

MINUTES OF THE ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE OF THE PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

19 December 1972

Present: Mr. Henry J. Magaziner, A.I.A., Architectural Advisor to the Commission
Mr. Erling H. Pedersen, A.I.A., Old Philadelphia Development Corporation
Mr. Louis Kramer, A.I.A., Architect for the Redevelopment Authority
Dr. Margaret B. Tinkcom, Historian
Mrs. Charles J. Maurer, Executive Assistant to the Chairman
Patricia Sienientkowski, Secretary

Also: Mr. Theodore Bartley, A.I.A., Mr. Robert Cathcart and Mr. Bruce McFadden
to present to the Committee their findings on the possibility of
preserving the Thomas U. Walter buildings at 706-14 Spruce Street.

Dorothy Byrd, reporter for the EVENING AND SUNDAY BULLETIN.

SUBMISSIONS

304 Queen Street, Nick James Chimes & Associates, Architects and Planners.
The Committee noted that the eash and door proposed are not appropriate
for this house. It is recommended that the existing twentieth century
door and windows be retained or that the entire facade of the building
be rebuilt so that it can be restored to its original condition.

239 Arch Street (improvements to adjoining yard), George E. Patton, Inc.,
Landscape Architecture. The improvements to the yard were approved.
The Committee suggested limestone capping instead of pre-cast stone
for the fence posts and will be glad to advise the architect on an
appropriate iron fence design.

781-83-85-87 South Second Street, Dannington Corporation, Larry Formica.
The proposal for the restoration of these four buildings was approved.

Old Pine Street Presbyterian Church, John W. Wright, Jr., A.I.A. The
Committee affirmed Mrs. Maurer's approval of a building permit for
making a window into a door at the rear of this church.

440 Spruce Street (preliminary submission), William Saxon, Designer.
This submission was given the Committee's preliminary approval with
the request for a more serious study to the rear of the structure
in view of the fact that it is a corner building. Working drawings
are now requested.

728 Pine Street, James J. Marshall, R. A. Approved.

218 Delancey Street, John H. Burris, R. A. It was the opinion of the
Committee that the new structure planned for this site does not relate
to the surrounding historically certified buildings. At the suggestion
of Mr. Pedersen, this submission will be referred to the Advisory Board
of Design for review.

DEMOLITIONS

706-14 Spruce Street, Bartley, Long, Miranda, Reynolds, Architects.

Mr. Bartley reported to the Committee that as a result of his firm's study and that of Strouse-Greenberg, the Hospital has come to the conclusion that it is not possible to preserve these structures and, at the same time, meet the needs of its patients.

Mr. Cathcart reported that the Hospital had considered other sites for its expansion but that this area was the only feasible one for the development of the master plan. Consideration also was given to the leasing of the front half of the Spruce Street buildings to a developer for twenty-five years for apartment use. The Strouse-Greenberg report, however, reports that the initial investment for this type of development would exceed the property value thereby making it almost impossible to interest a developer in the financing of such a project if it had to be written off in twenty-five years. It was also reported that R. Damon Childs, Executive Director of the City Planning Commission, informed the Hospital that no established mechanism in the present zoning laws of Philadelphia has been created to implement the transferring of development rights although this preservation tool has been successfully used in several Philadelphia locations.

After excusing the visitors, the Committee discussed at length the problems presented. Mr. Magaziner proposed marketing the front halves of the buildings so that the Hospital would not be burdened with the maintenance of the structures, in view of their having no functional use at this time. The Redevelopment Authority will be requested to look into the marketability of these buildings and report to the Historical Commission before January 18 at which time the matter will come before the Board at its Stated Meeting. Subsequent investigation brought out the fact that this procedure is impossible, since the Authority has already conveyed the land to the Pennsylvania Hospital and is under contract to the Hospital to demolish the buildings unless the Hospital can find a way to use them or dispose of them. It should also be noted that the Historical Commission's withholding time has expired.

Mr. Magaziner pointed out that much has happened which could have a bearing on these buildings in the ten years since the agreement with the Hospital was signed. (1) The buildings have been established as the work of Thomas U. Walter - certainly one of America's most important architects. (2) Federal preservation funds have become available through the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Historic Preservation Act of 1966, etc. (3) The concept of the transfer of air rights has been developed and has been applied in Philadelphia, etc.

705 South Street, Redevelopment Authority. The Committee agreed to allow the demolition of this building in view of extensive fire damage and the Redevelopment Authority's plan to clear the entire block of new construction.

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DEMOLITIONS (Cont'd)

1028-30 Rodman Street, Redevelopment Authority. Because of the dangerous condition of both structures, the Committee agreed to permit their demolition.

PROBLEMS

333 South Third Street. The owner's request to install a second bathroom in the rear of this certified building was approved.

Holy Trinity Church, William H. Thompson, A.I.A. In view of the church's objection to the Commission's requirement that the finials and railing on the tower of Holy Trinity Church be replaced, the Committee again reviewed the matter. After some discussion, the members voted to reaffirm the previous decision to require the replacement of these components.

REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY SPECIFICATIONS

Specifications for the following buildings were reviewed by the Historian:

707 Pine Street
638 Pine Street
607 Pine Street
919 Spruce Street
917 Spruce Street
1135 Spruce Street

It was determined that in future Mrs. Patton, Mr. Kremer, and Dr. Tinkcom will review all specifications without referring these to the Architectural Committee unless some unusual problem presents itself.

PLAQUES

1714 Delancey Street. Approved.

234 Monroe Street. Approved with a recommendation that the shutters be rehanging right side up.

628 Spruce Street. Approved.

224 Delancey Street. Approved.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:05 P. M.

Respectfully submitted,