

PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION
COMMITTEE ON CERTIFICATION
22 May 1984

Present: Janet S. Klein, Vice-Chairman, Philadelphia Historical Commission
David Baldinger, Phila. City Planning Commission
Herbert W. Levy, A.I.A., Architectural Advisor, Philadelphia
Historical Commission
James Mooney

Also: Jefferson M. Moak, Executive Secretary, Philadelphia Historical
Commission
Richard Tyler, Historian

Mr. Hyman Myers telephoned prior to the meeting, apologizing for his absence. He commented on each of the nominations and requested that his votes and comments be recorded as part of these minutes.

The 19th meeting of the Committee on Certification began at 2:30 P.M. on 22 May 1984 in Room 1313 City Hall Annex. The Chairman being absent, the Committee members requested that Mr. Moak chair the meeting.

2133-2141 Arch Street: Juvenile Court and Detention Center
1908: Philip H. Johnson, architect; Sax & Abbott, contractors

The significance of this building rests not upon its architectural significance but upon its position as a landmark in the history of penology both in Philadelphia and America as a whole. The detaining and incarceration of juveniles with adults in inadequate facilities had been loudly decried. Not until 1899, in Illinois, would legislation emerge creating a separate penal system specifically for juveniles. Less than two years later, the Pennsylvania Legislature followed suit: Philadelphia quickly organized a juvenile detention system under this enabling legislation. Although the system was founded in 1901, seven years would pass before the Juvenile Court would occupy a permanent facility. Once in place, however, the system and its building became models for similar systems throughout the world.

The Committee recommended the certification of 2133-2141 Arch Street by a split vote of 2-1 with 2 abstentions. Mr. Myers stated that the building had little architectural significance, indeed, the nomination did not claim any, and so voted against certification. Mrs. Klein and Mr. Levy abstained.

2136-2142 E. Dauphin Street: 26th District Police & Patrol Station
1896: John T. Windrim, architect; Doyle & Doak, contractors

The 26th District Police and Patrol Station is architecturally significant as a unique document of the little-known creative aspect of the early public work of John T. Windrim (1866-1934). The property possesses historical significance because it exists as a rare survivor of several commissions completed by the younger Windrim while his father, James H. Windrim, was the Director of Public Works for the City of Philadelphia. It holds further significance because, just as this 1896 station house

refers to a newly-formed police district, it suggests a strong, however peripheral, reference to the growth of the industrial city. It also provides a specific material record of the almost immediate response to the reorganization of Philadelphia's Police and Fire Departments under Mayor Edwin H. Fitler; the 26th District with which this property was once associated was created out of the older 18th District in 1895, and the police and patrol units assigned to the new precinct represented a new mode of civic authority established under Mayor Fitler and continued well into the 20th century.

John T. Windrim was only just beginning to establish himself apart from a partnership with his father when the City authorities restructured the police and fire departments in order to gain more control of the services. Between 1893 and 1897, Windrim designed as many as eleven police and fire stations, but less than five of these works survive. In addition to the Dauphin Street property, the police station and firehouse at 1028 W. Berks Street, a turreted limestone and brick pile designed by Windrim in 1893, is still extant. Attributed to Windrim as well are a stone firehouse, built in the Romanesque manner in Chestnut Hill, and brick, Queen Anne style fire station and patrol house at 117-121 Queen Street.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend certification of 2136-2142 E. Dauphin Street, the 26th District Police and Patrol Station.

3839-3849 Hamilton Street, 3849-3861 Lancaster Avenue, 431-439 N. 39th Street
1895: Wright & Prentzal, builders

The development pressures exerted along the main road between Philadelphia and her western suburbs converted many rural and light industrial areas into rows of speculative houses, stores and other commercial buildings. Such notable structures as those located at 4000, 4157-4159, 4203-4205 and 4400 Lancaster Avenue anchored the strong commercial hub of the Avenue, and gave the entire street an 1890s appearance. Numerous residential structures also sprang up on and abutting the Avenue, including these 19 dwellings and hall at the corners of 39th Street, Lancaster Avenue and Hamilton Street. Research has failed to link an architect with this project. Wright & Prentzal did undertake other building operations (one exists near 21st & Westmoreland Streets), and probably handled many of the design elements in-house. Despite the lack of an architect, the firm succeeded in clothing the development with variety, originality, and an appearance which fitted well with its neighbors, and one which contributes to the overall ambience of Lancaster Avenue. In short, the development possesses an unique architectural character.

Mr. Moak mentioned to the Committee that H.E. Flower, an architect responsible for many of the large houses in the 4100 and 4200 blocks of Parkside Avenue, designed another 1895 Wright & Prentzal project in North Philadelphia. He said that although no documentation exists to connect Flower with the Lancaster Avenue project, such a connection is conceivable in light of the design of the buildings. The Committee voted unanimously to recommend certification of the 19 buildings located at 3839-3849 Hamilton Street, 3849-3861 Lancaster Avenue, and 431-439 N. 39th Street.

