

MINUTES OF THE 188th STATED MEETING OF THE PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

7 November 1974

Dr. F. Otto Haas, Chairman

Presents: F. Otto Haas, Chairman
Charles R. Tyson, Vice Chairman
Mrs. James C. Crumlish, Jr.
Edward Pinkowski
John Taxin
Robert Silver, Commissioner, Department of Public Property
Joseph W. Hickey, Deputy Finance Director
Henry J. Magaziner, A.I.A., Architectural Advisor to the Commission
Barbara Liggett, Archaeological Consultant to the Commission
David Rosenblum, Assistant City Solicitor
Richard Tyler, Historian
Patricia Siemiontkowski, Executive Assistant to the Chairman

Guests: Mr. and Mrs. Paul Downey representing the Spring Garden Civic Association concerning that Association's request for the certification of buildings in the Spring Garden area.
Mr. Eugene Pasymowski, owner of 2036 Spring Garden Street.

Unless otherwise noted, all action taken herein is the result of motions correctly made, seconded and carried.

THE MINUTES of the Stated Meeting, 12 September 1974, were approved and directed to be filed.

REPORTS

The Report of the Architectural Committee for 22 October 1974 was approved (as amended by Mr. Magaziner) and directed to be filed with the official copy of the Minutes.

Recommendations for the Certification of Buildings, Richard Tyler, Historian.
At the request of the Spring Garden Civic Association, Mr. Tyler once again presented to the Board the Association's proposal for the certification of a number of buildings within the Spring Garden Area.

At the suggestion of the City Planning Commission, Mr. Tyler asked that the certification be done in stages, preferably two streets at a time, moving from west to east, to allow the Planning Commission the opportunity to study the impact of certification on the neighborhood and, specifically, on the Spanish district. Mr. Paul Downey, representing the Spring Garden Civic Association, spoke to the Commission in support of this application noting the original condition of the existing buildings and the Association's concern for the preservation of these structures and of the neighborhood as a whole.

Although several questions in regard to block certification were raised, the Commission agreed that the usual procedure should be followed whereby each owner is notified of the Commission's action and each building certified only if no objection from the owner is forthcoming. A motion to table the matter for six months was defeated.

Commission Activities, Report on, Richard Tyler, Historian. Mr. Tyler's Report on Staff Activities for the period 6 September 1974 through 7 November 1974 was approved and directed to be filed with the official copy of the Minutes.

OLD BUSINESS

Haviland Paneling, Richard Tyler, Historian. Since the Penn Mutual Life Insurance Company can use only a small portion of the Haviland paneling, presently in their possession, they agreed to release all of the paneling to anyone willing to accept it and display it in an appropriate manner. The Commission agreed to give Mr. Tyler complete freedom to arrange for the disposition of the paneling.

Cannonball Farm House, Richard Tyler, Historian. The Commission was informed of the Water Department's inability to relocate the back wing of the Cannonball Farm house and was asked whether or not this was agreeable. The Board decided not to require its retention upon the recommendation of the Commission's former Historian.

Fort Mifflin, Richard Tyler, Historian. Mr. Tyler reported to the Commission Raymond Shepherd's suggestion that the National Trust for Historic Preservation might be interested in the acquisition of the Fort Mifflin complex. The Commission agreed to ask the Recreation Department to consider approaching the Trust with a proposal for the acquisition and maintenance of the fort.

NEW BUSINESS

Decertification: 606-08 South Front Street, Richard Tyler, Historian. At the request of the owner, the Commission was asked to consider the decertification of the two buildings situate at 606-08 South Front Street. The two structures, both unique buildings constructed in the mid eighteenth century, are registered not only locally but also with the Pennsylvania Register as being historically significant. (Mr. Silver asked that he be excluded from participation in this matter.) After some discussion, the Commission agreed to table the matter for further study.

Decertification: 526 South Front Street, Richard Tyler, Historian. Upon the recommendation of the Architectural Committee, the Commission agreed to consider the decertification of the structure located at 526 South Front Street. Mr. Magaziner, (Chairman of the Committee, noted that the building, recently altered, did not comply with the plans approved by the Committee and the Commission and that it no longer held any historic or architectural significance. In view of this, he asked

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that the Commission decertify the structure and that the State be asked to follow the same course to have it removed from the State Register. After a lengthy discussion concerning certification procedures, it was agreed that this matter be tabled for further consideration. A motion was also made to have Mr. Tyler prepare for the Commission's review a report on Commission certification procedures to be discussed at the next meeting of the Board. This motion was seconded and carried.

Design Review of New Construction Where Certified Building Now Stands, Richard Tyler, Historian. The Board unanimously agreed that it should exercise no control over new construction in any circumstance.

Seamen's Church Institute (105 Queen Street), Richard Tyler, Historian. At the request of Mr. Tyler, the Board was asked to consider the question of preservation of the stone walls of this Furness Church, the only fabric of the structure remaining as the result of a recent fire. Theodore Bartley, a member of the Architectural Committee, at Mr. Tyler's request, inspected the walls and reported that, in his opinion, they could be rebuilt and incorporated into the design of a new building, although he would prefer the opinion of an engineer before making a final recommendation.

Since the fire had destroyed most of the building, the Commission agreed that it was unreasonable to request the preservation of the stone walls.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:45 P. M.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Siemiontkowski
Executive Assistant to the Chairman

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