

THE MINUTES OF THE 257th STATED MEETING OF THE PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

7 October 1981

F. Otto Haas, Chairman

Present: Janet S. Klein, Vice Chairman of the Commission
Edward Pinkowski
John F. McCloskey, Jr., Deputy Commissioner, Department of Public
Property
Val C. Mogensen, Executive Assistant Director of Finance
Herbert W. Levy, A.I.A., Architectural Advisor to the Commission
Frank Thomas, Esq., Assistant City Solicitor, Law Department
Richard Tyler, Historian
Patricia Siemiontkowski, Architectural Historian

Also: David Stewart, Executive Director of the Philadelphia Old Town
Historical Society, and his associate regarding the proposed
development of the Clinton Street National Register Historic
District and the surrounding neighborhood.

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

THE MINUTES of the Stated Meeting held on 6 August 1981 were approved
and directed to be filed.

THE REPORT of the Architectural Committee for 19 August 1981, Herbert
W. Levy, A.I.A., Chairman. The report was reviewed and one correction
was made. Under the minute relating to 2001 Wallace Street, the
Vice Chairman asked that the word "beam" be changed to "column."
Subject to this correction, the report was approved and directed
to be filed with the official copy of the Minutes.

THE REPORT on Philadelphia Historical Commission Staff Activities
for the months of August and September, 1981, Richard Tyler, Historian.

The Historian apologized to the Commission members for not having
had the time to prepare a written report on the staff's activities
in time for distribution at the meeting. A typed report will be
prepared and mailed to each Commission member shortly. Mr. Tyler,
instead, gave an oral account of the staff's work in August and
September including a detailed up-date on the Lit Brothers Department
Store crisis.

OLD BUSINESS

Certification of the Pennsylvania Railroad's Chestnut Hill West commuter stations. The Historian reported to the Commission SEPTA's refusal to accept the certification of seven stations deemed historically and architecturally significant by the Commission at its August Stated Meeting. It was agreed that the matter of certification should be referred back to the Committee for its consideration and a recommendation.

Clinton Street Proposal. David Stewart, Executive Director of the Philadelphia Old Town Historical Society, Inc., presented to the Commission members for their consideration additional information and scale drawings of the proposed Clinton Street project. Mr. Stewart had appeared previously before the Commission to make an initial presentation in August. At that time, some Commission members expressed reservations about particular aspects of the project, and no action was taken on Mr. Stewart's request for an endorsement.

At the invitation of the Commission, Mr. Stewart made a more detailed presentation of his Society's proposal including scale drawings of the gates proposed for erection at both ends of Clinton Street.

Following Mr. Stewart's explanation of the project, the Commission members raised several questions concerning its appropriateness. They objected particularly to the closing of Clinton Street as an ahistorical treatment of an open, public thoroughfare.

After considerable deliberation, a consensus of the Commission emerged that it could not endorse the Clinton Street project.

NEW BUSINESS

Report on the National Trust for Historic Preservation Annual Meeting, Richard Tyler, Historian. The Historian reported to the Commission members on the staff's attendance at the annual meeting of the National Trust in New Orleans. Both Mr. Tyler and Ms. Siemiontkowski found several of the sessions to offer valuable information particularly the seminar relating to the new Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981 which will take effect on January 1. Other sessions of interest to the staff included one on revising local preservation ordinances and one on energy conservation in old buildings. More importantly, the staff met with state, federal and National Trust officials on an informal basis throughout the conference concerning the Lits crisis. As a result, significant gains toward ensuring the preservation, at least a partial preservation, of the buildings were made.

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There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:30 P. M.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Siemiontkowski
Architectural Historian

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