

MINUTES OF THE THIRTY-EIGHTH MEETING OF THE HISTORICAL COMMISSION
January 26, 1960

Present were: Mr. Harry A. Batten
The Hon. Victor E. Moore, Councilman-at-Large
Dr. Toy Franklin Nichols
Mr. Charles E. Peterson
Mr. George K. Trautwein
Mr. R. Norris Williams, LL.

Mr. Grant M. Simon, Chairman

Mr. William T. Gennetti, Commissioner of Public Property
Mr. Philip Carroll, Administrative Assistant
Mr. George I. Lovatt, City Architect
Mr. Harry G. McDowell, Deputy Director of Finance

Mrs. Charles J. Maurer, Executive Secretary

A WARM WELCOME was extended to Councilman Moore and to Dr. Nichols and Mr. Trautwein.

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

THE MINUTES for December 29, 1959 were approved as corrected

It was noted with pleasure that Mayor Dilworth has reappointed the Members of the Commission and appointed two new Members, Dr. Roy Franklin Nichols and Mr. George K. Trautwein.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Councilman Moore was asked if he cared to make any comments to the Commission. He replied that he was glad his schedule permitted him to attend the meeting and to support its activities.

Mr. Simon commented on the fact that this Commission exists because Mr. Moore sponsored the Bill creating the Commission and that he spoke for all the members in expressing great satisfaction in having Mr. Moore present.

CONTRACTS

The Chairman stated that this is the only body in the Department of Public Property having part-time contractual workers excepting architects for specific work. Referring to the research staff, he said it was his opinion that such talent as the Commission enjoys would probably not be available on a full time basis. The Chairman expressed his gratification that both Mr. Moore and Commissioner Gennetti were present to discuss this matter. The Commission was asked to advise the Commission as to a procedure that would be mutually satisfactory.

Mr. Gennetti said that:

1. The rates must conform to those which Public Property presented to City Council.
2. Each contract sent to the Commission of Public Property must be approved at a stated meeting of the Commission and that these acts should be recored in the Minutes.
3. As contracts for the Historian and two assistant historians had been presented four times and had in effect become permanent, it was Mr. Gennetti's (continued next page)

Jan. 26, 1960

Mr. Gennetti's advice continued:

opinion that the Department of Public Property should make another attempt to get the research staff qualified as Civil Service employees. He emphasized that this need not change the personnel.

Mr. McDowell expressed his opinion that if this does not work, that there exists a blanket exemption from Civil Service. That applications of this exemption would avoid the need for annual application for contracts.

Councilman Moore asked the Chairman how such a change would effect the work of the Historical Commission. Mr. Simon explained that Dr. Tinkcom is a Doctor of Philosophy, with important background and historic study; that Mr. Fuller is a post graduate student at the University of Pennsylvania, and by special arrangement with the School of American Civilization, gets some credit for his research on briefs of title and deeds which he searches for information pertaining to the Commission's certified buildings, in the City's Department of Records.

Councilman Moore asked if any of these staff members left the Commission, would it be possible to replace them? Mr. Simon thought the loss of any one of the staff would create a serious problem for the Commission.

Mr. Williams asked if it would be necessary for the personnel to live in the City, if she or he came under Civil Service. Mr. Gennetti reported that a variance could be sought for an exemption to this rule. Mr. Williams recalled that as far as Dr. Tinkcom is concerned, it was never the intention of the Commission that her services would be on a temporary basis. Mr. Gennetti reiterated that it was not the City's intention to change the personnel, that if it is impossible to employ the present staff under Civil Service, the Department will withdraw this effort.

Miss Rudolph's past work in the Public School system was reviewed by the Chairman, with special reference to her supervision of a program of Industrial Arts, initiated by her. Mr. Simon drew attention to the fact that the Historical Commission was in no position to pay Miss Rudolph a salary commensurate with her skills and experience and that the first contract for \$500 annually and the one for 1960 in the amount of \$750 to be paid in quarterly payments, is an honorarium to partially cover her expenses.

Summing up, the Chairman asked for a motion to approve the contracts. Mr. Hatten made the motion that the following amounts be paid the Historical Staff of the Commission. Councilman Moore seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved that:

Dr. Margaret B. Tinkcom \$ 4,400
Hourly rate of \$4.50 per hour remains the same as that paid during 1959. Original request for contract in the amount of \$4500 (See Budget request enclosed with letter to Mr. Gennetti from Mr. Simon April 30, 1959)

Mrs. Earle R. Kirkbride (Beatrice K.) \$ 3,500
Rate of \$3.00 per hour represents an increase of 25 cents an hour over that paid in 1959. Note that the contract in the amount of \$3,760 was originally requested for Mrs. Kirkbride. (See Budget request sent to Mr. Gennetti from Mr. Simon, April 30, 1959)

