

MINUTES OF THE 212th STATED MEETING OF THE PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

7 April 1977

F. Otto Haas, Chairman

Present: F. Otto Haas, Chairman
Janet S. Klein, Vice Chairman
Robert Silver, Commissioner of Public Property
Val Mogensen, Executive Assistant Director of Finance
Herbert W. Levy, A.I.A., Architectural Advisor to the Commission
David Rosenblum, Esq., Assistant City Solicitor, Law Department
Richard Tyler, Historian
Patricia Sieniontkowski, Executive Assistant to the Chairman

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

THE MINUTES of the Stated Meeting, 3 March 1977, were approved and directed to be filed.

REPORTS

The Report of the Architectural Committee for 16 March 1977 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.

There were no recommendations for certification.

Report on Historical Commission Staff Activities for the month of March, Richard Tyler, Historian.

Mr. Tyler's report was accepted and directed to be filed with the official copy of the Minutes.

OLD BUSINESS

Old City Survey, Richard Tyler, Historian.

With the completion of the Old City Evaluative Survey, a statistical distribution of the 790 Old City buildings by rating and period was prepared by the staff and distributed to the Commission members. The quadrile division points fall at 3.5, 8 and 10, with the mode at 8.5 and the median at 8. The mean of the distribution was 7.53. The data analyzed by the staff was also transposed onto a map prepared by Mr. Levy as a part of his preparation of an environmental assessment of the Vine Street Expressway on the National Register and eligible properties in the impact area.

Mr. Tyler reported that a map had been prepared in 1971 but that the basis for the judgments made at that time is not known. The present survey lists the criteria for evaluation and thus provides a recorded basis for the conclusions reached.

Janet Klein questioned whether the evaluation of the streetscape, in addition to the individual structures, might not prove useful to the Commission. This does not appear necessary, for each building, rated for historical and architectural significance, is also rated for its contribution to the overall streetscape. A building taken out of its original context loses a significant number of points and reflects its lesser importance than one found within its original context or within a block possessing integrity.

NEW BUSINESS

Vine Street Expressway, Richard Tyler, Historian.

Mr. Tyler reported to the Commission members his recent meeting with various representatives of City departments to coordinate policy and action on the Vine Street Expressway and asked for the authority to write to James McPhillips, Chief Engineer and Surveyor, with an endorsement from this Commission of the proposed route. In view of the fact that over 95 percent of the right-of-way for the expressway has already been cleared, the members directed Mr. Tyler to endorse this project in the Commission's name.

Kensington Survey, Richard Tyler, Historian.

Given the relatively small number of certified buildings in Kensington and the beginning of speculation there, Mr. Tyler suggested that the Commission staff direct its survey attention to this neighborhood as time allows. The members agreed.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Sieniontkowski
Executive Assistant to the Chairman

PAS/rt