

**THE MINUTES OF THE 393rd STATED MEETING OF THE  
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
13 April 1995**

**Wayne Spilove, Chairperson  
Mayor's Reception Room, Room 202 City Hall**

**Present** \_\_\_\_\_ Wayne Spilove,

Chairperson  
David Brownlee  
William Candelori  
Richard Heany, Commerce Department  
Bennett Levin, Department of Licenses and Inspections  
Arlene Matzkin  
Susan Rabinovitch  
Robert Vance, City Planning Commission  
Joseph James, Department of Public Property  
Scott Wilds, Office of Housing and Community Development  
Stephanie Wolf

Ann Agnes Pasquariello, City Solicitor's Office  
Richard Tyler, Historic Preservation Officer  
Randal Baron, Assistant Historic Preservation Officer  
Lori Plavin Salganicoff, Historic Preservation Specialist  
Jeffrey Barr, Historical Research Technician

**Also** \_\_\_\_\_ Doris D. Fanelli,

Independence National Historical Park  
Michael DiBerardinis, Recreation Department  
Lenore Milhollen, Center City Residents Association, Pres. Coalition  
William Mifflin, Fairmount Park Commission  
Stephanie Craighead, Fairmount Park Commission  
Michael Sklaroff, Ballard Spahr Andrews & Ingersoll (1334 Walnut St)  
Albert W. Shiffrin, Counsel, Michael Cutone  
Ted Beitchman, Mayor's Office  
Dan Rubin, Philadelphia Inquirer  
Peter Bruhn, Diner on the Square  
Bernard Nearey, Center City Residents Association  
Judith S. Eden, Center City Residents Association  
Tom McNally, Department of Licenses and Inspections  
Jennifer Goodman, Preservation Coalition  
L. B. Linsker, Empire Building  
Tom Hine, Philadelphia Inquirer  
Eric J. Iffrig, Recreation Department  
Sam Fadullon, Philadelphia Planning Commission  
Ron Barber, Getz & Barber Associates

The 393rd Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission was called to order at 10:10am by Wayne Spilove, Chairperson, who recognized that a quorum of Commission members was present.

**THE MINUTES of the 392nd Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission held on 8 March 1995, Stephanie Wolf, Vice-Chairperson, were approved by unanimous vote and adopted upon a motion made by Dr. Wolf and seconded by Mr. Candelori.**

**REPORT OF THE ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE of 28 March 1995, Arlene Matzkin, Chairperson**

COLLEGE HALL, UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

Marianna Thomas, Architect

**PROPOSAL: Alterations to Door, Dormers, Windows, and Finials**

*Architectural Committee Recommendation: The Committee recommended approval of the proposal.*

As part of the restoration of College Hall, the Applicant proposed new work. The central door, currently modern, would be restored in large part to its Gothic original. A new handrail would be installed to meet code. The leaded front central windows would be releaded/reframed. Two mansard dormers would be restored where they are missing to approximate the originals and one would be used for ventilation. Two Gothic finial caps would be installed where spires were removed many years ago.

***Mr. Wilds made a motion to approve the proposal that was seconded by Dr. Brownlee and passed by unanimous vote.***

INDEPENDENCE SQUARE GROUP OF BUILDINGS

Doris Fanelli, Independence National Historic Park

**PROPOSAL: Conceptual Approval-Tower Cladding, Accessibility Ramps**

*Architectural Committee Recommendation: The Committee recommended approval in concept with details to be approved later. They added that the Applicant should provide a mockup of the copper cladding proposed to cover several wood portions of the tower.*

In order to better preserve several wooden areas of the Independence Hall tower that have begun to rot, the Applicant proposes to cover them with lead-coated copper cladding. In addition, for the purpose of making the buildings more easily wheelchair accessible, the Applicant proposes to place temporary masonry ramps at the main entrance to Independence Hall as well as at Congress Hall and Old City Hall. The ramps as originally proposed featured bluestone paving and a metal rail with simple vertical balusters. Committee members suggested that the Applicant re-examine aspects of the design, details, and materials. Mr. Tyler reported that Commission staff has been working with the National Park Service to identify alternatives.