Mr. Richard S. Fuller \$ 2,500

Rate of \$2.50 per hour represents an increase of 50 cents an hour over that paid Mr. Fuller in 1958 and 1959. This increase brings his rate of pay up to that previously set for his predecessor, William K. Bohan. (See Budget request sent to Mr. Gennetti, April 30, 1959)

Miss A. Adele Rudolph \$ 750

To be paid in equal quarterly installments to cover the expenses she incurs, working for the Commission. Original request was for \$1,000 (See Budget request sent to Mr. Gennetti April 30, 1959)

The Commission wishes to make it a matter of record that these rates now agreed upon are identical with those proposed with the Commission's Budget was submitted to the Department of Public Property in April, 1959, and also, that they are identical with the rates requested by the research staff when applications were individually made for new contracts for the staff, December 1959.

Mr. Gennetti agreed to work out the details with his assistants.

PLAQUES FOR HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Mr. Batten reviewed the procedure of manufacturing the plaques and the means of handling the applications and the distribution of the numbered plaques. Mr. Gennetti requested one for City Hall. The Chairman then mentioned the Commission's master ledger where records of applications and authorizations for buying plaques from the manufacturer are kept. He asked the members' approval of this procedure. It was unanimously given.

Mr. Batten suggested that it become a part of the record that the assignment of a plaque rests upon whether the building is certified and restored in agreement with the Historical Commission's specifications. It was so ordered.

HAMILTON-HARRISON HOUSE, 61st & Cobb's Creek Boulevard

The Chairman reported that the building is already demolished; that the Board of Education had not known in time, that the building was certified when this was done; that no application for a demolition permit from Licenses & Inspections appears to be required of the School Board. However, the interior and some exterior features have been salvaged and are now in the possession of the Redevelopment Authority. Ultimately this salvage will be sold to St. Peter's Church, Third & Pine Streets, to be incorporated into the fabric of an intended building.

THE MORRIS BREWERY VALUTS c 1790

A verbal report from Mr. William Berry of the Redevelopment Authority informs the Commission that a five story, forty-unit apartment house will be built on the site. It was Mr. Williams's opinion that the vaults will be the most interesting feature of this new building. Mr. Batten suggested that the Commission ask the Old Philadelphia Development Corporation to exert its influence to save these vaults, and agreed to bring the matter to their attention at a meeting the following day. A motion to do this was made by Mr. Williams, seconded by Councilman

Jan. 26, 1960

Moore, and unimously approved.

THE PEALE HOUSE c 1783, Frankford Avenue and Welsh Road (NO. 8100 Frankford Ave.)

The Chairman reported that Deputy Commissioner Flood had undertaken a search among the departments of the City for a use for this house, without success, and inquiries leading to its use by local societies had failed. The matter is reviewed at this time because of a letter to the Mayor from Mrs. W. C. Mason, who in turn has written to the Commission himself. The Chairman read part of his reply to the Mayor's letter, suggesting that Mrs. Mason might become the leading spirit of an organization to preserve the house, since it is one of a group of several fine buildings. Dr. Nichols asked whether the Peale House had been brought to the attention of the Frankford Historical Society, or any neighborhood group. Mr. Moore suggested that he write to Mr. Herman Blum, whose office is in the Craftex Building. Councilman Moore was given the photographs as well as the correspondence file.

FIRE EQUIPMENT FOR THE HEAD HOUSE

Mr. Lovatt, City Architect, reported that a bathroom for the custodian will cost \$2500 and that he is trying to get an appropriation in this amount from the City.

Mr. Batten reviewed two plans - an apartment for a married man, or quarters for a single man; the latter is the only feasible one. Councilman Moore asked whether a suburban group, once interested in the Head House (under the chairmanship of the Rev. Alan Evans, D.D.) could be approached. Mr. Batten thought that Mrs. David Van Pelt was interested, but only in a sum that would decorate the second floor and that the group was no longer functioning. Mr. Lovatt reported that the restoration by the City would be completed in April. Mr. Moore suggested that the Commission speak to the Mayor, asking him to see if City Council cannot appropriate the needed amount in order that the work be done concurrently with plumbing and wiring, this last under the auspices of the Redevelopment Authority. It was further suggested that the Redevelopment Authority be requested to assume this obligation. Mr. Gennetti agreed.

DEMOLITION BY NEGLIGENCE

Mr. McDowell read a letter from the Assistant City Attorney of New Orleans, in which it appears that there have been no appeals or contests to an ordinance in force there, carrying a penalty of \$100 a day or ninety days in gaol. It is apparent that New Orleans has as yet reached no conclusion regarding the effectiveness of this ordinance. Councilman Moore suggested that Mr. Shusterman in the City Solicitor's office would be interested in trying to clarify the question as to whether a similar ordinance would be effective in Philadelphia, and whether the penalties would be legal. It was resolved that no action could be taken at this meeting and the matter was deferred until Mr. McDowell reports further.

