

THE TWENTY-FIRST MEETING OF THE PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Held on Tuesday, March 25, 1958 in Room 813, City Hall Annex at 3:30 P. M.

The following members were present:

Mr. R. Norris Williams, II.
Mr. Charles Peterson
Mr. Harry G. McDowell, for Mr. Richard J. McConnell
Mr. Grant M. Simon Chairman

Also present:

Mr. John Gane, Architect, representing the City
Planning Commission
Dr. Margaret B. Tinkcom, Historian for the Commission
Mrs. Charles J. Maurer, Executive Secretary

The Meeting came to order at 3:40 P. M.

The Minutes of the last Meeting, February 25, 1958, were approved.

✓ THE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

Mr. Gane exhibited a map showing the Redevelopment Authority's plans for Unit #1., Washington Square East. This plan calls for the Delaware Expressway to follow the bed of Front Street, bearing west to Second Street below Lombard. In addition to the blocks on which the old houses will be rehabilitated and the gaps filled in with new construction, the plan shows several eight story buildings on the site of Dock Street Markets and one fifteen story apartment building at Fourth Street & Willing's Alley, presently a Yellow Cab lot. Mr. Gane could not leave the map for the Commission to study as the information contained therein is not yet public. Since this information is still confidential, comment by the Commission would not be appropriate at this time.

Mr. Gane emphasized the fact that this is still a study; the State and Federal highway engineers will have the controlling influence upon its final form.

Mr. Gane gave the Commission prints of drawings for: 223, 225-7, 429 Spruce; 232, 270 So 3d; 264, 271, 273 S 4th and 313 DeLancey Streets.

Mr. Peterson moved that Wright, Andrade and Amenta be commended for their thorough work, even though it was not acceptable to the Philadelphia Historical Commission. The motion was seconded by Mr. Williams and unanimously carried. X

✓ SECOND STREET MARKET - Mr. Edwin G. Brumbaugh's report.

The Chairman read his letter of February 27 to Mr. Brumbaugh and the latter's reply, to which was attached an addendum to the original report, quoting the additional data supplied by the Historian with appropriate comment. Mr. Peterson commended the report and recommended its acceptance. The Motion was carried.

Mr. Brumbaugh's bill for \$1,000 was approved for payment.

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The Chairman reported that the \$25,000 needed for restoration of the Head House is not yet available. The restoration of the Market proper was discussed and Mr. Gane suggested that it be restored and used as an old-fashioned open air market, perhaps a farmer's market. Mr. Peterson concurred and reported that he had seen some old plans of the shambles which he will try to relocate. The subject was tabled.

✓ PENNSYLVANIA HOSPITAL NURSES' HOME

A resume of past correspondence was given and Mr. Bacon's letter of March 3d and Mr. Simon's reply of March 11th were read. It was the opinion of the Members that all the Commission could do at present would be to delay the demolition of the Spruce Street houses for six months, if advisable. The Chairman reported that he is waiting for a conference which is to be arranged with Mr. Cheston and Mr. Hare to discuss the problem.

✓ BIDDING ON THE RESTORATION OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS.

The Chairman read a copy of his letter to Mr. M. O. Anderson, asking for information about the Government's policy in awarding contracts for restoring historic buildings. He read part of Mr. Anderson's reply. It was the sense of the meeting that the Commission, having drawn the question to the attention of Mr. Anderson, could do nothing further.

✓ THE BULLETIN ALMANAC

Mr. Leo Murphy, Editor of the Almanac is on vacation. The matter of listing the Commission and various additional historic sites and buildings was deferred, pending Mr. Murphy's return.

✓ THE SCHUYLKILL ARSENAL

Mr. Williams reported that he had written to Mr. Gondos in Washington, at the Historian's request and had had a reply that the Arsenal records are not arranged for convenient study. Mr. Peterson suggested that the Chairman ask the Mayor to request Senator Clark to ask for a study of the Arsenal. After some discussion it was decided that no definite action be taken at this time.