***Mr. Wilds moved to adopt the recommendation of the Committee and approve the proposals in concept. This motion was seconded by Mr. Candelori and ratified by unanimous vote.***

ARNEST MANSION, FAIRMOUNT PARK

William Mifflin, Fairmount Park Commission

**PROPOSAL: Demolition**

*Architectural Committee Recommendation: The Committee voted to recommend denial of the permit application owing to lack of supporting information at the time of the Committee meeting.*

The proposal calls for the demolition of the c. 1800 Arnest Mansion, located in East Park in close proximity to the Mander Recreation Center. This action is requested jointly by the Fairmount Park Commission and the Department of Recreation. The Recreation Department intends to build a swimming pool adjacent to the site of Arnest in addition to renovating Mander and constructing another building for related facilities. They claim that the cost of renovating Arnest would be prohibitive and that the unrenovated building would serve as an attractive nuisance. Demolition was first proposed for Arnest Mansion several years ago and was denied. Under the management of the Fairmount Park Commission and vacant since the early 1980s, the building has been seriously damaged through unchecked water infiltration and vandalism.

The Commission staff received a report providing information supporting the demolition on 11 April that was immediately distributed to Commission members. The report estimated that \$300,000 would be needed to retrofit the first floor of the Mansion with toilet and locker rooms -- \$150,000 to stabilize the building and \$150,000 to install the facilities.

Commission members inquired about the expected costs of the pool and lifeguard stations, the available funding, and the expected timetable for the project. Mr. Iffrig of the Recreation Department stated that \$650,000 is available for the project -- slightly less than the estimated cost of the project. He added that even with the placement of some pool facilities within Arnest Mansion, an additional pool service building closer to the pool would still have to be built. This use of Arnest would subtract \$30,000 from the cost of building these facilities in the new pool building and would therefore bring the real cost of reuse of Arnest Mansion for these purposes to \$270,000. Mr. Tyler noted that although funds for the reuse of the building could be found within this project's budget, this cost represents more than 40% of the funds available for capital costs.

Commission members expressed uneasiness with voting on the demolition of this building given that they had had less than 24 hours to consider the rather complex application. Several recommended that the issue be sent to the Committee on Financial Hardship.

Mr. Tyler reported that the Fairmount Park Historic Preservation Trust was unable to define a reuse for the building. He stated that in the past year 29% of that Fairmount Park Commission's expenditures were for historic structures, a demonstration of their commitment to buildings where possible. He recommended approval of the demolition.

***Mr. Levin made a motion to approve the demolition that was seconded by Mr. Candelori.***

Ms. Goodman of the Preservation Coalition expressed her full support of the pool and facilities for the neighborhood. She added that a possibility may still exist that would allow for the reuse of the building without jeopardizing the pool proposal or using its funding. According to her, a community group has contacted the Fairmount Park Historic Preservation Trust with a proposal to use Arnest Mansion, although no documentation was available to support this.

Dr. Wolf declared that this building has in essence been demolished by neglect by the City. Dr. Brownlee stated that since it is often difficult to salvage buildings such as Arnest without their being attached to well-funded programs such as recreation, this opportunity should be seized. He added that this building

may be better situated and in better condition than other buildings in the Park and worried about the precedent its demolition would set.

Mr. Levin objected to adding costs to a project important to this north Philadelphia community. Commission members discussed the dilemma in reconciling the importance of this pool facility for the community with the importance of saving the mansion. The two are not, however, mutually exclusive. Mr. Wilds again expressed discomfort with voting in favor of this demolition with so little time to consider the issues, and with the possibility of a reuse proposal around the corner.

In order to allow further investigation of the reuse possibility described by Ms. Goodman, Mr. Levin stated that the Department of Licenses and Inspections would not issue a demolition permit for seven days. Mr. Mifflin declared his willingness to work with Ms. Goodman and any community group that proposes reuses for the building, even if the Commission has voted to allow demolition. Ms. Goodman added that if another use can be found for the building, it will be an asset for the area.

