

**THE MINUTES OF THE 389th STATED MEETING OF THE
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

14 December 1994

**Wayne Spilove, Chairperson
City Council Caucus Room
Room 401 City Hall**

Present _____ Wayne Spilove

Terry Gillen, Commerce Department
David Brownlee
Barbara Kaplan, City Planning Commission
Robert Johnson, Council President Street's Office
Arlene Matzkin
Robert Vance, City Planning Commission
Peter VanderHeide, Department of Public Property
Scott Wilds, Office of Housing and Community Development
Stephanie Wolf

Richard Tyler, Historic Preservation Officer
Randal Baron, Assistant Historic Preservation Officer
Lori Plavin Salganicoff, Historic Preservation Specialist
Jeffrey Barr, Historical Research Technician

Also _____ Ray Lamorgese, Wills

Eye Hospital
Kevin Frayne, Wills Eye Hospital
Jen Goodman, Preservation Coalition
Gersil Kaye, Building Conservation International
Arnold Solis Cohen, 217 S. 9th Street
Alison Douglas Knox, 2025 Delancey Place
Matthew Schultz, Avenue of the Arts, Inc.
Constance Williams, Fitler Square Improvement Association
Miriam Rothman, 2020 Chancellor Street
Bernard Edelstein, 220 West Rittenhouse Square
Lenore Millhollen, 2047 Waverly Street
Lenard Wolffe, Rittenhouse Savoy
Bobbie Burke, CCRA

The 389th Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission was called to order at 10:15am by Wayne Spilove, Chairperson.

THE MINUTES of the 387th Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission held on 9

November 1994, Wayne Spilove, Chairperson, were approved by unanimous vote and adopted after a motion was made by Mr. Wilds and seconded by Dr. Brownlee.

THE MINUTES of the Special Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission held on 15 November 1994, Wayne Spilove, Chairperson, were approved by unanimous vote and adopted after a motion was made by Dr. Brownlee and seconded by Mr. Wilds. They were later amended to reflect the attendance of Terry Gillen of the Commerce Department at the meeting.

THE REPORT of the Technical Sub-Committee of the Philadelphia Historical Commission, 11 November 1994, Arlene Matzkin, Chairperson:

INDEPENDENCE SQUARE GROUP OF BUILDINGS

Vitetta Group, Inc.

National Park Service

PROPOSAL: Mechanical Systems

The Technical Sub-Committee met to discuss remaining issues with the proposed mechanical systems, smoke detectors, and lighting. The Sub-Committee forwarded the following recommendations to the Applicants:

- 1. Using last year's temperature and humidity data, adjust algorithms to guarantee that no condensation will occur, even during transitional periods. Interior lows may remain at 55 °, 20% relative humidity. Extremes may be prepared for by:
 - a) keeping the buildings dryer in anticipation of extreme winters,*
 - b) allowing for greater daily swings than the 2 °F and 1% relative humidity currently proposed, and/or*
 - c) operating the system with an algorithm that is based on average weather patterns with the capacity to impose a second algorithm should outdoor temperatures become more severe than the typical.**
- 2. Provide an analysis of these algorithms over a full year, using last year's temperature and humidity data, plotting proposed temperature and humidity set points, reset points, and corresponding window glass condensation temperature.*
- 3. Create a control schematic, logic diagram, or decision tree diagram that illustrates the interior temperature and relative humidity set points and the exterior conditions that affect these set points.*
- 4. M3-4.1, Detail #11, Air Flow Diagram. Bring this drawing into conformance with the system operation described in the specifications and expand it to show the reheat coil, space humidity and temperature sensors. Provide a psychometric chart showing the airflow process diagram. This is necessary to assure that the physical relationship of equipment and controls can accomplish what the controls specification describes.*
- 5. Acknowledge the discussion that the rate of change, especially temperature, in the specification would have to be relaxed.*
- 6. Provide a better description of the monitoring and alarm system. The DDC should monitor and record exterior wet bulb temperature or by exterior relative humidity.*

7. Provide better description of summer humidity controls and monitoring. The basis for averaging both winter and summer humidity readings should be elaborated. The references to summer and winter modes of system operations should be deleted from the specification since there may be periods when the system alternates between modes.

8. Describe the "unoccupied mode" in the specification. Mr. von Rosenberg stated at the meeting that the only change will be the closing off of dampers -- all other controls will remain on, however the specification does not reflect this.