Mr. McDowell was asked to explore the possibility of getting an amendment to the present Bill #695. Mr. Peterson suggested that Mr. McDowell proceed with a draft controlling the neglect of a certified building. Mr. Batten thought the matter of penalty should be thoroughly explored.

328, 330 SOUTH THIRD STREET

After discussing the matter of Robert Trump's neglect to apply for a permit

THE MINUTES

Jan. 26, 1960

for alterations to the facades of these two houses and the fact that the matter was not first referred to the Commission for its approval, Mr. Williams made a motion that a letter be sent to the Commissioner of Licenses and Inspections, drawing his attention to Mr. Trump's neglect of the proper procedure. The motion was seconded by Mr. Batten and carried.

ORDINANCE FOR A VARIANCE

Mr. Lovatt read the draft of an appeal for a variance from the existing regulations pertaining to building materials, on which he and Mr. McDowell had worked together, the wording of which the Commission has approved. So has the Fire Marshall. Mr. Gennetti commented that authentic restoration might be less expensive than that required by the Department of Licenses and Inspections under the modern Building Code. It was moved and seconded that Mr. McDowell take the next steps toward making this proposal effective. This was unanimously approved.

SURVEYS OFFERED TO THE COMMISSION BY THE PHILADELPHIA CONTRIBUTIONSHIP For Insuring Houses Against Loss by Fire - Mr. Webb, Treasurer

The question was asked: Can the Commission accept them? A motion was made by Dr. Nichols and seconded by Mr. Peterson, that the Commission obtain copies of the insurance surveys and that the originals be turned over to the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. It was so ordered.

COMLY FARM

Mr. Simon said that this farm, purporting to belong to the City as a part of the proposed extension of the Northeast Airport, has been brought to the Commission's attention by Mayor Dilworth. The Commission has very little information about it. Mr. Carroll said that Public Property would order adequate photographs. Mr. Batten moved that the matter be tabled until a later meeting. This motion was seconded and approved.

FIRST FEDERAL SAVINGS & LOAN ASSOCIATION

A letter from Mr. Samuel A. Green, President, reports that in 1831, a loan was granted to Comly Rich to build the property at 4276 Orchard Street in Frankford, giving birth to the philosophy of financing and building homes that has grown to a most important industry. The First Federal Savings & Loan Association look upon this property as a shrine, since their industry has its roots there. They wish to have the Commission certify this as being historically significant. After some discussion, the matter was referred to Dr. Tinkcom for further study to authenticate the data at hand.

SUBMISSIONS

342 South Third Street. Mr. Batten objected to the recommendation made to the owner by the Redevelopment Authority, that the present stucco covering be removed, the bricks inspected and if they are not in good condition, that another, thinner covering be applied; also that shutters be hung "wherever hardware indicated shutters to have been". It was suggested that a letter be written to the owner, urging him to exert every effort to restore this building properly

SUBMISSIONS continued

342 S. Third continued: because of its prominent position in relation to St. Peter's Church and because of its important background; and that a competent architect be asked to prepare drawings illustrating necessary changes before further consideration by the Historical Commission.

632 Spruce Street. The Brief of Title goes back to 1805, but the building appears to be of the Civil War era. It was suggested that Dr. Tinkcom study the surveys and at the next meeting inform the Commission of the probable date of construction

534 Cypress Street. Mr. Williams urged that the Commission write to the owner, asking him to present adequate plans for the Commission's review.

208 South Fourth Street. The Chairman reported that this is probably the most fully documented building in the city. No action can be taken on the submission until we are fully advised as to the Redevelopment Authority's decision on zoning for stores. Mr. Batten offered to take the matter up with the Redevelopment Authority at a meeting on January 27 and borrowed the photograph and the attorney's letter to Mr. Simon. The matter will be held over until the next meeting.

332, 334 South Fourth Street. The Chairman read Dr. Godwin's latest letter to the Commission ~~stating his reluctance to accept the bulk or jut window~~ stating his reluctance to accept the bulk or jut window. Blueprints of the proposed restoration were viewed by the members. Mr. Peterson was asked to study the building in the light of Dr. Godwin's latest statement and discuss it with him. Mr. Peterson agreed to do so. The question as to whether the Commission will insist upon a jut window cannot be resolved until Mr. Peterson's study of the exterior is complete.

323 South Third Street. The plans submitted were approved with recommendation that shutters be added.

325 South Third Street. The owner's proposal that the roof be repaired in conjunction with roofing presently in progress at 323 South Third, by the same contractor was approved.

528 Cypress Street. It was recommended that the architect redesign the windows to conform with the original structure.

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION'S PROPOSALS: NORTH OF CHESTNUT STREET

A discussion of Mr. Larsen's plans for the redevelopment of the area was deferred, pending additional information.

The Meeting was adjourned at 5:50 P. M.

Respectfully submitted

Charles E. Peterson
Secretary