

MINUTES OF THE 217th STATED MEETING OF THE PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

1 September 1977

F. Otto Haas, Chairman

Present: The Hon. John B. Kelly, Jr., Councilman-at-Large
Val Mogensen, Executive Assistant Director of Finance
Edward Pinkowski
Herbert W. Levy, A.I.A., Architectural Advisor to the Commission
David Rosenblum, Esq., Assistant City Solicitor, Law Department
Richard Tyler, Historian

Unless otherwise noted, all actions taken herein are the results of motions correctly made, seconded and carried.

THE MINUTES of the Stated Meeting, 4 August 1977, were approved and directed to be filed.

REPORTS

The Report of the Architectural Committee, Herbert W. Levy, Chairman, for 17 August 1977. Mr. Levy and Mr. Tyler drew the particular attention of the Commission to the request for the demolition of 407, 409 and 411 South Second Street. The Historian reported on the findings of Nicholas Gianopoulos, P.E., and recommended that the Commission consent to the razing of 407 and 409 South Second Street at once, but that it impose the delay of six months on 411 South Second Street as provided by ordinance of City Council. He also suggested that the owner/developer be urged to brace 411 South Second Street and the Ross House at the southeast corner of South Second and Pine Streets and to secure the buildings against the weather.

After some discussion, the Commission determined that Mr. Tyler should approach the owner/developer and suggest that they seek only the demolition of 407 and 409 South Second Street and that they take appropriate measures to preserve and restore 411 South Second Street and the Ross House. If the owner/developer agrees to this, the staff may approve a demolition permit application at once for 407 and 409 South Second Street. Should the owner/developer decline to accept this solution, the Commission voted to deny the application for demolition for six months and directed the Historian to ask the Department of Licenses and Inspections to keep the buildings under its surveillance and to report to the Commission should an imminently dangerous condition arise.

With this modification, the Report was approved and directed to be filed with the official copy of the Minutes.

Recommendations by the Staff for the Certification of Buildings, Richard Tyler, Historian. The Commission voted to refer the request for the certification of the Drake Hotel, 1512 Spruce Street, to the Architectural Committee for an evaluation.

Report on Historical Commission Staff Activities for the month of August, Richard Tyler, Historian. Mr. Tyler's report was approved and directed to be filed with the official copy of the Minutes.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

The Tax Reform Act of 1976 and Facade Easements, Richard Tyler, Historian. Upon the request of several private persons and civic associations, the Historian laid the question of the appropriateness of the Commission's receiving facade easements under the Tax Reform Act of 1976 and recommended that the Commission not become the recipient of easements owing to its lack of resources to undertake such a program. In view of this and the absence of a municipal policy on the issue, the Commission concurred with the Historian's recommendation.

Eden Hall, The Hon. John B. Kelly, Jr., Councilman-at-Large. Having received a copy of a letter from Francis G. Lederer to Mr. Tyler concerning Eden Hall, Councilman Kelly requested a report on the status of the buildings. Mr. Tyler reviewed his recent visit to Eden Hall and his conversations with representatives of other City agencies. The Commission referred Eden Hall to the Architectural Committee for an evaluation of the appropriateness of certifying the buildings or a portion of them.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Tyler
Historian

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