9. Provide enough detail within the Sequence of Operations of the Control Specifications to describe the system functions as discussed and approved, and as described in the NPS narratives.

10. As stated above, Ms. Matzkin requested that the Vitetta Group find a wood louver cover for the 2"x8" faceplates of the Independence Hall stairway step lights and provide a picture of the currently proposed faceplate configuration.

Ms. Matzkin stated that members of the Sub-Committee were still waiting for the final resolution of the control system. The Sub-Committee was informed at the 11 November meeting that the monitoring system is not part of the current contract, and some concern exists for its design and implementation.

No action was taken by the Historical Commission.

THE REPORT of the Architectural Committee of the Philadelphia Historical Commission, 29 November 1994, Arlene Matzkin, Chairperson:

1435-1441 WALNUT STREET, DREXEL BUILDING

Herbert Wilhelm, Architect

PROPOSAL: Awnings

Architectural Committee recommendation: The Committee recommended accepting the proposed non-lit awnings' shape, color, and logo, but denying the marquee canopy. In lieu of this canopy, the Committee recommended a neon sign behind the entrance arch window and/or a sign placed at the plane of the main facade within the entrance opening.

The Applicant seeks to install new maroon-colored awnings on existing framework, lengthening the front edge for signage. Ms. Matzkin reported that the Applicant expressed satisfaction with the compromise reached for the entrance signage.

Mr. Brownlee made a motion to accept the recommendation of the Committee which was seconded by Mr. Wilds.

219, 221 S. 9TH STREET

Ray Lamorgese, Wills Eye Hospital

PROPOSAL: Rebuilding of Facades or Demolition

Architectural Committee recommendation: The Committee recommended that the Applicant retain a structural engineer and submit a proposal based on that report. The proposal may be made to

Commission staff who will immediately consult Committee members rather than holding the information for the next scheduled Committee meeting. The Committee is in favor of retaining the facades if possible.

The buildings experienced a fire in the summer and their structural stability is in question. Ms. Matzkin stated that since the Committee meeting, a structural engineer has visited the site, but the resulting report has not been received. She noted that the Committee hoped the situation would be resolved before winter becomes a problem. No stabilization work has been performed since the fire, but stabilization should not be ruled out as an alternative.

No action was taken by the Historical Commission.

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION, Continuation of Hearings
regarding the proposed Rittenhouse Fitler Residential Historic District.**

Mr. Spilove welcomed all in attendance to the hearing to consider the eligibility of the Rittenhouse Fitler Residential Historic District for addition to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. He requested that those who spoke limit their remarks to five minutes each. Persons speaking were heard in the order which they signed up to speak.

Mr. Tyler announced the discovery two weeks prior to this meeting that 34 of the 4,676 property owners were not sent notice of the 9 November meeting, owing to a computer glitch. According to the Historic Preservation Ordinance, all property owners in a district being considered for designation must be given sixty days notice of a public meeting at which the designation will be discussed. To remedy the situation, letters of notice were sent to the 34 property owners announcing the 8 February 1995 meeting, accompanied by a letter from Mr. Tyler apologizing for the inconvenience, explaining the computer error, and inviting them to attend this meeting, the 11 January meeting, and the 8 February meeting. Mr. Tyler recommended that the Commission continue to hear testimony about the proposed designation, but no vote should be taken on the proposed designation before the February meeting.

Gersil Kaye introduced herself as founder and Chair of Building Conservation International, a technical non-profit educational organization that researches and teaches methods of dealing with pre-1940 buildings. She spoke of the economic benefits of working with and reusing older buildings. Using areas of New York City, Cleveland, and other cities as examples, Ms. Kaye pointed to the trend toward reinvestment when an area is designated an historic district.

Arnold Solis Cohen requested clarification of the legality of the Historical Commission's jurisdiction. Mr. Tyler explained that as a result of *United Artists vs. The Philadelphia Historical Commission*, the State Supreme Court ruled that, based on the Historic Preservation Ordinance, the Commission does not regulate alterations to building interiors. Alterations to facades not visible from a public right-of-way are subject to a much lower level of scrutiny; the principal concern of the Commission is for alterations proposed for building exteriors visible from a public right-of-way. The ruling did state that designation, even without owner consent, is not a taking.

