

THE MINUTES OF THE 321st STATED MEETING

OF THE

PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

11 May 1988

Edward A. Montgomery, Jr., Chairman

Present: Edward A. Montgomery, Jr., Chairman
David Brownlee
Caroline Golab
David Hollenberg
Jason Nathan
Christine Washington
Benjamin F. Ellis, Commissioner, Department of Public Property
Barbara Kaplan, Executive Director, Philadelphia City Planning
Commission
David Wismer, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Licenses and
Inspections
Scott Wilds, Office of Housing and Community Development

Maria Petrillo, Esq., Chief Assistant City Solicitor, Law
Department
Richard Tyler, Historic Preservation Officer
Patricia Siemiontkowski, Assistant Historic Preservation Officer
Randal Baron, Preservation Planner
Carmen Weber, Archaeologist
Maureen Heaney, Clerk Stenographer I

Also: John Plonski, Commissioner, Department of Licenses and
Inspections
James Kruhly, James Oleg Kruhly and Associates Architects
Randy Cotton, Philadelphia Historic Preservation Corporation
Dennis Oakes, Esq.
MaryLou McFarland and Rebecca Trumbull, Preservation Coalition
of Greater Philadelphia
Thomas Hine, reporter from The Philadelphia Inquirer
And others.

Unless otherwise noted, all actions taken herein are the results of
motions correctly made, seconded and carried.

THE MINUTES of the 320th Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission, held on 13 April 1988, Edward A. Montgomery, Jr., Chairman, were reviewed and approved.

THE REPORT of the Architectural Committee meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission held on 28 April 1988, David Hollenberg, Chairman. Mr. Hollenberg divided the report into three groups. The first group includes projects for which an approval is recommended. These projects are 1524 Delancey Street, 2038 Green Street, Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, 3512 Baring Street and The Wanamaker Department Store Building. Mr. Hollenberg stated that a correction should be made to the minute for Wanamakers. The minute erroneously states that the submission includes the proposed replacement of all windows. The minute should be corrected to read: "This submission includes the proposed replacement of windows on floors three through twelve."

The Commission unanimously voted to accept the recommendation of the Architectural Committee for the approval of these projects.

The next section covers projects requiring the submission of additional information. This information has not yet been received. These are: 243 Market Street, The Bourse Building located at 21 S. 5th Street, 2-16 Vine Street and 1500 W. Diamond Street.

The Commission voted to accept the Architectural Committee's recommendation for the submission of additional information before an approval is granted.

Finally, Mr. Hollenberg discussed the Committee's review of the properties at 533 and 535 Delancey Street. The owner wishes to have the front facades altered to reflect a change from two separate houses into a single family dwelling. Mr. Hollenberg noted that the architect for the project, Mr. James Kruhly, was present and wished to appeal to the Commission for an approval of this project.

Mr. Kruhly presented a drawing illustrating the proposed changes to the front facades of these two buildings. Photographs were also made available to the Commission members.

Mr. Kruhly explained that the facade at 533 Delancey Street will remain unaltered. However, substantial alterations are proposed for the front facade of 535 Delancey Street. The plans call for replacement of the present stoops on both buildings with a new curved single traverse stoop. Mr. Kruhly stated that his client is willing to store the stoops in the event that someday a new owner would choose to restore these properties to their original appearance.

The architect further explained to the Commission his plan to remove the existing ground floor windows and door at 535, to lengthen the existing masonry window openings and to create an open vestibule with the construction of a new wall several feet behind the original wall of 535.

After considerable discussion, the Commission unanimously voted to accept the recommendation of its Architectural Committee and deny approval of the application for 533-535 Delancey Street. The proposal, as presented, clearly does not follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Historic Buildings. It changes drastically the historic appearance of the building and impacts on the integrity of the streetscape.

THE REPORT on the Activities of the Philadelphia Historical Commission Staff for 1 April - 1 May 1988, Richard Tyler, Historic Preservation Officer.

In response to Jason Nathan's inquiry regarding recent developments with the Boyd Theater and its change in ownership, Maria Petrillo, counsel for the Commission, stated that she had nothing further to report.

David Brownlee asked if the Commission staff had received any information on the issue of maintenance at the Naval Home.

Richard Tyler stated that Toll Brothers has done nothing to date to secure or maintain the property.

THE REPORT of the Ad Hoc Committee on Rules and Procedures, Richard Tyler, Historic Preservation Officer.