***Mr. Levin amended his previous motion to approve demolition by adding that a permit would not issue for at least seven days to allow for the submission of a reuse proposal. The Fairmount Park Commission, the Fairmount Park Historic Preservation Trust, and the Philadelphia Historical Commission will coordinate their efforts to assess the viability of the proposal. This was seconded by Mr. Candelori. A majority of the Commission members voted in favor of the motion, while Dr. Brownlee, Ms. Matzkin, and Ms. Rabinovitch voted against it.***

#### BETH ZION BETH ISRAEL, 18TH AND SPRUCE STREETS

Ira Upin, Designer

##### **PROPOSAL: Accessibility Ramp**

*Architectural Committee Recommendation: The Committee recommended approval of the project.*

This proposal calls for a handicap ramp on the 18th Street (rear) side of this corner building. The ramp would have a metal rail to match an existing one on that portion of the building. A wire mesh will be used to shield the open lower portion from collecting debris.

***Mr. Wilds moved to accept the recommendation of the Architectural Committee and approve the proposal. This was seconded by Dr. Brownlee and passed by unanimous vote.***

#### DINER ON THE SQUARE, 1839 SPRUCE STREET

Peter Bruhn, Owner

##### **PROPOSAL: Accessibility Ramp**

*Architectural Committee Recommendation: The Committee recommended approval of the project with the suggestion that four inch wire mesh or a simple railing be used instead of balusters.*

Although not required by code the accessibility ramp proposed by the owner of the restaurant is in response to a legal threat. A grade level emergency exit exists in this condominium building, but the building's owner will not allow its use as an alternative entrance to the restaurant for security reasons.

***Mr. Wilds made a motion to accept the recommendation of the Committee and approve the proposal that was seconded by Dr. Brownlee and ratified by unanimous vote.***

#### TENTH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, 1700-1708 SPRUCE STREET

Matthew White, Manager

**PROPOSAL: Banners**

*Architectural Committee Recommendation: The Committee recommended approval of the banners.*

This proposal calls for installing two hanging banners from pilasters at the front facade of the church. The discussion at the Committee meeting had revolved around the best method for attachment.

***The Committee's recommendation was accepted through a motion by Dr. Wolf that was seconded by Mr. Wilds. A unanimous vote passed the motion.***

**2035 SPRUCE STREET**

Deborah Gruenstein, Owner

**PROPOSAL: Reroof Mansard, non-motion item**

*Architectural Committee Recommendation: No vote was taken, although the Committee recommended that an unbiased roof specialist be hired to determine whether the problem could be solved with replacement of the flashing and gutter rather than the slate.*

This proposal concerns removing the fishscale slate mansard roof on a house that sits on a block of similar buildings with intact mansard roofs. A neighbor recently replaced his roof with matching fishscale slate at the recommendation of the Commission staff. The homeowner has had difficulty finding affordable replacement slate and got prices for asphalt shingles. In an attempt to compromise, Commission staff has found substitute shingles that mimic the shape, color, and look of slate better than the asphalt shingles.

Mr. Nearey of the Center City Civic Association expressed his opposition to non-slate replacement shingles, reiterating that the block's intact row of slate mansard roofs is unique and worth maintaining.

Later in the meeting, Mr. Tyler requested and received permission to spend \$140 from the Harry A. Batten Memorial Fund to hire an architect knowledgeable about roofs to determine the longevity of the existing roof if just the flashing and gutter were to be replaced.

**1725 SPRUCE STREET**

Alan Turner, Owner

**PROPOSAL: Restore Ground Floor Facade**

*Architectural Committee Recommendation: The Committee recommended conceptual approval of this proposal & asked that the applicant work with the staff on details once the facing has been removed.*

This proposal calls for the removal of modern stone facing at the building's ground floor to return it to the original appearance. Arched openings and a grade level door would be added based on a photo as well as the similar house at 1721 Spruce Street, which has remained intact. This facing seems to have been installed directly on top of the original brick, which may have been damaged at that time.

***The recommendation of the Architectural Committee was accepted by a motion from Mr. Wilds that was seconded by Dr. Wolf and approved by unanimous vote.***

**410 SOUTH CAMAC STREET**

Anthony Miksitz, Owner and Architect

**PROPOSAL: Dormer Addition**

*Architectural Committee Recommendation: The Committee recommended approval.*

The Applicant seeks to add a new dormer to the roof of his building. Several rowhouses on this block of Camac Street have been outfitted with dormers, many of which were approved by the Commission.