Alison Douglas Knox, a resident of the 2000 block of Delancey Place and President of the Delancey Place Association, spoke in favor of the designation. She stated that most of her neighbors had voiced similar support, and that she has several times witnessed tourists looking at the buildings of her block.

Matthew Schultz, spoke to the Commission as a representative of the Avenue of the Arts, Inc. and

expressed concern about the eastern boundary of the district. He asked that the plans for the new Philadelphia Orchestra hall, due to be located on a parcel partially inside of the district, be considered before the district boundaries are finalized. The planned Performing Arts Center may also be impacted by the district. Dr. Brownlee stated his understanding that the Historic Preservation Ordinance allows demolition to serve and benefit the general public, and that he would vote for demolition of small portions of the historic fabric to advance objectives for the public good, such as the construction of the Orchestra hall.

Constance Williams, President of the Fitler Square Improvement Association and a member of the Center City Resident's Association (CCRA), has lived in the area for 29 years. She described the community effort responsible for the appearance and maintenance of Fitler Square, and her participation in giving tours of Fitler and Rittenhouse Square area architecture to visitors. She stated that the residents of the Fitler Square area are very supportive of the district.

Miriam Rothman has lived in the Rittenhouse district since 1945 and in 1961 bought 2020 Chancellor Street. She described the efforts taken by herself and her husband to restore the facade of their building as well as her efforts to maintain the residential character of Chancellor Street during the design and construction of highrise buildings on Rittenhouse Square. She noted that when they bought their property, mortgages were difficult to obtain there and that it is now a highly desirable area owing to the quality of its character. Finally, Ms. Rothman voiced her support for the district's designation.

Mr. Tyler spoke briefly to respond to comments made previously by speakers. Referring to the difficulty in obtaining a permit described by architect Frank Weiss at the 15 November meeting, Mr. Tyler related the conversation between Mr. Weiss and a Commission staff member after that meeting. It was revealed that Mr. Weiss had gotten a National Park Service review of a Certified Rehabilitation Tax Credit application confused with a building permit application. Indeed, the building of which he spoke is not listed on the Philadelphia Register.

Second, the color coded map requested by Council President Street at the 9 November meeting describing the northeastern and northwestern edges of the district, was prepared by Commission staff and present at this meeting. The building parcels were color-coded to show the following information:

- Built as commercial and currently used as commercial
- Built as residential and currently used as commercial
- Built as residential and currently used as residential
- Built as institutional and currently used as commercial
- Built as institutional and currently used as institutional

Retail, office, and industrial uses were counted as "commercial" for the purposes of this map.

Mr. Wilds inquired about a district resident's written request to change the district boundary to delete the non-contributing northern side of the 2400 block of Delancey from the district. Mr. Tyler responded that this request will be taken into consideration by the Designation Committee and Commission staff. Dr. Brownlee added that the Designation Committee would look into and make recommendations on any substantive issue brought forward by the Commission.

Ms. Kaplan expressed concern over a letter written to the Mayor and the Historical Commission which objects to the designation, criticizing the Commission with information that contains several factual errors. She requested that a response to this letter be written and copied to the Mayor.

Bernard Edelstein, is a resident of 220 West Rittenhouse Square, has lived in the Rittenhouse Square area

for over 30 years, and works as a volunteer tour guide the Foundation for Architecture. He stated that the Rittenhouse area tour is the most popular of the Foundation's approximately 40 tours, that people come from far and wide to take it, and that he is in favor of creating the historic district there.

Mr. Spilove thanked all those who testified. Mr. Spilove announced that the next hearing of the Rittenhouse Fidler Historic District would be held the regularly scheduled Commission meeting of 11 January 1995.

REPORT of the Activities of the Historical Commission Staff, October 1994, Richard Tyler, Historic Preservation Officer. Mr. Wilds asked for a status report on the Eastern State Penitentiary. Mr. Tyler described the effort as stabilization that is proceeding slowly. The Preservation Coalition's Eastern State Penitentiary Task Force had a mason rebuild a collapsed wall, and prisoner-painted murals in the Penitentiary's Roman Catholic Church are being stabilized after that area received a new roof.

A motion to adjourn was made by Dr. Brownlee, seconded by Mr. Wilds and approved by unanimous vote at 10:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori Plavin Salganicoff