

**THE MINUTES OF THE 366TH STATED MEETING OF THE
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

9 September 1992

**City Council Caucus Room
Room 401 City Hall**

Present

Wayne S. Spilove, Chairman
William Brown
David Brownlee, Ph.D., Architectural Historian
James Cuorato, First Deputy Commerce Director, Commerce
Department
Barbara Kaplan, Executive Director, City Planning Commission
Scott Wilds, Executive Assistant, Office of Housing & Community
Development
Stephanie Wolf, Ph.D., Historian
William Candelori, At Large
Lou Einhorn, Deputy Commissioner, Public Property

E. Jane Hix, Assistant City Solicitor, Law Department
Richard Tyler, Historic Preservation Officer
Sara Jane Elk, Historical Research Technician
Ira Kauderer, Executive Secretary

Also

Tom Hine, Philadelphia Inquirer
James Matour, R.C.I., Inc.

The Minutes of the 365th Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission, held 12 August 1992, Wayne S. Spilove, Chairman. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Dr. Brownlee, seconded by Mr. Wilds and approved by unanimous vote.

The Report of the Architectural Committee of the Philadelphia Historical Commission held 27 August 1992, Randal Baron Reporting for Arlene Matzkin, Chairperson.

Approval

Shaber Residence, 528 Spruce Street: This proposal to restore a 1795 townhouse with late 19th century alterations to its 1839 appearance has come before the Committee twice before. The Committee has recommended approval in concept. The applicant returned to the Committee showing the specific details of the plan. These details include the installation of a new cornice and marble water table and the removal of deteriorated Victorian era

details. The Committee recommended approval of the plans as presented.

Dr. Brownlee moved that the Commission grant final approval for this proposal. Mr. Wilds seconded the motion.

The Commission voted unanimously to adopt the motion for approval.

Approval

Vesper Boat Club, #10 Boat House Row: The Committee had previously reviewed Vesper's plan to alter a 1950s cinder block addition to the boat house. The resulting neo-Victorian addition will house a women's locker room and social space. The Committee granted conceptual approval, and made several suggestions about the proposed details of the building. Armstrong Kaulbach architects responded to these suggestions and returned to the Committee with revised detailed drawings. The Committee recommended final approval of these revised plans as presented.

Mr. Wilds moved that the Commission grant final approval of these plans. Mr. Brownlee seconded the motion.

Approval

Olivet Covenant Presbyterian Church, 22nd & Mt. Vernon Streets: This proposal to add a sign to the corner of the church property had come before the Committee at an earlier meeting. At the first meeting, members of the Spring Garden community expressed concern about the large size of the sign. In response, architect Edward Reader reduced its size. This change met with the Committee's approval. At this meeting Committee members noted that the planned internally illuminated portion of the sign appeared inconsistent with the historic character of the neighborhood. They recommended other materials for the cross such as a bright metal that could illuminate from below. Mr. Reader agreed to make this change. The Committee recommended approval of plans that reflect this change.

Ms. Wolf moved that the Commission approve the plans subject to this one change. Mr. Wilds seconded the motion.

The Commission voted unanimously to adopt the motion for approval.

Disapproval

312 Market Street: Applicant James Matour came before the Committee with a sketch that called for replacing an existing turn of the century store-front with one of anodized aluminum and glass with central doors. These plans

allowed for the retention of an existing transom and pilasters. The Committee stated that the rough sketch provided by the applicant provided too little information for it to make a decision. Committee members agreed, however, that given the historic nature of the East Market Street, the applicant should construct any new store-front of wood. The Committee also asked whether enough of the original store-front existed for the owner to consider restoration.

Mr. Matour agreed to meet with Mr. Baron in the next few days. Matour stated that the great length of the building, which the applicant plans to fill with a central aisle mall, makes a central entrance most desirable from his standpoint. He further expressed his readiness to install a wooden storefront.

The Committee recommended disapproval of Mr. Matour's proposal, and urged him to return to the Committee with architectural drawings reflective of his new plans.

Mr. Brownlee moved that the Commission disapprove the applicant's plans as presented. Mr. Cuorato seconded the motion.

The Commission voted unanimously to adopt the motion for disapproval.

Disapproval

319 South 12th Street: Review of this work came before the Committee as the result of a violation issued by the Department of Licenses and Inspections. Mr. Baron recounted how the illegal work in question continued after repeated site visits, requests to the workmen to have the work approved, and a violation issued by L & I.

Owner Mel Heifetz wrote a letter to the Committee requesting legalization of the work already completed. In his letter he stated that he did not know the building was certified when he began the work. He wrote that he decided to place the air conditioners through the front wall to give the apartments more light and air. Lastly, Heifetz urged the Committee to approve the work because removal of the air conditioners would result in a patch that would not match the original.

The Committee noted that if the applicant sought a permit for the work, the Department of Licenses and Inspections would have informed him of its historic designation. Mr. Wilds recalled that the applicant came before the Committee to oppose designation of the Mellor and Meigs Studio several years ago, and was therefore aware of the Commission's

activity. Ms. Kaplan urged Mr. Baron to make certain that further disassembly of the building does not take place.

Mr. Cuorato moved that the Commission disapprove the proposal to legalize the through-wall air conditioners. Ms. Wolf seconded the motion.

The Commission voted unanimously to adopt the motion for disapproval.

Approval In Concept

Christ Church Hospital (Kearsley Home), 49th Street and Monument Road: This proposal to add a large building to the Kearsley Home originally came to the Committee showing the new building sited in front of the existing historic one. In response to the Committee's request, the applicants had their architects move the site of the addition to the rear of the existing building. The Committee approved the new plans in concept, but expressed the hope that in the final proposal the architects would allow more space between the two buildings.

Mr. Brownlee moved that the Commission accept the Committee's recommendation for approval in concept of this plan. Mr. Wilds seconded the motion.

The Commission voted unanimously to approve in concept Christ Church Hospital's plans to construct a new addition to the rear of the existing historic building.

The Report on Staff Activities, August 1992, Richard Tyler, Historic Preservation Officer.

Mr. Tyler reported that a new federal transportation measure provides money for the rehabilitation of historic transportation facilities and other amentities. Since the Overbrook train station is the oldest station in Philadelphia and one of the most visible, it has been identified as a candidate for this money. Ms. Kaplan added that the Overbrook community strongly supports this activity, and it seems likely that restoration will take place.

Certified Local Government, Educational Session on William Penn and the Beginnings of Philadelphia, Richard Tyler, Historic Preservation Officer.

To maintain Certified Local Government status the National Park Service requires the Philadelphia Historical Commission to present eight hours of preservation education per year.

In partial fulfillment of this obligation Mr. Tyler presented Commission members with a lecture about William Penn and the early history of Philadelphia. After the lecture Mr. Spilove thanked Mr. Tyler on behalf of the Commission for an informative and interesting presentation.

There being no further business the Commission adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Ira Kauderer,
Executive Secretary