***Mr. Wilds moved that the Commission accept the Architectural Committee's recommendation and approve the proposal. This motion was seconded by Dr. Wolf and passed by unanimous vote.***

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION meeting of 27 January 1995,  
Dr. David Brownlee, Chairperson**

*The Committee voted to recommend that the following nominated buildings be approved for designation by the Commission:*

1. 1728 Chestnut Street, Alexander T. Martin Building
2. Kelly Drive, East Park Canoe House
3. 1334-1336 Walnut Street, The Hotel Hamilton
4. 1509 Walnut Street, Dr. James C. Wilson House
5. 135-145 South 13th Street, The Albemarle

Dr. Brownlee described that, as required by the Historic Preservation Ordinance, the owners of the five buildings to be considered for designation at this Commission meeting received 30 days notice of the hearing. Included in the regular packet of information that Commission members receive one week prior to monthly meetings were copies of the buildings' designation forms and the minutes of the Designation Committee's 27 January meeting where these buildings were discussed.

Although neither the Historic Preservation Ordinance nor the Commission's Rules and Regulations require it, Mr. Levin objected to the fact that Commission members had not had 30 days to consider the designations.

***Mr. Levin made a motion to table the discussion about designating these buildings for one month so that Commission members could contact owners to gather their opinions. The nominations will appear on next month's agenda. This was seconded by Mr. Candelori.***

In response to a question from Mr. Wilds, Mr. Tyler stated that, as proscribed in the Historic Preservation Ordinance, the buildings have been protected since the issuance of the letter notifying owners of this meeting. Mr. Levin agreed that any permit applications for those properties are referred from the Department of Licenses and Inspections to the Historical Commission. Dr. Brownlee claimed to have no objection in principal to a longer notification period, but wished that Mr. Levin's concerns had been known earlier so that the time spent in preparation for this presentation had not been wasted. He added that when an owner asks for a continuance, it has been the Commission's practice to grant it. Mr. Spilove noted that the designation of individual buildings is new to most current Commission members, and that they must become accustomed to necessary procedures.

Mr. Spilove stated that he has received calls from some of the owners and their representatives.

***The motion passed by unanimous vote.***

Mr. Tyler assured Commission members that in the future they will receive nomination forms and

relevant Designation Committee minutes at least four weeks prior to the meeting at which a hearing would take place.

**REPORT of the Activities of the Historical Commission Staff, March 1995, Richard Tyler, Historic Preservation Officer.** Commission members had no questions about the Report.

**REQUEST FOR DISBURSEMENT from the Harry A. Batten Memorial Fund, Richard Tyler, Historic Preservation Officer.**

1. PRISON SENTENCES. Moore College of Art is sponsoring the installation of 14 works of art in Eastern State Penitentiary by invited artists. In addition to money received from several other well known charitable organizations, the College was awarded a \$25,000 grant from the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts for this project. Since the College currently has an outstanding grant with the Warhol Foundation and could not directly accept this grant, the Historical Commission received Administration approval to apply for and accept the grant. The check sent by the Foundation was deposited into the City's General Fund, thereby necessitating either a contract with Moore or Miscellaneous Purchase Orders with each artist for payments to be issued from the Commission. In order to avoid such administrative difficulties, Mr. Tyler proposed that the money be moved into the Batten Fund and expended, for the purposes described in the grant application, upon the receipt of invoices from Moore. The Finance Department and the Controller's Office must still approve this proposal.

*Dr. Wolf moved to approve the use of the \$25,000 from the Warhol Foundation grant, if it is placed in the Batten Fund, for the purposes described in the grant application. The motion was seconded and passed by unanimous vote.*

2. 2035 SPRUCE STREET. In order to assess and make recommendations about the condition of the roof, flashing, and gutters of 2035 Spruce Street, \$140 was requested to hire an architect knowledgeable about roofs who has agreed to this amount. The architect will investigate whether the leak can be fixed in a long term fashion with repair to the cornice and gutter or whether the roof slate should be replaced.

*A motion to approve the expenditure was made by Dr. Wolf, seconded by Dr. Brownlee, and passed by unanimous vote.*

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Wilds, seconded by Dr. Brownlee, and approved by unanimous vote at 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori Plavin Salganicoff