

THE THIRTY-FOURTH MEETING OF THE PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION HELD IN THE COMMISSION'S OFFICE, ROOM 634 CITY HALL, JUNE 30, 1959, 3:30 P.M.

Present were: Mr. Charles E. Peterson
Mr. R. Norris Williams, II

Mr. Grant M. Simon, Chairman

Also present: Mr. Philip Carroll, representing Mr. Gennetti
Mr. Harry G. McDowell, representing Mr. McConnell
Dr. Margaret B. Tinkcom, Historian
Mrs. Theresa V. Pulice, Executive Secretary

THE MINUTES for May 26, 1959 were approved.

Unless otherwise stated, all actions reported herein were taken after motions properly presented, seconded and carried.

DR. TINKCOM'S REPORT:

✓ 1960 Budget - The budget has been through two hearings, Public Property and Managing Director's Office. The next hearing is to take place in the Finance Office on July 16th.

The Present status of the budget is as follows:

The Commission will be given an additional \$6,500 for 1960 broken down as - \$3,500 for a Clerk-Stenographer II, \$2,200 for Professional Services and \$825 for Equipment.

The total budget will be approximately \$24,000.

An increase for Mrs. Maurer's salary has been refused for the present, since the City is planning an over-all increase in January for City employees.

✓ The Bonaparte House, 260 So. 9th St. - The papers needed to complete the study of this house are at the Girard College and will not be available until next Fall.

Girard Papers - Dr. Tinkcom went to see Mr. Blackwell Newhall, Assistant General Manager and Secretary of the Board of City Trusts, and obtained permission to use the Board's records relating to Girard's property. Robert Corrigan will make a study of the Philip Street and Spruce Street houses some time next week.

Philadelphia Photo Photographed
✓ Old Photographs Center City - The City Photographer, Mr. Widdop, is in the process of printing for the Department of Records photographs of center city buildings taken about 1914 or 1915. He asked whether the Commission would be interested in having copies of these photographs for its files. Upon examination of those he has brought down to date, we have found about fifty we would like to have. Copies of these have been requested.

✓ Reliance Insurance Company - Mrs. Kirkbride has just begun to examine the Fire Association's surveys now among the records of the Reliance Insurance Company, and has thus far found a number of interest to the Philadelphia Historical Commission, among them a survey for "Wyck" in Germantown and one for St. Johns Church in Kensington.

as follows
✓ Survey of Rittenhouse Square Area - A study of this area was begun by looking up insurance surveys and briefs of title for 2314, 2316 and 2318 Locust St. Mr. Simon suggested that Dr. Tinkcom contact Mr. Paul James, who has a real estate firm and who has had quite a bit of experience in restoring houses in this area. Mr. Simon feels he should be able to give us a good deal of information.

Publication
✓ Commission's Biography - The Commission was written up in the Greater Phila. Magazine in the June, 1959 issue.

✓ Dock Street Demolition - Notices for demolition of the houses in the Dock Street area, Unit 1, will be sent out starting next week. The Commission will receive a copy of the demolition notice and will have a week in which to photograph the interiors of these houses if they contain anything worth recording.

In a letter to the Commission from Mr. Lammer, it was requested that the Commission act as a clearing house for informing persons and groups of the buildings that are currently available for inspection so that they may be

arrange with the demolition contractor to purchase any items, mantles, doors, molding, etc., in which they may be interested. Approximately 14 letters have been sent to various historical groups and persons whom the Commission felt would be interested. x

It was moved and seconded that Dr. Tinkcom's report be accepted and filed.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- ✓ 312 Delancey Street - Councilman Moore asked Mr. Simon to attend a meeting to review a proposal for the City to take over the new park area - north side Delancey Street opposite 310-316. The possible acquisition by the City of the "greenway" south of Delancey, will come up in December.
- ✓ Bannaker School - Mr. Johnson, of the S. W. Philadelphia community association, is trying to make arrangements to have the school restored and preserved. The owners, the Martin Candy Company, claim that Licenses and Inspections has condemned the building. Dr. Tinkcom was asked to call L & I to check its status.
- ✓ Peale House, 8100 Frankford Ave. - Mr. Flood, Deputy Commissioner of Public Property, after inquiring of the various city departments, informed us that none of the departments is interested in using this building. It was decided that the Commission would take no further action until a petition for demolition was filed.
- ✓ Second Street Market - Mr. Carroll, in Mr. Lovatt's absence, reported that Procurement is now taking bids for this restoration.
- ✓ Schuylkill Arsenal - In a letter to the Commission from Mr. Gennetti, Commissioner of Public Property, it was stated that the Detention Center, which is planned on the present site of the Schuylkill Arsenal, is still in the preliminary stages and that a thorough investigation will be made of the possibility of restoring some of the original buildings for use in this project.

✓ 329 Lawrence Street - Mr. Kinsky submitted drawings for the alterations and the Commission gave its approval on the condition that the same type of windows as existing ones be installed.

✓ Design Board of the Redevelopment Authority - Mr. Simon accepted a request by Mr. Robert L. Geddes, Chairman of the Advisory Board of Design, to act in an advisory capacity to the Board on all aspects of the proposed plans of the redevelopers for the Washington Square East project. The first meeting was held on June 17, 1959, at the Redevelopment Authority offices. Mr. Simon read an excerpt of his letter to Mr. Geddes dated June 22, 1959, outlining his ideas on the architectural problems that might be encountered in a rehabilitation project of this type.

