

THE MINUTES OF THE 376th STATED MEETING OF THE
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

13 October 1993

City Council Caucus Room
Room 401 City Hall

Present

Wayne S. Spilove, Chairperson
David Brownlee, Ph.D., Architectural Historian
Susan Rabinovitch, Real Estate Developer
Scott Wilds, Department of Housing
Stephanie Wolf, Ph.D., Historian
William Brown, Community Representative

Richard Tyler, Historic Preservation Officer
Randal Baron, Preservation Planner
Ira Kauderer, Executive Secretary

Also

Jennifer Goodman, Preservation Coalition of Philadelphia

The meeting began with comments from Mr. Bennet Levin, Commissioner of the Department of Licenses and Inspection. Mr. Levin said that he has been concerned with the condition of the Mayfair House apartment building at 401 W. Johnson Street in Germantown. The Department has issued a violations to the owners and will insist on a the corrections of the violations at the properties.

The Mayfair House site has become a drug haven and a blight to its neighborhood. The Department has adopted the position that "they will no longer allow building owners to take their communities in contempt." It would cost the building owners a million dollars if the City undertakes demolition, and more to have the asbestos abated. Therefore it will be more expensive for the owners to do nothing than for them to work on the building.

Mr. Levin added that the Department has also become concerned about the numerous empty buildings in Center City. Numerous violations have been issued and the Department will aggressively insist that the owners be responsive.

The Department has also removed all debris from the parking lot at 23rd and Vine Streets. This occurred as part of a policy that aims to improve the gateways to Center City.

Mr. Levin will return in November to apprise the Commission of the progress.

CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT TRAINING SESSION: In partial fulfillment of the Certified Local Government education requirement, Dr. David Brownlee presented a lecture and slide presentation about Philadelphia architecture and City Planning after 1900.

THE REPORT of the Activities of the Philadelphia Historical Commission Staff, September 1993, Richard Tyler, Historic Preservation Officer.

Mr. Tyler reported that owing to the vacancy created by Ms. Elk's departure, Mr. Baron has continued to fill both this position and his own. Mr. Kauderer is also leaving to take a new position with a law firm. Work is proceeding and interviews to fill the positions will be conducted within the next two weeks.

CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT REVIEW AND COMMENT, National Register of Historic Places, Mansion Court District, 1907-51 N. 32nd Street, Strawberry Mansion, Philadelphia.

Commission members reviewed the nomination form for the proposed Mansion Court District. Consensus was that although the buildings appear eligible for the National Register, the small group included in this nomination form are part of a larger Strawberry Mansion District. Mr. Tyler proposed that the Commission support listing these buildings on the National Register now, and at the same time urge the State to consider a larger district in the area. The Commission voted unanimously to approve this proposal.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Ira Kauderer".

Ira Kauderer