

MINUTES OF THE 208th STATED MEETING OF THE PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

2 December 1976

F. Otto Haas, Chairman

Present: F. Otto Haas, Chairman
Janet S. Klein, Vice Chairman
Edward Pinkowski
Val Mogensen, Deputy Director, Finance Department
Herbert W. Levy, A.I.A., Architectural Advisor to the Commission
Barbara Liggett, Archaeological Consultant to the Commission
David Rosenblum, Esq., Assistant City Solicitor, Law Department
Richard Tyler, Historian
Patricia Siemientkowiak, 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, 4 November 1976.

Here the question of the Commission's ratification of the certification of the buildings within the Old City Historic District was raised by Mr. Pinkowski. Mr. Pinkowski suggested using the word "nominate" rather than "ratify" in the continuing review and designation of structures in the Old City Area.

Dr. Tyler reported that although the buildings in the Old City Area had not been individually designated as certified structures, they were certified as a district and that each building was being administered within the district as a certified structure. Since there is no provision in the ordinance for district designation, this creates, at best, a legal ambiguity. To overcome this problem, the staff has recommended that the Commission review Old City and establish certification within the area on sounder legal grounds.

Mr. Pinkowski also brought to the Commission's attention the need for the notification of the owners of the buildings being certified and the appropriateness of having all objections to certifications noted in the Commission's minutes. It was noted that all objections are included in the report of the Architectural Committee which then becomes a part of the Commission Minutes. This procedure was judged to be correct and legal by the Commission's counsel, Mr. Rosenblum.

Upon the request for a clarification of notification procedure by Mr. Mogensen, Dr. Tyler reported that letters are sent to the owners of buildings after they are first considered by the Commission. If an objection is not received within thirty days from the mailing of the letter, the buildings are automatically certified and listed for preservation with various city departments, and with title and insurance companies. This procedure although having been adopted by the staff over the years is not required under the Commission's ordinance.

If an objection is received, however, the matter is brought to both the Architectural Committee for its recommendation and, finally, to the Commission for a determination. If the building is judged to be of importance to the neighborhood and if its non-certification would adversely affect the existing certified buildings in the area, the structure could be certified over the owner's objection.

Following this discussion, the members voted to approve the Minutes of the Meeting for 4 November 1976 and directed that they be filed.

REPORTS

The Report of the Architectural Committee for 17 November 1976, Robert W. Levy, A.I.A., Architectural Advisor to the Commission.

The Commission approved the addition of two items to the report of the Architectural Committee for 17 November 1976. These are the approval of the handrails designed for the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and permission to demolish three buildings owned by the Borean Institute situate at 1926-28-30 South College Avenue. Both items were reviewed by the Architectural Committee and the Commission in accordance with standard procedure.

Also discussed at this time was the proposal to provide parking below the Reading Terminal Market. Although the proposal as presented to the Architectural Committee on 17 November 1976 was reviewed and its approval in concept recommended, subsequent information required that the Commission carefully evaluate the Committee's recommendation in view of the new information received from the City Planning Commission. According to a representative of the Planning Commission, it was noted that during the construction of the center city commuter connection tunnel the service bays to the market on Filbert Street will be closed. Presently, the Reading retains an easement to the alley where the proposed parking ramps will be constructed. This alley, during the construction of the tunnel, must serve the market temporarily. In view of this problem, the Planning Commission tabled the review of this proposal at its most recent meeting until a waiver to the easement is obtained by the market's new lessee, Mr. Rappaport. Upon the recommendation of Dr. Tyler, the Historical Commission voted to take no formal action until all other involved municipal agencies have reviewed and commented on the matter. In order to avoid any delay in the final review of the proposal, the Commission agreed to grant the staff and the Architectural Committee the authority to take action on the proposal in conformity with the decision of the City Planning Commission and other municipal agencies.

The Commission also voted to table the recommendation of the Architectural Committee concerning the Bellevue-Stratford Hotel.

Dr. Tyler reported that it was his understanding that the Bellevue-Stratford would be entered into the National Register of Historic Places by the end of the month. If accepted, the building's demolition and the erection of a new hotel within a specified period of time could mean a denial of tax benefits amounting to an estimated three million dollars. It was pointed out by the Historian that the various state and federal actions are outside of the Historical Commission's purview and control.

With the tabling of the Reading Terminal and Bellevue-Stratford Hotel items and the addition of the two items concerning the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and the Korean Institute, the Report of the Architectural Committee for 17 November 1976 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 Historical Commission was asked to consider the request of the owner of 1032 Waverly Street for that building's certification.

After some discussion, it was determined that although the building might be eligible for certification as part of a total streetscape it could not be considered for certification on an individual basis.

Upon the recommendation of Dr. Tyler, the Commission approved the certification of the following buildings on Hazel Avenue between Forty-sixth and Forty-seventh Streets:

4615 Hazel Avenue
4617 Hazel Avenue
4619 Hazel Avenue
4621 Hazel Avenue
4623 Hazel Avenue
4625 Hazel Avenue
4627 Hazel Avenue
4629 Hazel Avenue
4631 Hazel Avenue
4633 Hazel Avenue
4635 Hazel Avenue
4637 Hazel Avenue
4639 Hazel Avenue
4641 Hazel Avenue
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4645 Hazel Avenue
4647 Hazel Avenue
4649 Hazel Avenue
4651 Hazel Avenue
4653 Hazel Avenue

4616 Hazel Avenue
4618 Hazel Avenue
4620 Hazel Avenue
4622 Hazel Avenue
4624 Hazel Avenue
4626 Hazel Avenue
4628 Hazel Avenue
4630 Hazel Avenue
4632 Hazel Avenue
4634 Hazel Avenue
4636 Hazel Avenue
4638 Hazel Avenue
4640 Hazel Avenue
4642 Hazel Avenue
4644 Hazel Avenue
4646 Hazel Avenue
4648 Hazel Avenue
4650 Hazel Avenue
4652 Hazel Avenue
4654 Hazel Avenue

MINUTES

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2 December 1976

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

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:45 P. M.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Sismiontkowski
Executive Assistant to the Chairman

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