✓ VE
Mr. Moore wants to do some special articles for the Inquirer supporting Mr. Simon's ideas. He will use pictures showing some of the old houses, some of the proposed new ones with their fenestrations and other unsuitable features and drawings or photographs suggesting other possibilities for facades for the town houses that are to stand opposite to 18th century buildings.

✓ Standards of Rehabilitation - Mr. Simon and Mr. Williams attended a meeting of the Redevelopment Authority where the standards of rehabilitation were discussed. These standards may be submitted to the Commission for review. This procedure has not been confirmed by the Redevelopment Authority. The Secretary was asked to obtain a copy of the standards from Mr. Andrade.

✓ Congress Hall - Chairman Simon is one of a committee of Architects who have been asked to review the procedures for the preservation of Congress Hall by the National Park Service, and the Independence Hall group. The question of the structural stability of the building and the best method of preserving it were discussed. Mr. Peterson stated that he had been brought into this problem three and a half months ago and is making an intensive study of the structure. In his opinion the Hall

is in relatively good shape. The only failing parts of any importance are one roof truss on the south end and the ceiling structure of the Senate Chamber immediately below. This failure has been developing over a period of many years.

Secretary Hill
Managing Director's Memo on Washington Square East - This memorandum, addressed to the Commissioners of the ten service departments, suggested that all actions in this area by any department be cleared with the City Planning Commission. Mr. Wagner noted that the character of this area could be damaged inadvertently by action on the part of city departments in making installations which would be appropriate in other areas but undesirable here. It was decided to write Mr. Wagner offering some suggestions as to the preservation of this area. (See attached letter)

✓ Fort Mifflin - The importance of Fort Mifflin was discussed and it was decided to write to Senators Scott and Clark, enclosing a copy of a study made by Frank Barnes of the Park Service, to try to get the Federal Government to add the Fort to the National Parks, rather than to turn it over to the City and not have it cared for properly because of the lack of funds.

Chairman
City Charter
NEW BUSINESS:

✓ Getting Historical Commission in Charter - The desirability of the Commission being included in the City Charter was discussed. The Commission feels that if this could be done, it would be a permanent function of the City rather than just a temporary operation and could, perhaps, expand its services. Mr. McDowell was asked to make an inquiry of the City Solicitor to get a reaction to such a step. Mr. Carroll was asked to get an opinion from Commissioner Gennetti, and the Commission will ask Councilman Moore for his opinion in the Fall.

✓ Permits - It was resolved that a photostatic copy of all permits be made for the Commission's records.

SUBMISSIONS:

- ✓ 308 Philip Street - Permission was given to put shingles on the roof and to replace the window sash.
- ✓ 1020 Clinton Street - Permission was given for interior alterations.
- ✓ 768 So. Front Street - Permission was given to replace the front wall with cinder block, rough cast in colonial fashion, with a colonial doorway and install 6 pane windows as in the original design, and also to install shutters.
- ✓ 248 Delancey Street - It was suggested that the Architect, Mr. Betts, restudy the doorway and pent roof. The Commission asked Mr. Peterson if he would work with Mr. Betts on his design. Mr. Peterson agreed and the Secretary was asked to have Mr. Betts get in touch with him.
- ✓ 244 Delancey Street - This house is not on the certified list, but the owner, Mr. Martin Pyle, wanted to make the proper alterations to his house and, therefore, submitted his permit for the Commission's O.K. It was suggested that Mr. Pyle contact Mr. Peterson for his advise. Dr. Tinkcom felt that this house and 242 Delancey Street were worthy of certification by the Commission and it was then resolved that these two houses be added to the certified list.

✓ VIEUX CARRE COMMISSION, NEW ORLEANS

Mr. Peterson reported that he had just visited the Vieux Carre Commission office on Chartres Street in New Orleans and discussed various matters with the staff. The Commission, in a position somewhat similar to ours, is one of the pioneers for the control of architecture in historic districts, having been instituted in 1936. Staff: The Commission now operates with three paid employees as follows: Director (an architect) \$750.00 a month, Assistant Director (also an architect) \$450.00 a month, one secretary \$225.00 a month.

copy
made

"DEMOLITION BY NEGLECT ORDINANCE"

Mr. Peterson produced a copy of a New Orleans ordinance passed in 1958 to prevent owners from letting their buildings deteriorate. The Secretary was asked to have photostats made for the files and a copy sent to Mr. McDowell for his opinion.

SAMPLE DETAILS

Mr. Peterson loaned the Commission a set of prints issued by the VCC. These are details for providing balcony floors, doors, patio gateways, etc. for owners who do not wish to—or cannot—have special details architecturally drawn. It was suggested that Architect George Robbins make up similar drawings of windows, doors and doorways characteristic of each period from about 1750 to 1850 and date them.

The meeting adjourned in the proper manner at 5:15 p.m. The next meeting will be held on the call of the Chair.

Respectfully submitted,

GRANT M. SIMON, CHAIRMAN