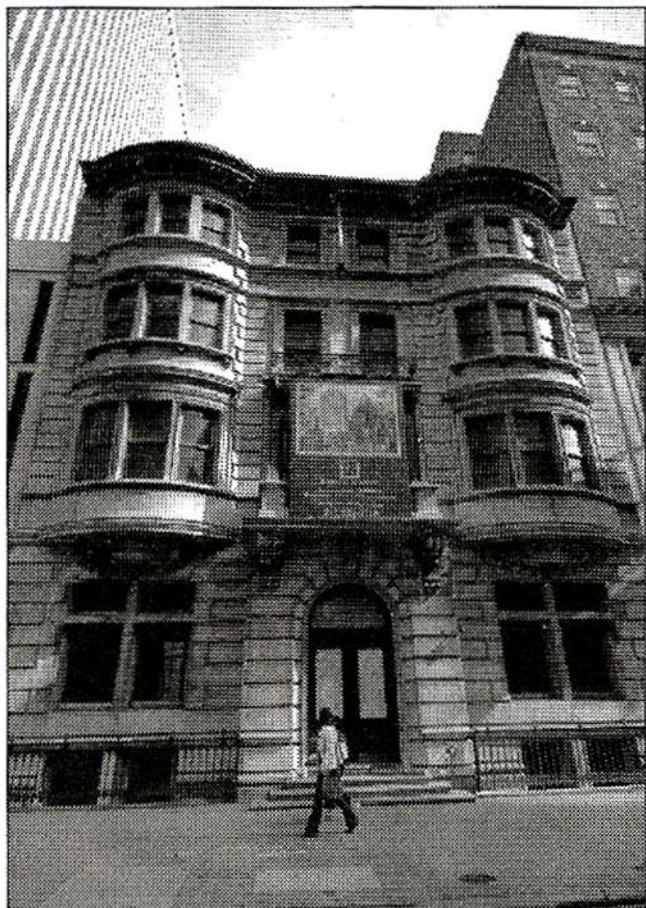
NATALIE KOSTELNI
STAFF WRITER

ARC Wheeler, the developer of 10 Rittenhouse, a high-end condominium project in Center City, is saving the historical façade of the old Rittenhouse Club and will incorporate it into a new five-story structure that will have three high-end mega-condominiums.

The new building will be part of a \$300 million luxury condo tower under development by ARC Wheeler called 10 Rittenhouse. The high-rise residential tower will have street frontage on the 1800 block of Walnut Street, South 18th Street and the 1800 block of Sansom Street.

Preservationists had long debated with ARC Wheeler about how to preserve the Rittenhouse Club, a private club formed in 1875. It was originally called the Social Arts Club and changed its name in 1888 to the Rittenhouse Club, according to "Philadelphia Gentlemen: The Making of a National Upper Class." The club was initially housed in a Victorian mansion at 1811 Walnut St. and later expanded into two adjoining townhouses with a remarkable limestone Beaux Arts façade.

An agreement was hatched in which ARC Wheeler tore down the two town-



MIKE MERGEN

Part of a \$300 million condo project.

houses but preserved the limestone façade of the former club. The developer is constructing the five-story building to complement 10 Rittenhouse, said Roger Friedman, principal with ARC Wheeler.

The structure's first two floors, totaling 10,000 square feet, have been leased to Barney's. The store is set to open in the fourth quarter. Each of the other three stories will be full floor condos running between 3,100 and 3,500 square feet each. Kurfiss Sotheby's International's Center City office will market the condos.

The condos will reflect the typically high prices of Rittenhouse Square, and some. The third floor is priced at just under \$6 million. The fourth floor is set at \$5.1 million. The fifth floor is not yet priced. ■