

THE MINUTES OF THE 330TH STATED MEETING
OF THE

PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

10 May 1989

EDWARD A. MONTGOMERY, JR., CHAIRMAN

Present: Edward A. Montgomery, Jr., Chairman
Christine Washington, Vice Chairman
David Brownlee
David Hollenberg
Jason Nathan
William Thompson
Christopher Cashman, Acting Director, Philadelphia
Department of Commerce
Barbara Kaplan, Executive Director, Philadelphia City
Planning Commission
Donald Kligerman, Commissioner, Department of Licenses
and Inspections
Councilman John Street, Esq., Philadelphia City Council
Scott Wilds, Office of Housing and Community Development

Maria Petrillo, Esq., Law Department
Richard Tyler, Historic Preservation Officer
Patricia Siemiontkowski, Assistant Historic Preservation
Officer
Randal Baron, Preservation Planner.

Also: Mark L. Gushner, Boyd's Men's Store
Gerald Gushner, Boyd's Men's Store
Jeffrey Glass, Boyd's Men's Store
Michael Malone, Chares E. Broudy Associates
Herbert Bass of Fox, Rothschild, O'Brien and Frankel
Edna Irving, Aide to Councilman John Street
Philip Hooper of Curtis Cox Kennerly Architects
Paul Vaivoda of Curtis Cox Kennerly Architects
Robert Wayne Tomlinson, Department of Public Property,
Division of Architecture and Engineering
Leslie Deis, Dekoda Architects
Arthur T. Gravina, University of Pennsylvania
Titus Hewryk, University of Pennsylvania
Sandra Gross Bressler, Executive Director, Philadelphia Art
Commission.

THE MINUTES of the 329th Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission held on 8 March 1989, Edward A. Montgomery, Jr., Chairman, were reviewed and approved.

THE REPORT of the Architectural Committee of the Philadelphia Historical Commission for 30 March 1989, David Hollenberg, Chairman. The Commission voted to ratify its earlier approval of the 30 March 1989 report of the Architectural Committee. This approval was obtained by a telephone poll of the Commission members during the week of 10 April 1989 owing to the cancellation of the April meeting and the staff's desire not to delay construction projects for an additional month.

The recommendation concerning 2006 Brandywine Street, contained in the 30 March 1989 report, had been tabled pending negotiations between the Commission staff, the Committee Chairman, Commission counsel and the owner. Ms. Petrillo reported to the Commission that an agreement has been reached and that this matter has been resolved to the satisfaction of all parties. Mr. Hollenberg agreed with Ms. Petrillo's report to the Commission and asked for an approval of the final agreement reached regarding the treatment of the windows and entrance door on the front facade of 2006 Brandywine Street.

The Commission voted unanimously to ratify the 30 March 1989 Report of the Architectural Committee and to approve the resolution of the matter concerning 2006 Brandywine Street.

THE REPORT of the Architectural Committee of the Philadelphia Historical Commission for 27 April 1989, David Hollenberg, Chairman. The Committee evaluated ten projects at its April meeting. Mr. Hollenberg recommended to the Commission a final approval for three projects. These include plans for the rehabilitation of 1610 Chestnut Street, plans for the completion of a rear addition at 135 Carpenter Street and plans for the expansion of a kitchen and for the construction of a roof deck at 317 South 18th Street. Revised drawings for the proposed roof deck at 317 South 18th Street that reflected the Committee's recommendation for a substantial reduction in the size of the deck were received and found to be acceptable. As a result, a final approval of the entire project was recommended to the Commission.

The Commission voted to accept the Committee recommendation and grant a final approval of these three projects.

The Committee voted to recommend a denial of one project. This application involved the addition of a third story atop an existing two story house at 318 South Fawn Street. The Commission agreed with the Committee recommendation and voted to deny the approval of this application.