Mr. Peterson reported that Dr. Frank Barnes, Regional Historian for the National Park Service had made a study of Fort Mifflin. It was agreed that the Historian ask Dr. Barnes' permission to see it.

✓ HABS FORMS

Reports on Holy Trinity, St. Mark's, St. George's, the Mechanic's Bann, the Contributionship, Schuylkill Arsenal and Kirkbride's are in progress.

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✓ HABI SHEETS

The Historian pointed out that photographs taken by the City's photographer are inadequate in some cases, for filing with these forms, inasmuch as the instructions were for the photographers to take as many facades at one exposure as feasible. Mrs. Tinkcom suggested that Miss Adele Rudolph be hired to take suitable snapshots where necessary for these forms. The Historian was instructed to explore the matter.

✓ THE GEORGE HOUSE

This problem is to be dropped, as it is considered that no further effort to save the house is expedient. The Historian reported that HABI Forms have been filled out for the George House.

SUBMISSIONS

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✓ The Chairman read a letter from Mr. Arnold Nicholson, Chairman of the Renewal Committee of SHARA, which accompanied his drawings of proposed work needed to rehabilitate Drinker's Court. It was the Commission's opinion that it could not take action on these drawings, inasmuch as a Permit had already been obtained from the Department of Licences and Inspections. x

✓ Mr. Frank P. Graham's request for permission to remove a fire escape from the front of his house, 210 Spruce, and to substitute a window for an existing door on the Spruce Street facade was discussed. The Commission approved the substitution of a window for the door. The present side door is to become the main entrance to the house. x

✓ Mr. Frank J. Matthews, for the owner of 708 Pine, submitted plans for some minor interior changes required to make this an approved three family dwelling. Application was approved for one apartment to each floor, no external changes. x

✓ KIRKBRIDE'S AND THE BUSTI MANSION

The Chairman read a letter to Mr. Donald C. Wagner, recommending the preservation of these buildings and requesting that any alterations or additions be made subject to the approval of the Commission, as required by Ordinance No. 695, effective November 1956. Mr. Wagner's reply of March 14th stated that the matter will be taken up with the Administrative Board on March 17th.

In regard to the Administration Building, Mr. Simon suggested that the City needs an increasing amount of storage space; there is a possibility that Kirkbride's, because of its fire-resisting construction, might lend itself to use as a satisfactory depository for files and records.

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✓ THE SOCIETY FOR THE PRESERVATION OF LANDMARKS

The Chairman read Mr. Levis' letter of March 14, replying to Mr. Simon's letter of March 11th, concerning a special study of the Front Street area. The Study Committee of the Landmarks Society thought such a study inexpedient and it will not be made.

THE MATTHEW NEWARK HOUSE

✓ Contract & Budget

A letter from Mr. Bacon, dated March 24, 1958, asking for a suggestion for using the portico of the Newark house was read. Mr. Bacon wanted to use the structure in the North Mall, but that effort was not successful.

A STATEMENT ON THE COMMISSION'S BUDGET AS OF MARCH, 1958

Equipment (400)	bookcase, filing cabinet.	Expended \$	122.65	Balance \$	127.35
Supplies (300)	supplies & petter cash	"	139.94	"	960.06
Services (200)	contracte for estimated funds needed by historians during current Calendar year, 1958	"	6700.00	"	2300.00
	Additional sum needed to extend present contracts.		2500.00		
	In round numbers		\$9200.00		\$3887.31

The Statement was read and approved.

It was suggested that if it were possible, the Commission should meet in its own office in the future. Mr. McDowell offered to see if a conference table and a sufficient number of chairs could be obtained for this purpose.

PRINTING THE ANNUAL REPORT

✓ Mr. McDowell said that he had been in touch with Mr. Abraham Rosen, Deputy City Representative and that Mr. Rosen agreed that his office could absorb the cost of printing the Commission's Annual Report, together with the special studies which such a report might contain. It was suggested that the Historian get in touch with Mr. Rosen to discuss the matter in detail.

The Meeting adjourned at 5: 30 P. M.

Charles E. Peterson
Secretary