

THE MINUTES OF THE 279th STATED MEETING OF THE PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

5 April 1984

F. Otto Haas, Chairman

Present: Edward Pinkowski  
Allen J. Beckman, Esq.  
William Thompson  
Paul Deegan, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Public Property  
Herbert W. Levy, A.I.A., Architectural Advisor to the Commission  
Kenneth Cooper, Esq., Deputy City Solicitor, Law Department  
Richard Tyler, Historian  
Patricia Siemiontkowski, Architectural Historian  
Jefferson Moak, Executive Secretary

Also: Harry J.J. O'Neill, Esq. and William Chavis, Executive Director of the  
College of Physicians.  
Leonard Boasberg, THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER.  
James V. Roselli, Omega Broadcasting Corporation.

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

In the absence of Mr. Haas and Mrs. Klein, Paul Deegan, Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Public Property, chaired the meeting.

THE MINUTES of the 278th Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission held on 1 March 1984 were reviewed, approved and directed to be filed.

THE REPORT of the Architectural Committee for 21 March 1984, Herbert W. Levy, A.I.A., Chairman, Architectural Advisor to the Commission. The report was reviewed and a correction made. Mr. Levy asked that the words "soft siding" be struck from the minute describing the rehabilitation of 1609 St. Paul Street. In addition, the Commission members agreed to remove from the Report of the Architectural Committee the item relating to the proposed demolition of 20, 22 and 24 South 21st Street and act upon it separately.

Following some discussion, a motion to approve the Report of the Architectural Committee for 21 March 1984 as amended was made, seconded and carried.

The Chairman next brought forward for discussion and consideration the College of Physicians' request for permission to demolish the three historically certified structures at 20, 22 and 24 South 21st Street.

Harry J.J. O'Neill, Counsel for the College of Physicians, and Mr. Chavis, Executive Director of the College, appeared before the Commission

to present their request. Messrs. O'Neill and Chavis reported to the Committee the intention of the College to demolish the three buildings on 21st Street and to use the site for surface parking. According to Mr. Chavis, rental income from the 34 units in the three buildings is insufficient to cover the carrying costs of the properties. He explained that demolition of the buildings would eliminate this drain on the College's limited resources and generate income for the College through the interim use of the site for surface parking. While no plans exist at this time for the development of the 21st Street parcel, the College may wish to improve the property at some future date.

In response to a query regarding attempts by the College to market the buildings, Mr. Chevis reported that some consideration had been given to the disposition of the buildings but that he had nothing further to report at this time. In fact, the properties have not been listed with a broker although the possibility of such a listing has been discussed by the College. It was the opinion of Mr. O'Neill and Mr. Chavis that if the buildings were to be made available for potential development, ownership of the land would need to remain with the College. The Commission suggested that the College of Physicians consider a joint venture with a private developer if such an undertaking did not jeopardize the College's tax status. The Commission advised Mr. Chavis that a long-term lease holder (15 year minimum) would be eligible for federal tax incentives for the substantial rehabilitation of these historic buildings.

Mr. Beckman reiterated the Commission's concern for the preservation of the 21st Street buildings and its desire to have the buildings rehabilitated and reused in some manner either by the College or a private developer. He suggested strongly that the College consider other land in the area, that although not contiguous to their present facilities, might be available for future development. This would eliminate the need for retaining title to the 21st Street properties.

Following this discussion, a motion was made to accept the recommendation of the Architectural Committee and to impose the statutory six-month delay on the demolition of the buildings, 20, 22 and 24 South 21st Street. The Historical Commission, its Architectural Committee and its staff will be available, of course, to assist the College and the community in any endeavor that will result in the preservation and reuse of these structures.

THE REPORT of the Committee on Certification for 8 March 1984, Edward Pinkowski, Chairman.

The Commission members reviewed the Report of the Committee on Certification for 8 March 1984 and took action where necessary.

In agreement with the recommendation of its Committee on Certification, the Historical Commission reviewed and approved, individually, for certification each of the following buildings:

2024 Locust Street  
1210 Lombard Street  
502 South 12th Street  
300 South 36th Street, a.k.a., 3600 Locust Street

The following buildings were considered and approved, individually for ratification or reaffirmation of certification:

5321 Knox Street  
832-836 Lombard Street  
1200 Lombard Street  
36 North 3rd Street  
38 North 3rd Street  
1726-1748 N. 17th Street, a.k.a., 1700-1720 W. Montgomery Avenue  
501 South 41st Street, a.k.a., 4040 Baltimore Avenue  
500 South 41st Street, a.k.a., 4100-4112 Baltimore Avenue

In reaffirming the certification of 5321 Knox Street, the Commission voted also to strike from the list 5305-5307 Knox Street, a non-existent address.

Finally, the Commission reviewed and approved, individually, the decertification and removal from the list of each of the following buildings:

7980-7982 Oxford Avenue  
506 South 41st Street

Mr. Beckman voted in opposition to the decertification of the Oxford Avenue property expressing his concern over the illegal work undertaken and the Commission's lack of recourse other than to decertify the structure. While the Department of Licenses and Inspections may issue violations on the building, removal of the illegal alterations is not required.

THE REPORT on Philadelphia Historical Commission Staff Activities, Richard Tyler, Historian. The Historian's report for the month of March was reviewed, approved and directed to be filed with the official copy of the Minutes.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Siemiontkowski  
Architectural Historian