

THE SIXTEENTH MEETING of the PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION,
Held on October 29th, 1957 at 3:30 P. M., in Room 813, City Hall
Annex. The following Members were present:

Mr. Grant M. Simon, Chairman
Mr. R. Norris Williams, II.
Mr. Charles, E. Peterson

Also present were:

Mrs. A. A. Gilchrist, Architectural Historian
of the National Park Service
Mr. John Gane, Architect for Wright, Andrade
and Amenta
Dr. Margaret B. Tinkcom, Historian
Mrs. Theresa V. Pulice, Executive Secretary

The Meeting was called to order at 3:35 P. M.

The Minutes of the last Meeting, held June 25th, were approved.

Dr. Tinkcom submitted a report of historical research from July
1st to August 18th. This report was approved with the following
comments:

✓ MEASURED DRAWINGS OF EIGHT HOUSES

It was decided to substitute 217 Spruce Street in
lieu of the Washington Square houses to be measured
by Mr. Robbins. This is one of the houses on which
the Commission previously had title searches made.

TECHNICAL TERMS TO BE USED IN THE DESCRIPTION OF BLDGS:

Dr. Tinkcom and Mrs. Gilchrist, who is working with
Mr. Peterson at the National Park Service, will col-
laborate on standardizing the Commission's procedure
in the survey of buildings.

✓ PAMPHLETS ON THE OLD CITY:

Dr. Tinkcom felt that this would be a good thing
to think about doing in the future and possibly pro-
vide for in the 1959 Budget

There has been a wealth of general information found
in the newspapers and insurance surveys which could
be used to compile an unpretentious little guide book
to the Old City. . . A pamphlet, something like
that used by the Charleston Art Association, could be
prepared.

It was requested that Dr. Tinkcom make up a prospec-
tus as to the kind of information that could be
gathered together for this purpose.

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Mr. Simon suggested that this might be included in the yearly report submitted to Councils. X

Mrs. Pulice was requested to find out whether or not there is a limit to the size of a report of this kind

A report of administrative activities from July 1st to October 21st was submitted to the Commission by Mrs. Pulice. This report was approved with this comment:

- ✓ The Commission was advised that the 1958 Budget has been reviewed by the Managing Director, but it has not yet gone into City Council. The Commission will be notified when it goes before City Council, so that a representative of the Commission will be present.

✓ REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF SOCIETY HILL

✓ At 4:00 P. M., Mr. John F. Gane, of Wright, Andrade and Amenta, architects, at present under contract with the Redevelopment Authority, came into the meeting to talk about the survey which is being conducted at present in the Society Hill area. Mr. Gane stated that the Architects are making a general block by block survey of approximately 300 buildings, roughly bounded by Front Street to Fifth and Walnut Street to South, for the purposes of determining the present use and to suggest a future use in the Society Hill area.

This survey was started by making a general block survey in pictures. (Mr. Gane displayed a sample of this kind of survey, showing pictures of buildings pasted on white hard paper and giving a general description of the buildings.) They are now going into these buildings and obtaining photographs and rough floor sketches. With the sketches, a conditions review is made, e.g., whether trim has been replaced, how the upper floors are used, condition of the front, back and party walls, kind of electricity, type of heating and how much of the original fabric exists.

After the survey of 300 buildings is completed, the Architects will select twenty buildings of which actual measured drawings will be made. The choice of the twenty buildings will be made ~~after the block-by-block~~ survey and will be influenced by several things, such as the condition of the building, residential use and historical value. It would also be desirable to have a row of about six or eight houses studied.

The Redevelopment Authority would like to call on interested people, owners where possible, or developers, to discuss the possible use of these buildings.

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Mr. Simon stated that the interests and problems of this group and the Commission, are similar and the desirability of pooling information was expressed. This feeling was unanimous and Mr. Gane stated that the Redevelopment Authority would make available for photographing or copying, any information gathered by them. He will begin by sending the Commission a list of buildings on which surveys are being made.

HABS Survey: (Historic American Buildings Survey)

Mr. Peterson stated that the National Park Service and the AIA had started a survey of Early American Architecture in 1933 which continued only until Pearl Harbor. Last summer, a substantial sum was appropriated to renew this activity in the Eastern States.

Mr. Peterson and Mrs. Gilchrist displayed some architectural drawings made by students. It was pointed out that 100% rag paper and ink were used for permanency and the drawings were of a standardized size. The cost of a complete sheet is approximately \$175.00. when made by students.

National Inventory forms used in the listing of historic buildings were also displayed. The Commission has a supply of these forms on hand and hopes to be able to start work in the near future.

SKYSCRAPER AT 4th & WILLING'S ALLEY:

✓ Society Hill
Mr. Peterson stated that he felt the Commission should oppose the erection of a skyscraper designed by Oscar Stonorov and proposed by the City Planning Commission for a site at 4th and Willing's Alley. It was the general feeling of the Commission that a building of this kind would not be in character with the area. However, Mr. Simon stated that many of these proposed projects are not consummated and felt that there was no immediate need for alarm in this instance.

He was asked to prepare a statement on this for the consideration of the Commission.

✓ THE GEORGE HOUSE:

This house (on the SE cor of Drexel Road and City Line) was recommended by Judge Klein to be added to the list of certified buildings. Judge Klein also submitted information on this house together with his recommendation. Dr. Tinkcom was asked to obtain photographs of the house.

The Meeting was adjourned at 5:30 P. M.

Charles E. Peterson
Secretary