

**THE MINUTES OF THE 381st STATED MEETING OF THE
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

13 April 1994

**Stephanie Wolf, Vice Chairperson
City Council Caucus Room
Room 401 City Hall**

Present

Stephanie Wolf, Vice Chairperson
Ronald Barber, Commerce Department
David Brownlee
G. Peter Vander Heide, Department of Public Property
Bennett Levin, Commissioner, Department of Licenses & Inspections
Arlene Matzkin
Scott Wilds, Office of Housing and Community Development
Ernest Leonardo, City Planning Commission

Richard Tyler, Historic Preservation Officer
Randal Baron, Preservation Planner
Lori Plavin Salganicoff, Historic Preservation Specialist
Jeffrey Barr, Historical Research Technician

Also

Richard W. Thom, Old City Civic Association
Milton Marks, Preservation Coalition
David R. Slocum, Architect
Tom Hine, Philadelphia Inquirer
Nilo Regojo, Kise Franks and Straw

The 381st Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission was called to order at 10:15am by Stephanie Wolf, Vice Chairperson.

THE MINUTES of the 380th Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission held on 9 March 1994, Wayne Spilove, Chairperson, were approved by unanimous vote and adopted.

THE REPORT of the Architectural Committee of the Philadelphia Historical Commission, 29 March 1994, Arlene Matzkin, Chairperson:

1912-1916 South Rittenhouse Square

David R. Slocum, Architect

PROPOSAL: Additions and Renovations

Architectural Committee Recommendation (29 March 1994): The Committee voted to recommend approval of all aspects of the project, with the stipulation that wood windows be added to the stairhall addition's second and third floors if they comply with fire code. If wood windows are not acceptable

for code reasons, reveals should be required. NOTE: The Report of the 29 March 1994 Meeting of the Architectural Committee stated incorrectly that the Committee recommended that all floors be built with wood windows, rather than just the second and third floors.

Commission members agreed with the Committee in preferring, on the 2nd and 3rd floor, either windows or reveals instead of a flat brick wall. Ms. Matzkin noted that the Philadelphia Fire Code allowed for wood windows in the proportion in which they would occur and therefore recommended windows. Mr. Levin stated that the louvers should be painted to match the brick.

Dr. Brownlee moved to accept the recommendation of the Architectural Committee and approve the proposal, including the addition of wood windows and louvers painted to match the brick; the motion was seconded by Mr. Wilds and adopted by unanimous vote.

C.A.P.A (Formerly Ridgeway Library)

James Straw, Kise Franks and Straw Architects

PROPOSAL: Conceptual Approval, Additions and Renovations

Architectural Committee Recommendation (29 March 1994): The Committee recommended conceptual approval of this project, noting the Applicant's need to further study and resolve the glass-wall connection between the old and new buildings, the new building's base-level materials -- perhaps stone or stone-like, the graphic depiction of those materials, and the large metal spandrel panels for the next conceptual approval review. The Architect agreed to return to the Committee with details.

Mr. Wilds noted that this design is a marked improvement over the design submitted for the November 1993 meeting, and recommended that the Commission conceptually approve the proposal to encourage that process. Ms. Matzkin noted that the proposed addition integrates the old building successfully, and that conceptual approval is appropriate despite the Committee's questions.

Dr. Brownlee made a motion to approve the proposal which was seconded by Mr. Wilds. The Commission voted unanimously to approve the motion for conceptual approval.

City Hall

Burdell Buckley, Maria Romañach Architects

PROPOSAL: Conceptual Approval, Fire Code Compliance

Architectural Committee Recommendation (29 March 1994): Conceptual approval was recommended with the note that the design will also need approval by the Board of Building Standards of the Department of Licenses and Inspections.

The Applicant proposed a redesign of the previously accepted plan for fire code egress requirements at City Hall's 7th floor stair landings; code dictates that the grand stairways must be connected to the new fire stairs at this level. This design, unlike its predecessor, retains the original appearance of the stairhall walls and landing, creating openings instead through the elevator lobby wall and the fire stair bearing wall. The elevator lobby would become a pressurized exitway. Mr. Levin recommended clearly identifying which stairs are fire stairs and which are the non-fire stairs.