Approvals in concept were recommended for three projects. These included a proposal for the addition of a fourth floor atop 1945 Pine Street, the construction of a bridge over Cherry Street connecting the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts with a proposed new addition and the reopening of the City Hall Observation Deck. Concerning the latter, Mr. Hollenberg clarified the Committee's conceptual approval of the proposed reuse of the deck for observation purposes. He stressed the Committee's grave reservations concerning the architectural feasibility of satisfying the city's programmatic goals without seriously compromising the architectural integrity of the tower.

Following some discussion of the proposed City Hall Tower observation deck, the Commission voted unanimously to approve, in concept, the three projects cited in the preceeding paragraph.

The Committee also received copies of a report prepared by Joseph Berenholz, P.C. as part of the owner's demolition permit application for the buildings located at 26, 28 and 30 South 21st Street. The Committee advised the Commission that several items of information listed under Section 7(f) of the preservation ordinance were missing from that report. Moreover, additional information regarding possible reuses of these buildings including a variation of one of the schemes considered by the applicant, a more specific breakdown of general construction costs and a consideration of the possible financial ramifications of the historic rehabilitation tax credit and the donation of a facade easement was determined to be necessary for a proper review of this application.

The Commission agreed with the staff and Committee's evaluation of the applicant's report and voted to require the submission of the information specified in the Committee report. Until this information is received, the application cannot be considered complete and the time in which the Commission must act upon the application is halted. Upon submission of the requested materials, the period of deferral will resume.

Mr. Hollenberg advised the Commission of the Committee's recommendation that the applicant's report, supplemented with the additional materials, be submitted to a consultant for evaluation. The Commission voted to accept the Committee's recommendation on this application and to inform the applicant of this decision.

Finally, the Committee reviewed two projects for which an approval was recommended subject to some revision. These projects include the Bourse at 13-21 South 5th Street and the former Oliver Bair Funeral Home at 1818-1820 Chestnut Street. Mr. Hollenberg noted that the revisions for the Bourse had not yet been received. These changes, however, are minor and Mr. Hollenberg recommended a final approval subject to staff review of the revised set of drawings. The Committee recommended a final approval of the second project, 1818-1820 Chestnut Street, subject to the elimination of all window

awnings and the use of a square entrance awning(s) in lieu of a canopy. The Committee also asked that the valance of the window display cases be executed in a matt finish metal.

Mr. Hollenberg recognized the presence of representatives of the Boyd's Men's Store and informed the Commission of the applicants' desire for an opportunity to appeal the Committee's recommendation with regard to the awning and canopy treatment on the Chestnut Street facade.

The Commission agreed to act upon each of these two applications separately. The members voted to accept the recommendation of the Architectural Committee concerning the Bourse application. This recommendation was for a final approval subject to minor revisions as noted in the Committee report.

Mr. Hollenberg next reviewed for the Commission the Committee's recommendation concerning 1818-1820 Chestnut Street. Although the Committee reviewed a proposal for a substantial rehabilitation of the entire building, the only issue of concern to the Committee involved the treatment of the Chestnut Street facade. In particular, the Committee found that the addition of an entrance canopy and the proliferation of window awnings at all floors would detract from the architectural quality of the facade. The Committee recommended that all awnings on the facade and the proposed entrance canopy be eliminated. In place of an entrance canopy, the Committee recommended the installation of either two single or one double awning(s) to mark the entrance to the building. This entrance awning should be square rather than cylindrical in shape. In addition, the Committee supported the proposed placement of banners on the facade to be hung from the two existing flagpoles on the upper floors. The Committee also suggested the use of a color or colors for the entrance awning and banners more compatible with the color and tone of the facade materials. Finally, the Committee also asked that the finish on the window display cases be statuary bronze rather than a bright brass finish.

Following a brief discussion of the Committee's recommendation, the Chairman asked if the applicant wished to make a statement at this time. Herbert Bass, Counsel for Boyd's, introduced himself to the Commission and suggested that the Commission might like to hear first from Michael Malone of Charles E. Broudy & Associates, project architect for the rehabilitation and reuse of 1818-1820 Chestnut Street, concerning the architectural treatment of the facade.

