

The meeting of the Advisory Commission on Historic Buildings was held on June 26, 1956 at 3:30 p.m., in the office of the Art Commission. The following members were present:

Mr. Grant M. Simon, Chairman
Mr. Harry A. Batten
Mr. Charles E. Peterson
Mr. R. Norris Williams, 2nd
Mr. Harry G. McDowell, Deputy Director of Finance
Mr. William D. Valente, Assistant City Solicitor

Also present were:

Dr. Margaret B. Tinkcom, Research Historian
Mr. George I. Lovatt, Jr., City Architect
Mr. Charles E. Hughes, City Archivist
Dr. A. B. Feldman, Archival Examiner

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved.

Dr. Tinkcom's bill for services totalling \$308.51 was read and approved.

Dr. Tinkcom reviewed an amended list of 100 buildings and stated that, to the best of her knowledge, all of them are standing at present time. It was decided that this list should be distributed with the minutes of the meeting to each member of the Commission.

Mr. Simon read to the Commission a letter written to Commissioner Regalbuto in which he requested, in the name of the Commissioner, \$30,000 to cover expenses for a 12 month period. The \$22,000 amount asked for in his letter for restoration of the Market Head House at Second and Pine was then discussed. Several members of the Commission stated that this amount was not enough for complete restoration work on the Head House. Mr. McDowell pointed out that if the Commission wishes to change the figures previously submitted they would have to do so before July 9th in order to be included in next year's budget. Mr. Batten suggested that a new letter be sent to Commissioner Regalbuto asking for money to cover an 18-month period instead of a 12 month period and that approximate figures for operating and restoration expenses be shown. Mr. Simon said he believed it impossible at this time to estimate the amount of money the

Commission should ask for special appropriations as the need arises. Mr. Lovatt presented a figure of \$40,000 for the restoration of the Market Headhouse at 2nd and Pine. Mr. Lovatt and the members of the Commission were in agreement that it is better to ask for \$40,000 for this work and have some money left over than to ask for \$22,000 and not have enough. Mr. Simon did not agree with the other members on this point. It was resolved that the Commission recommend to the Department of Public Property an item of \$100,000 for other restoration work to be accomplished in 1957.

Mr. Batten requested a list of all real estate owned by the City. It was stated that this list is being compiled at present.

A letter written to the Commission by the President of the King of Prussia Historical Society asking for information and some moral support in the preservation of historical buildings in their community was read. Mr. Simon's answer to the letter offering the Commission's support was approved.

A letter from Herbert O. and Josephine F. Albrecht pointed out the interest of a very old wooden house at 5901 Woodland Avenue. Dr. Tinkcom mentioned that drawings and pictures of the house are available in the Free Library. It is not known as to whether or not the house is occupied at present. Mr. Simon and Mr. Peterson will make an investigation to see if the house is of any historic value.

A letter was read to the Commission concerning a house on the old Morrell Estate on Red Lion Road said to have been built in 1720. The house is in danger of being torn down in the near future, and the writer thought it might be well to investigate its historic value before this is done. Mr. Lovatt said he will investigate. Dr. Tinkcom was asked to check into the records to see if the house is of historic interest.

A letter dated June 20 from Arnold Nicholson concerning his house at 241 Pine Street was read. Plans by Architect E. J. Parnum call for the restoration of the street front to include a pent eave between the first and second floors. This has already received the approval of the Art Commission. It was agreed that the Chairman should write a complimentary letter of approval to Mr. Nicholson.

A letter from Hon. Harold D. Saylor was read to the Commission concerning the Robeson House, Shoomac Park, which is scheduled for demolition. Judge Saylor asked that the Commission assist in the preservation of this house which was bought for that purpose. Mr. Simon has written to the Fairmount Park Commission to see if he can prevent the demolition of this house.

Mr. Hughes, City Archivist, offered his help in doing research on some of the properties in question at present, and also those that may come up in the future. The Commission expressed its appreciation of this offer.

Occupancy of what remains of the Second Street Market House was discussed. Mr. Valente said that the City should not have any trouble terminating the lease of the Independence Neighborhood Association. Mr. Flood will be asked to bring the Commission up to date in this respect. Mr. Valente and Mr. Batten thought it best to have the lessees removed. Mr. Peterson pointed out that many prominent people have contributed money to the organization that is leasing this property and that the Commission should think twice before deciding to remove them. It was his opinion that perhaps reorganization would be better than removing them altogether. Mr. Batten pointed out that the Mayor will not put out any money towards the restoration of this building unless the City is sure there will be someone occupying the place and taking care of maintenance. In this way, once the initial cost of restoration is met, the City will have no further expenses to meet. Mr. Batten said that Mr. Diamond of the Insurance Company of North America will, more than likely, lease the building for museum purposes after it has been fixed.

Dr. Tinkcom pointed out that instead of making another list of individual buildings, certain areas should be comprehensively listed since some houses are interesting in respect to where they are situated. Mr. Williams motioned, "That the Commission investigate the idea of presenting to the Department of Licenses and Inspections a list of areas of streets where there is a relatively large concentration of old houses (18th and 19th century) with the request that these whole areas be placed under this Commission's supervision".

The Commission requested Dr. Tinkcom to concentrate on the areas, Vine to Lombard, and 9th Street to the Delaware River, to ascertain all buildings of historic interest.

Charles E. Peterson,
Secretary