Mr. Wilds made a motion to approve the project conceptually. This motion was seconded by Dr. Brownlee and approved by unanimous vote.

Independence Hall, Congress Hall, Old City Hall, and East and West Wings
The Vitetta Group, Inc.

PROPOSAL: Changes to Electrical, Lighting, Fire Protection, Security and Mechanical Systems

Architectural Committee Recommendation (10 April 1994 Special Meeting): The Committee recommended approval of the electrical, fire, and security systems. Committee vote on the lighting system was deferred pending a presentation by the Applicant of a sample installation.

Committee members voted to recommend that the Applicant be required to investigate further the following options, based on higher summer temperature and RH boundaries, and winter RH boundaries based on minimizing condensation on original sash:

- 1. Install state of the art air handling and controls using solely existing duct chases.*
- 2. Install a system with new controls and air handlers, utilizing existing chases as well as creating new ones where such intervention is of no consequence to historic fabric.*
- 3. Develop the currently proposed system with the new boundaries described above.*

Committee members also voted to recommend requiring that a detail of the design for proposed air intake louvers be presented. The Applicant agreed to present these alternatives to another special Committee meeting in approximately ten days.

Commissioner Levin stated that the Department would not enforce mechanical system building codes on a building "of this age and integrity." Ms. Matzkin suggested that Mr. Levin might attend the next Independence Hall special meeting as he is a licensed mechanical engineer. Mr. Levin suggested that the Applicant be made to further demonstrate a technical rationale for replacing basement windows with intake/exhaust louvers.

Dr. Brownlee moved to approve the proposals for the electrical, fire suppression, structural and security systems. Mr. Wilds seconded the motion which was approved by unanimous vote. Dr. Brownlee made another motion seconded by Mr. Wilds approving the Committee's mandate that the Park and its Consultant examine the other options detailed above and return to the Commission for further approval. Mr. Levin made a motion, seconded by Dr. Brownlee, to require the Applicant to provide sufficient technical evidence that proposed ground-level louvers are necessary, and if so shown, provide a detail of these louvers. These motions were approved by unanimous vote.

THE REPORT of the Designation Committee of the Philadelphia Historical Commission, Dr. David Brownlee, Chairperson:

Under a new procedure, nominations for the two proposed building designations were forwarded to each Commission member prior to this meeting. Dr. Brownlee, therefore, gave a very brief presentation of each nomination and asked for questions.

714 Market Street

The building possesses significance in the following areas, including:

1. Its Commercial Italianate style
2. Technology
3. Industry of iron facade construction, and
4. Its standing as an example of the first generation of purpose-built commercial buildings.

Mr. Wilds moved to accept the recommendation of the Designation Committee and approve this nomination. This motion was seconded by Mr. Mullin and unanimously approved.

124-126 South 16th Street

The buildings possess significance for their:

1. High Victorian Gothic style,
2. Attribution to the architects G. W. and H. D. Hewitt, and
3. History as a speculative development of Henry Gibson, a major figure in the development of the Rittenhouse Square area.

In response to Mr. Wilds inquiry about the obviously non-original storefronts on this building, Dr. Brownlee described the early 20th century storefront alteration as a common change to historic buildings in the area. Dr. Brownlee stated that, despite the modern doors, the storefronts are themselves historically significant.

Mr. Wilds moved to accept the recommendation of the Designation Committee and approve this nomination. This motion was seconded by Mr. Mullin and unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Tyler reported the recommendation of staff and the Architectural Committee to appoint Suzanne Pentz to the Architectural Committee. Ms. Pentz, a non-licensed structural engineer for Keast and Hood for the past ten years, has worked on projects including Independence Hall, City Hall, and the Academy of Music. Ms. Matzkin concurred, stating that the Committee needs Ms. Pentz. Mr. Marks of the Preservation Coalition questioned whether the appointment of a non-licensed engineer would reduce that person's effectiveness on the Committee. Ms. Matzkin stated that Ms. Pentz's expertise is needed and that there would always be a licensed engineer other than the person sitting on the Committee hired for independent assessments.