Mr. Malone explained his client's wish to establish an identity on Chestnut Street and to indicate Boyd's use of all five floors of the building. For this reason, the architect proposed the introduction of an entrance canopy on the facade and the placement of canvas awnings on all floors to signify Boyd's presence in the entire building.

Dr. Brownlee asked the architect to explain the reason for choosing a barrel vaulted canopy at the main entrance rather than one more sympathetic to the rectangularity of the facade. Mr. Malone explained that the arch was a major theme on the interior of the building and that the canopy served as an introduction on the street to that particular theme.

Mr. Bass next provided for the Commission members some recent history concerning Boyd's move from its present store in the 1200 block of Market Street. Owing to the proposed development of this block as a part of Pennsylvania's new convention center, Boyd's is being forced to abandon its Market Street store and move to a new location. Boyd's has accepted this situation with reluctance. The current store on Market Street provides a high level of visibility with a significant stretch of storefront and a large sign. Boyd's did consider relocation in the newly renovated Bellevue, the Bonwit Building, and the Centre Hotel. None of these buildings proved feasible, however, and as a last resort, Boyd's agreed to settle for the Chestnut Street property. Having now acquired this building, Boyd's is committed to its preservation and substantial rehabilitation. Given the building's new retail use, however, the owners believe it extremely important to achieve the highest level of visibility possible. This visibility Boyd's hopes to achieve through the use of awnings and an entrance canopy on the front facade.

Sandra Gross Bressler, Executive Director of the Art Commission, addressed the Historical Commission and reported her Commission's position on this matter. According to Ms. Bressler, a sub-committee of the Art Commission recently reviewed the Boyd's proposal and found the totality of items - awnings, banners and canopy - to overwhelm the facade of the building. It was the opinion of the Art Commission that Boyd's could achieve its goal of identification and high visibility with banners and an entrance awning. It was suggested that the owners focus on quality of design rather than quantity of items. The Art Commission further suggested lighting the facade of the building to highlight its unique architectural features and ornamental details. Finally, the Art Commission also suggested that the applicant reconsider the color selection for the banner and awning fabric.

Following some further discussion of this matter, Mr. Nathan moved for the approval, in concept, of awnings, banners and an entrance canopy on the Chestnut Street facade of 1818-1820 Chestnut Street. The Commission noted that awnings, banners and a canopy would not alter seriously any original fabric and could be removed without harm to the building. This approval would, however, be subject to the submission of design and construction details for a final review by the Architectural Committee. This motion was seconded and additional discussion ensued.

The Commission expressed its concern with regard to the proposed color of the canvas fabric and the shape of the entrance canopy.

These two items, in particular, should be addressed by the Architectural Committee. The applicant agreed to conform with the remaining recommendation of the Architectural Committee for use of a matt finish metal on the valance of the window display cases rather than a bright brass finish.

The Chairman pointed out that this application need not return to the Commission unless a satisfactory solution cannot be reached between the applicant and the Architectural Committee with regard to the final design and construction of the awnings, canopy and banners.

The motion offered by Mr. Nathan was carried by a unanimous vote of the Commission members present.

Mr. Hollenberg noted that one additional item of concern, not recorded in the Committee report, regarding the composition of the Architectural Committee needed to be discussed. Mr. Hollenberg reported to the Commission on the increase of submissions to the Architectural Committee and on the current membership of that committee. The Committee consists of five architects who generously donate their time and energy to the review of projects under the jurisdiction of the Historical Commission. Owing to busy schedules and other commitments, member attendance at committee meetings is sometimes thin. For this reason, the Chairman thought it desirable to add at least two new members to the Committee. Mr. Hollenberg invited Don Stevenson of the architectural firm of Sheward-Henderson to attend the last meeting of the Architectural Committee to observe its operation. Mr. Stevenson who has had considerable preservation experience performed well at this meeting.

Mr. Hollenberg expressed his satisfaction with Mr. Stevenson and asked that the Commission consider his appointment as a member of the Architectural Committee.

