

MINUTES OF THE 170th STATED MEETING OF THE PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

5 October 1972

Dr. F. Otto Haas, Chairman

Present: Dr. F. Otto Haas, Chairman of the Commission  
Hon. John B. Kelly, Jr., Councilman-at-Large  
John Taxin  
William A. Costello, Commissioner of Public Property  
James L. Ferguson, Deputy Director of Finance  
Henry J. Magaziner, A.I.A., Architectural Advisor to the Commission  
Dr. Margaret B. Tinkcom, Historian  
Lewis Kramer, Architect for the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority  
Patricia Sieniontkowski, Secretary

Also: L. Charles Scipione, A.I.A., Architect for the congregation of St. Nicholas Church  
Joseph Anderson, representing the Building Committee of St. Nicholas Church.  
Gregory Yaroschuk, also representing the Building Committee of St. Nicholas Church

Unless otherwise noted, all action taken herein is the result of motions correctly made, seconded and carried.

THE MINUTES for the Stated Meeting, 7 September 1972, were approved and directed to be filed.

REPORTS

The Report of the Architectural Committee for 19 September 1972 was approved and directed to be filed with the official copy of the Minutes.

Staff Recommendations for the Certification of Buildings, Dr. Margaret B. Tinkcom, Historian. The Commission voted to certify the following buildings:

St. Vincent DePaul Church  
2113-15-17 Green Street and 2110-12-14; 2114-16 Green Street  
2100 block of Mt. Vernon Street  
Southwest corner of Seventeenth and Spruce Streets, Tenth Presbyterian Church (James H. Windrim, Architect)  
237-43 South Twenty-first Street (Furness and Evans, Architects)  
1001 Chestnut Street, "Victory Building"

It was decided that the certification of 301 and 317 Parker Avenue and the barn on Wise's Mill Road and Henry Avenue, requested by the Mansyunk-Romborough-Wissahickon Historical Society, be tabled for the present in view of a heated controversy over the proposed development of that area, and a study of the Wissahickon and upper Schuylkill valleys being prepared by the City Planning Commission.

## REPORTS (Cont'd)

Report on Historical Commission Activities for September, Dr. Margaret B. Tinkum, Historian. This report was approved and directed to be filed with the official copy of the Minutes.

## OLD BUSINESS

St. Nicholas Church, Seventh and Brown Streets. The Chairman of the Architectural Committee reviewed with the Commission members Mr. Scipione's proposals to alter this historically certified church and the Board's rejection of these plans. A report to Mr. Magaziner prepared by Mr. Pedersen, a member of the Architectural Committee who visited the church building with Mr. Scipione, was read to the Commission attesting to the architectural integrity of the structure and the financial advantages to the congregation of its preservation. (A copy of this report is appended to the Minutes.)

The architect for the church, Mr. Scipione, raised several objections to the Board's refusal to allow him to carry out his plans. It was first alleged that the Philadelphia Historical Commission did not notify the owners of the church of its certification; and secondly, that extensive alterations have already been made to this building without the Historical Commission's knowledge but with the proper building permits from the Department of Licenses and Inspections. Mr. Scipione outlined the work completed and explained the committee's reasons for the planned elimination of the side doors on the front facade and the installation of a new center door.

To keep down the cost of refurbishing the structure, which seemed to be the main consideration to the congregation, Mr. Magaziner suggested keeping the openings flanking the main entrance; repairing the existing bi-fold doors which are original; and using good quality stucco to face the facade since it would be more appropriate.

Both the architect and Mr. Anderson were unsympathetic to these suggestions and expressed the hope that decertification could be accomplished relatively soon so that work may begin as planned.

The visitors were thanked for coming to the Commission meeting to present their views to the Board and excused.

After a long discussion among those present, it was decided not to decertify the building but to try to reach a compromise satisfactory to the church. It was suggested that the two side doors on the front facade might be eliminated but that the center door and doorway be preserved and restored to their original condition. The Commission also suggested strongly that stucco to match the existing color and texture now on the church, be used to face the front facade instead of a substance different in composition and quality. A motion was made to follow the suggestions as presented in these Minutes and to deny decertification of St. Nicholas Church. This motion was seconded and carried.

## OLD BUSINESS (Cont'd)

Another motion was made to ask the City Solicitor's Office for a ruling on the Philadelphia Historical Commission's notification of owners whose properties have been declared historically significant. This motion was seconded and carried.

## NEW BUSINESS

814 South Front Street. The Secretary reported on the receipt of a memorandum from the Department of Licenses and Inspections requesting permission to demolish the four rear court houses at 814 South Front Street. It was noted that the buildings are structurally dangerous and present a hazard to public safety. A motion was made to permit the demolition of these buildings. It was seconded and carried.

Mariner's Church, northwest corner of Front and Queen Streets. It was reported to the Board that the owner of the property at Front and Queen Streets has sandblasted the exterior of this building without getting the Commission's approval or a building permit from the Department of Licenses and Inspections as required. The Board agreed that a letter be sent to the owner informing him of the illegality of his work and stressing the need for a building permit if any further work is planned. The Commission also strongly suggested that the exterior walls (now damaged by the sandblasting) be covered with a sealer to protect the fabric from any further harm, and the interior of the building from penetrating moisture.

Proposal to encumber \$100.00 to pay expenses of Patricia Siemiontkowski at the Annual Meeting of the National Trust for Historic Preservation in Washington, D. C. A motion was made to approve this request. It was seconded and carried.

Volunteer with the Philadelphia Historical Commission. The Commission approved the appropriation of funds (not to exceed \$100) to cover the out-of-pocket expenses of Miss Gibb while she is working for the Historical Commission at the rate of \$3.00 per day.

Resolution - Richmond P. Miller. Dr. Haas agreed to prepare a resolution to be sent to Mrs. Richmond P. Miller whose husband, a long time member of the Philadelphia Historical Commission, died on October 2, 1972.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:00 P. M.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Siemiontkowski  
Secretary