Richard Tyler described the preliminary nature of the meeting and its purpose to explore a range of issues regarding general policy and specific regulations.

The Committee recommended obtaining a consultant to assist the Commission and its staff in formulating these policies and regulations.

Jason Nathan advised the Commission of the sense of urgency expressed by the Committee members which is not reflected in the report. He further noted the possibility of receiving funds from the Preservation Fund of Pennsylvania to retain an outside consultant.

Mr. Tyler discussed this matter with the Preservation Fund and reported its receptivity to the idea. Mr. Tyler will report back to the Commission with more specific information at the next meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

The relocation of the Batten Fund to Mellon Bank from Germantown Savings Bank was approved by the Historical Commission at its last meeting. However, owing to the Chairman's association with Mellon Bank, the Law Department advised the staff to move the Fund to yet another bank.

The Commission voted to approve the relocation of the Harry A. Batten Memorial Fund to the Philadelphia National Bank. Edward A. Montgomery abstained.

NEW BUSINESS

David Brownlee discussed, at length, the process and procedures for the creation of Historic Districts. Mr. Brownlee cited the sections of the ordinance which relate to the creation of historic districts and discussed the work that the designation committee and the Commission staff must undertake to create Historic Districts.

David Hollenberg warned that the creation of additional districts in the city will bring many more applications before the Architectural Committee for review. Mr. Hollenberg stated that the Architectural Committee, as it exists presently, will be unable to handle these additional applications. He suggested that consideration be given to the formulation of a review process which will result in an efficient way to handle the additional flow of work which will confront the Architectural Committee and the staff.

Mr. Tyler suggested that possibly more applications could be reviewed at staff level.

Richard Tyler stated that the meeting of the Committee on Rules and Regulations discussed two important issues. As a result, two possible policies are being proposed today. The first policy addresses the problem of how to treat applications for alterations to non-contributing buildings within an historic district. A copy of this proposed policy is attached to the official copy of these minutes.

The Historical Commission members discussed this issue at length. It was agreed that review of submissions be conducted by the Historical Commission staff without referral to the Architectural Committee. The Commission further agreed that this review for non-contributing buildings must occur within 45 days of receipt of the building permit application. The Commission determined that each of the six items under section (7)(k) of the ordinance will apply.

Barbara Kaplan suggested that the proposed policy, placing emphasis on the compatibility of height in the review of non-contributing buildings be eliminated. The Commission, as a whole, agreed.

The Commission asked Mr. Tyler to rewrite the policy with regard to the treatment of non-contributing buildings in an historic district in accordance with the comments made today. The Commission further asked for a clarification concerning the character of the policy as a procedure or a regulation.

Mr. Tyler next read the proposed transition rule which is also attached to the official copy of these minutes. This rule addresses the problem of property owners who own buildings in a district and who have entered into contracts and expended funds on a project before they were notified of the potential designation of that district as historic.

Maria Petrillo, counsel for the Commission, suggested that the proposed statement be characterized as a regulation rather than a rule.

Mr. Hollenberg noted that the proposed new transition rule will not apply to properties located in a district under consideration for designation if that property has been individually designated.

The Commission voted to adopt the transition regulation with the understanding that it will not apply to previously designated buildings located in a proposed new district. David Brownlee, David Hollenberg and Scott Wilds abstained.

Harry A. Batten Fund

The Historical Commission approved Richard Tyler's request for \$750.00 from the Harry A. Batten Memorial Fund to allow for his attendance at the National Trust for Historic Preservation Annual Meeting in Cincinnati.

The Commission also approved the reimbursement to Carmen Weber of \$48.90 for travel expenses incurred for her attendance at the Statewide Preservation Conference in Downingtown, Pennsylvania.

Richard Tyler reported that the Coalition of Greater Philadelphia has published a pamphlet for lay people concerning historic districts. Mr. Tyler requested the Commission's authorization to spend \$300 for the purchase of 600 of these pamphlets.

The Commission unanimously approved this expenditure.

National Register Nomination Dobson Mills

The Dobson Mills complex consists of twenty industrial buildings principally constructed of local stone and heavy timber on twenty acres of land at Ridge Avenue and Scott's Lane in the East Falls section of Philadelphia.

The Dobson Mills complex is associated with events that made a significant contribution to the industrialization of the nation and, according to Mr. Tyler, warrants being placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Commission agreed with the recommendation of Mr. Tyler to support entry of the Dobson Mills complex on the National Register of Historic Places.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Heaney
Clerk Steno I

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