Mr. Montgomery asked that Mr. Stevenson's resume be circulated among the Commission members. Until the Commission formally votes on the nomination of Mr. Stevenson at the next Stated Meeting, it was suggested that he continue to participate in the committee meetings on an interim basis.

THE REPORT of the Committee on Historic Designation held on 17 April 1989 David Brownlee, Chairman. Dr. Brownlee reviewed for the Commission the status of the proposed Penn Knox Historic District which the Committee has recommended be renamed Germantown Historic District I. Dr. Brownlee also reported that the Committee reviewed a nomination for Engine House #29 located at 1221-1225 North Fourth Street and that this nomination and the Committee's recommendation will be presented to the Commission for consideration at its next meeting.

Dr. Brownlee took this opportunity to report on the status of other proposed districts being reviewed by the Committee. The proposed

Girard Estates District nomination passed its Stage 1 review earlier this year and is currently in Stage 2. The Spruce Hill Historic District has passed Stage 2 and is currently in Stage 3 as is the proposed Society Hill Historic District. All paperwork is complete for the Rittenhouse/Fitler Residential Historic District.

Scott Wilds expressed his concern over the staff's ability to administer adequately the several proposed historic districts if they are approved for designation by the Commission. Dr. Brownlee explained that the documentation for these several districts was underway before the fiscal crisis which the Commission now faces became apparent. The Committee has advised the Preservation Coalition, the organization which has utilized grant money for the Spruce Hill, Girard Estates and Germantown I district nomination forms, that it could not assure the submission of the latter two nominations to the Commission for consideration.

Recognizing the fiscal dilemma which exists and its potential for impact upon the operation of this Commission, the Chairman appointed a Planning Committee to evaluate the work of the Commission, the composition of its staff and its essential functions. This committee will meet shortly to address these matters.

THE REPORT on the Philadelphia Historical Commission Staff Activities for the month of March, 1989, Richard Tyler, Historic Preservation Officer.

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The Chairman noted the Commission's recent victory in Commonwealth Court where the Commission's designation of the Boyd Theater was upheld. The Chairman thanked the Law Department, the Commission staff and others involved in this matter. It is expected that an appeal will be taken to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court.

OLD BUSINESS

REPORT of the University of Pennsylvania Committee on Historic Preservation. Arthur Gravina, Vice President of Facilities Management of the University of Pennsylvania, appeared before the Commission to report on the progress of the University's plan for historic preservation. Mr. Gravina informed the Commission that the University has completed its fifth and final draft of the preservation planning document. He further reported that arrangements had been made to have Mr. Tyler appear before the University's Senior Planning Group to provide it with a context in which it could review the committee's recommendation regarding historic preservation. Mr.

Tyler will discuss the purpose of the Historical Commission, the Commission's rules and regulations, the difference between local and national designation and other related issues.

Following submission to the President and Senior Planning Group, Mr. Gravina will return to report to the Historical Commission at its July meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

HARRY A. BATTEN FUND - Ratification of People to People Eastern European Program. Mr. Tyler asked the Commission for ratification of its telephone poll approval of money, provided by the Office of the City Representative through the Harry A. Batten Fund, for Mr. Tyler's participation in the People to People Eastern European Program. The Office of the City Representative has agreed to provide half the cost and a private benefactor will provide the remainder.

The Commission voted unanimously to ratify its approval for the expenditure of these funds from the Harry A. Batten Fund.

RULES AND REGULATIONS - The first draft of the Philadelphia Historical Commission's Rules and Regulations has been distributed to the Committee members, Ms. Petrillo and John Gallery, the consultant hired by the Historical Commission to assist in the development of this document. Following review by the Committee and the City's Law Department, the document will be made available to the public and then be submitted to the Commission for a final review and approval.

JUNE MEETING OF THE HISTORICAL COMMISSION. Mr. Tyler noted that the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission falls on Flag Day, the 14th of June, a legal holiday. The Chairman suggested that the staff poll the Commission members to establish another meeting date for June.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Siemiontkowski
Assistant Historic Preservation Officer