Dr. Brownlee moved to accept the recommendation of the Architectural Committee and appoint Ms. Pentz to that Committee. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wilds and approved by unanimous vote.

THE REPORT of the Activities of the Philadelphia Historical Commission Staff, March 1994, Richard Tyler, Historic Preservation Officer. Mr. Tyler gave a brief, verbal report of staff activities for the month of March:

The Early Warning (Demolition by Neglect) Committee, composed of Wayne Spilove, Bennett Levin, Jennifer Goodman of the Preservation Coalition, and Richard Tyler, has met twice. The initial focus of the Committee is to identify the historic properties within the boundaries of Schuylkill River to Delaware River and Washington Avenue to Spring Garden Street. Next, a building survey within these boundaries by staff, community people, architects, engineers, preservationists, and others, will catalog buildings that appear to be threatened by demolition by neglect. The Department of Licenses and Inspections will then inspect threatened buildings and violations will be written under the Historical Commission's Demolition by Neglect provision as well as the Department's violation codes. A revolving fund will be created to fund emergency repairs, funds that will be replaced using liens on repaired buildings. Mr. Levin stated that Demolition by Neglect violations written as a result of this survey will describe to an owner how to address the problems described. Ms. Matzkin questioned the legality of repairing a building without owner consent. Mr. Levin responded that an upcoming Bill (687) will give greater ability to take independent action.

Mr. Marks stated that, as the only private member of the Committee, it seems to fall to the Preservation Coalition to organize the survey. He noted that the ability to raise money in the private sector will be very closely linked to institutions' perception of the successful enforcement of ordinances. Mr. Levin assured Mr. Marks of the positive intentions of the Department and described this survey and subsequent action as the first of many anticipated efforts. Enforcement comes both from the Department and the Court System, so the Court system must be made to understand the a Demolition by Neglect violation is serious. The fact that the Committee will have money to abate problems will give these violations more weight within the enforcement community.

Historic Philadelphia, Inc. was formed by Mayor Rendell to bring the tourist experience beyond Independence Hall. Mr. Tyler sits on this Committee.

Mr. Tyler described the proposal currently being considered for the Naval Home site. The development calls for four high-rise (17-22 stories) apartment towers, containing 1,200 units in total, to be built behind the historic building. Building high rather than wide allows for greater green space. Mr. Wilds suggested that the Commission reaffirm that the development of the historic buildings be considered an integral part of the total development and that the developer be asked to demonstrate that the historic buildings will be rehabilitated before or concurrently with new construction.

The proposed summer tour route for the Eastern State Penitentiary was inspected by the Department of Licenses and Inspections, resulting in a few minor changes to be made for fire code requirements.

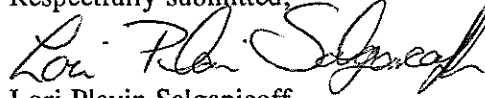
In addition to the systems discussed at this meeting, Independence National Historic Park will soon bring other items to the Historical Commission, including compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Mr. Tyler holds that this building reflects a set of values that include the extension of rights to all, and likened a lack of access to disabled people at this building to the existence of separate bathrooms for colored people decades ago. Mr. Tyler has met with the Park on several occasions regarding this situation; the posture of the City to date is that there shall be compliance with ADA. This will include actual physical access to the first floor, and "programmatic" access to the second in the form of audio-visual aids.

Randy Baron and Jeffrey Barr held a training session for contractors to describe the 106 process and typical requirements and restrictions to National Register eligible and listed properties which receive federal funding.

Finally, the staff and the Preservation Coalition have been working together to effect the Rittenhouse Historic District nomination. That Hearing is slated for this fall. The logistics of moving forward with other pending districts is also under discussion.

There being no further business, Dr. Wolf asked for a motion to adjourn. Upon a motion made and seconded, the Commission unanimously voted to adjourn at 12:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,


Lori Plavin Salganicoff