

Approved - 5.28.63

THE SEVENTY-FIRST STATED MEETING OF THE PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

30 April, 1963

Present were: Mr. Harry A. Batten
Mr. Charles E. Peterson
Mr. John Taxin

Mr. Grant M. Simon, Chairman

Also present: Mr. Philip Carroll, representing the Commissioner of Public
Mr. Edward J. Martin, Deputy Director of Finance Property
Dr. Margaret B. Tinkcom, Historian
Mrs. Charles J. Maurer, Executive Secretary
Miss Constance F. Smith, Clerk.

Dr. Nichols and Mr. Williams were unable to attend
Mr. Trautwein is on leave of absence

Unless otherwise noted, all actions mentioned herein were
taken after motions properly presented, seconded and carried.

THE MINUTES of March 26th were approved as circulated among the Members

REPORTS

Historic Values Committee, Dr. Roy Franklin Nichols, Chairman

In Dr. Nichols's absence, his report was read by the Historian. The Report was approved, with the suggestion that a letter be sent to Mr. John Harbeson, who furnished a list of notable buildings proposed for the Commission's consideration by the Committee on Preservation of the Philadelphia Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. The letter shall clearly outline the Commission's policy in regard to certifying buildings and report that seventeen buildings on his list are already certified.

Architectural Committee, Mr. Grant M. Simon, Chairman pro tem.

The report was approved as read, except in regard to 226 South 4th Street. The letter to Dean G. Holmes Perkins shall be revised, referring the point at issue to the Old Philadelphia Development Corporation for decision. It was determined that henceforth copies of all correspondence dealing with certified buildings which come under the purview of the OPDC shall be sent to Mrs. C. Jared Ingersoll, Chairman of the Historical Committee of that body.

The Historical Commission's Activities, Dr. Margaret B. Tinkcom, Historian.

Dr. Tinkcom's report was approved as read.

Copies of all Reports are to be filed with the official copies of the Minutes

OLD BUSINESS

Preston Retreat, 20th & Hamilton Streets. The Chairman reviewed action taken at the last meeting and stated that two letters are pending which will determine present action: One from the State Department of Welfare, the other from the Commission on Higher Education. Neither has been received in spite of determined effort by all concerned.

The Chairman entertained the motion that the Commission give its approval to the demolition of the Retreat, subject to the receipt of written statements from the aforementioned bodies, reporting that neither is interested in the building. A motion was passed, instructing the Chairman to write to the heads of these agencies, asking them to confirm in writing their verbal statements that this building does not suit their needs and notifying them that unless the Commission was advised to the contrary, it would proceed on the basis of this assumption. It was further agreed that when the building is released for demolition, the release should indicate a detailed account of the Commission's efforts to find a use for the Retreat, and now that, in view of its failure to do so, it reluctantly agrees to the proposals of the Hyman Korman corporation. This organization is to be reminded that at of their promise to preserve the portico of the Preston Retreat.

20 South Twelfth Street. The letter from Mr. Richmond P. Miller, Associate Secretary of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, was read. Mr. Miller stated that the Society of Friends does not intend to sell this building at this time, although Ludlow Street is to be extended across the property, making it impossible to use the doors on the north side of the building.

238 South Third Street. The Chairman reviewed his conversation with Mr. Praissman and reported the latter's attendance at the Architectural Committee meeting. It was agreed that a letter be sent to Mr. Rafsky reporting the Commission's continued belief that the character of the Third Street area would better be preserved if the Wilson Eyre facade were replaced by a reconstruction of the original front.

The Chairman read the following letter he prepared, to be sent to all those who have written to the Historical Commission asking that the Wilson Eyre facade be retained:

The Commission is pleased with your interest in its work and thanks you for your advice and counsel. Should you care to be further informed concerning the unusual precedents it has been able to establish, the files and records are at your disposal.

The building at 238 South Third Street, with which you are particularly concerned, has been discussed at length. The ability and, perhaps genius, of Wilson Eyre, it believes, should be recognized by the preservation of some, at least, of his many buildings which still exist in Philadelphia and its environs.

However, the Commission is primarily concerned with the preservation of those buildings which may be considered historically significant, and is limited to this purpose by City ordinance. Much as individual members of the Commission are interested in the preservation of

buildings as evidence of the architectural evolution of this country, this is not the purpose of the Historical Commission.

It believes that this neighborhood, so near to Independence Hall, should be preserved in character and appearance as it was at the time of the Revolution and in the formative years following it.

The Commission is committed to this concept which transcends the preservation of individual memorials.

Sincerely,

Grant M. Simon, F.A.I.A.
Chairman, for the Commission

This letter was approved.

A motion to preserve the Wilson Eyre Building at the Northeast Corner of Juniper and Locust Street was made. It was approved that Mr. Taxin arrange with the Poor Richard Club to have Mr. Peterson invited to interest this club in preserving this excellent example of Wilson Eyre's work.

NEW BUSINESS

Folder on History and Procedures of the Historical Commission. It was reported that the text and a second layout had been sent to the printer. Glossy prints, showing before and after views of 217 Spruce Street will accompany this. An interior, proposed by Mr. Batten, will be obtained from the Ingersolls as soon as possible.

1964 Budget. This was approved as presented. It was recommended that, in order to justify the proposed increase to Mrs. Maurer's salary, and to better describe her work, her title should be altered from Executive Secretary to Executive Assistant to the Chairman. This was approved.

120 Delancey Street. It was recommended that the architect be asked to restudy the shutters, calling his attention to the placement of the lock-rail; to check the moldings of the cornice and to replace the back chimney. If precedent for the cornice moldings, as indicated, can be established, a letter to the Commission should contain this information. This was approved.

413 South Third Street. It was approved that the chimney may be rebuilt as indicated on the application for a building permit.

Signs on Certified Buildings on South Third Street. It was approved that a letter be sent to Mrs. Phoebe Patterson, thanking her for her interest and referring her to the Old Philadelphia Development Corporation in regard to the signs.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at five o'clock.

Respectfully submitted.....