

THE TWENTIETH MEETING OF THE PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

was held on February 25, 1958 in Room 313, City Hall Annex. The following members were present:

Mr. Grant M. Simon, Chairman
Mr. Charles E. Petersen
Mr. George Lovatt, City Architect
for Mr. Regalbuto
Mr. Harry G. McDowell, Deputy Director of Finance
for Mr. McConnell

Also present were: Dr. Margaret B. Tinkcom, Historian
Mrs. Charles J. Maurer, Executive Secretary.

The meeting came to order at 3:30 P. M.

The Minutes of the last Meeting, January 23, 1958, were approved.

SECOND STREET MARKET

Mr. Brumbaugh's report was discussed, particularly in regard to certain duplications of material with that of the Commission's Historian. The Chairman said he would write to Mr. Brumbaugh, and at Mr. Peterson's suggestion, would enclose a copy of Dr. Tinkcom's report, which is tentatively scheduled to appear in the July issue of the Pennsylvania Magazine of History & Biography.

A copy of Mr. Batten's letter to Mr. J. A. Diemand, President of the North American Companies, was read. He quoted estimates from Mr. Brumbaugh's report, mentioned the City's promised allocation of \$25,000 for restoration purposes, and reported on a conversation with Fire Commissioner McNamee, who suggested a retired fireman as a possible caretaker. Mr. Batten suggested that the Insurance Company of North America might contribute \$2200 a year for three years, and the loan of a suitable fire engine from its collection.

Mr. McDowell suggested that rather than a retired fireman, a "Regulation 32 man" be considered. This classification refers to a uniformed man, either police or fireman, who has been disabled in the course of his duties, and therefore assigned to a clerkship or other secondary duty.

PENNSYLVANIA HOSPITAL, NURSES' HOME

Mr. Peterson suggested that a title search be made on the corner house, Eighth and Spruce Streets, to encourage interest in the preservation of the several fine houses of the row in question. No one now knows who built them or when. No further action has been taken since the recent exchange of letters between and among Messrs Simon, Hare, Cheston, Day and Bacon. The subject will carry over until the next meeting.

CITY OWNED BUILDINGS

Dr. Tinkcom reported that the official listing of buildings has been brought up to date and that a study of this list is about to be made.

THE ANNUAL REPORT

The Historian listed the contents of the report, which must be ready for the Department of Public Property by March first. The matter of a guide book was referred to by the Chairman; Dr. Tinkcom voiced the opinion that a format such as the Charleston Guide is a possibility, but that this would be costly. The question arose as to whether the special studies could not be combined with the Annual Report and published as a unit.

Mr. McDowell suggested that if the report went through the City Representative's office, that department could publish it, with photographs &c., without cost to the Commission, as a phase of publicity for the City. Mr. McDowell offered to look into this.

The Chairman pointed out that the Bulletin Almanac for 1958 does not mention the Historical Commission in its listing of City Departments, nor is its listing of historic sites and buildings sufficiently inclusive. Dr. Tinkcom was asked to bring this matter to the attention of the editorial staff.

FORT MIFFLIN

The question was asked whether a private organization had bought this Government-owned property. It was the Chairman's opinion that there could be no objection to the Junta's making use of this property.

THE SCHUYLKILL ARSENAL

A note from the Mayor, February 3, 1958, with an enclosed copy of his letter to Mr. Greenfield, asking co-operation in exploring the Arsenal's appropriate use, preservation and benefit to the City, and the Commission's reply, was mentioned. Mr. Peterson said that the National Park Service might make some HABS photographs of it. Dr. Tinkcom reported on her visit to the Archives in Washington. There is a great deal of material available, but this is not arranged for convenient study. Dr. Tinkcom was directed to write to the Custodian again for further information; the subject is to be carried forward to the next meeting.

National Inventory forms were discussed in connection with the Arsenal. It was reported by the Historian that as yet nothing has been done toward filling out these HABI forms. It was asked that progress be made as soon as possible.

THE GEORGE HOUSE

The Historian reported on the panelling and general description, saying that there are at least three separate periods, suggesting that there may have been two houses, later linked to a third part, and that the house does not "hang together." It is to be demolished to make way for doctors' offices. A study is reported to have been made by Mr. F. J. Dallett, Jr., for the Society for the Preservation of Landmarks. The Secretary was asked to obtain this, and the subject is to be carried over to the next meeting.

SHOOMAC PARK

A campaign has been instituted, asking citizens to write letters of protest against demolition of Shoomac Park or changes in Wissahickon Drive.

THE MATTHEW NEWKIRK HOUSE

Nothing new has been said or written about this recently, to the knowledge of any member of this Board.

KIRKBRIDE'S HOSPITAL

The Chairman commented that the main building is allegedly to be preserved and made reference to the news article in the Magazine section of Sunday's Philadelphia Inquirer, February 23, 1958.

CUTHBERT STREET HOUSES

At the last meeting, January 28, the subject was referred to Mr. Batten, who because of illness, was unable to be present at this meeting. Mr. Peterson reported that panelling had been purchased and removed by Mr. ~~Harry~~ DuPont from one small room in one house. The Historian commented on the fact that Mr. Robbins' line drawings for the Commission show how this appeared before removal.

SOCIETY HILL

Mr. Peterson reported that the Police Administration Building is no longer proposed for the site on Society Hill. He was asked about his proposed report on old buildings on the east side of Second Street, worthy of preservation. The report is not yet available.

Reference was made to a letter to Mr. Dallett in regard to a special study of Front Street. The Secretary was instructed to call Mr. Dallett.

108 ELFRETH'S ALLEY

The Commission reviewed the drawing of the front elevation, calling attention to a number of faulty details. The application is rejected, pending submission of further drawings.

LOXLEY COURT

A discussion of aims and intentions of the Arch Street Business Men's Association and of the Commission's responsibility was curtailed by the Historian's comment that for the time being Mr. Albert Tandler was doing further research and was preparing a report. The Commission would receive a copy and would reciprocate by giving Mr. Tandler any insurance surveys on Leather/Loxley Court, available on request from the Mutual Assurance Company.

OFFICE STATIONERY.

It was decided that Dr. Margaret B. Tinkcom's name be added to the list of officials of the Commission, on the office stationery.

The Meeting adjourned at 4: 45 P. M.

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Charles E. Peterson
Secretary