1213-1215 Locust Street
1892: Frank Miles Day, architect

The dwellings at 1213 and 1215 Locust Street possess historical and architectural merit both on their association with the other surviving contemporary structures on the 1200 and 1300 blocks of Locust Street, and its design by one of Philadelphia's premier architects during the turn of the century.

These two residences are among seven or more residences commissioned by the Real Estate Investment Corporation during the early 1890s. This group aimed to replace many of the early 19th century dwellings, exemplified by 1201 Locust Street, in order to improve the locality. Development pressures generated by the Real Estate Investment Corporation did spur private investment, and produced a large number of comfortable, well-built houses during the decade between 1890 and 1900, including works by Wilson Eyre, Lindley Johnson, Frank Furness and Frank Miles Day. Day, whose design for the Philadelphia Art Club propelled him into the forefront of Philadelphia's architectural profession, designed several townhouses both in this neighborhood and across Broad Street in Rittenhouse. In his detailing and use of historical details, Day's design for 1213-1215 Locust Street compares favorably with his contemporary surviving townhouses at 245-247 S. 17th Street and 1920-1930 Pine Street.

The building has undergone few exterior alterations during its 92 year existence: the placement of the marquee forms the only disfigurement. The interior was altered to convert the two residences into a hotel. The Redevelopment Authority plans to renovate the building for office use.

The Committee recommended unanimously that 1213-1215 Locust Street be certified.

1217-1219 Locust Street
1892: Furness, Evans & Company, architects

This single dwelling at 1217-1219 Locust Street appears to possess little merit when compared to its twin at 1221 Locust Street, and to other buildings on the block. However, its original design by Frank Furness, although altered, its connections with the efforts of the Real Estate Investment Corporation to revitalize the neighborhood, and its presence as an integral part of the 1200 block of Locust Street all endows it with historical significance.

This design does not rank among Furness's landmarks but it does exhibit many details identified with his townhouses and rowhouse commissions including the heavy stone rustication, the unbalanced treatment of openings on each of the individual facades, and the use of a pyramidal dormer. The ground floor alterations unfortunately removed the original appearance as seen in its mirror image at 1221 Locust Street.

Both historically and aesthetically, this dwelling contributes to the understanding of the 1200 block of Locust Street. The Real Estate Investment

Corporation hired several notable architects to replace the older, probably dilapidated, structures on the 1200 and 1300 blocks of Locust Street. In effect, these buildings, as exemplified by the collection as 1213-1223 Locust Street and others, represent an early urban renewal project financed not by public monies but by private capital.

The Committee, by an unanimous vote, recommended that the Commission certify the single dwelling located at 1217-1219 Locust Street.

301-303 Race Street, also known as 200-214 N. 3rd Street: The Wireworks
1899-1900: John T. Windrim, architect

As the Moore Wireworks, the warehouse and factory at the corner of Race and North 3rd Streets was commissioned in 1899, designed by John T. Windrim. Its construction climaxed a twenty-year effort on the part of Arthur Fidler Moore, local telegraph and bonnet-wire distributor, to secure the local properties needed to build a factory which eventually fabricated insulated electric wire. Moore had begun his wire business on the corner of Race and Third Streets, eventually taking over the adjacent Van Tine Brewery and other, lesser properties to the north and west. The Moore Wireworks stands as the largest structure in the neighborhood, epitomizing the epic era of industrial mercantilism in inner-city Philadelphia. With its scale and proportions providing strong corner definition, its two principal walls are faced with "Roman" brick, a material which emphasizes a restrained sense of fabric, allowing detail to be prominent. Just as it typifies a period of change in architectural history, the structure maintains the sense of a soft-spoken Romanesque Revival building, modified further by Colonial Revival detail at the storefront level. The mix suggests an ambivalence which, rather than being naive, may perhaps be interpreted as a fundamental approach to a new expression of functional classicism.

This building has appeared on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places as a result of an action taken by the Philadelphia Historical Commission in 1972 certifying the Old City National Historic District. The Committee voted 4-0 to recommend that the Commission reaffirm the earlier certification and listing of 301-303 Race Street, a.k.a. 200-214 N. 3rd Street. Mr. Myers abstained.

115 Rounfort Road: The Leamy Home
1901-1903: Cope & Stewardson, architects; Doyle & Doak, contractors

The Leamy Home at 115 Rounfort Road bases its historical significance primarily upon its architectural character and association with a premier Philadelphia architectural firm. It also possesses additional merit by contributing to the overall character of Mt. Airy and through its connections with Philadelphia's charitable institutions and their little-publicized history.

Two sisters, Ann Leamy and Elizabeth H. Leamy Stout, not only provided for the institution of this "Home" which widows and single women "of respectable character" could live, but also donated their family mansion and estate for the establishment of the Episcopal Hospital in 1851.

The Leamy Trustees received permission to erect a Home in Mt. Airy which, together with the campuses of the Lutheran Theological Seminary and the Pennsylvania School for the Deaf, has enabled this neighborhood to maintain a large amount of open space. The architects chosen by the Trustees, Cope & Stewardson, have also played an important role in the development of the area. In addition to the Leamy Home, it has designed several residences for the Gowen Estate near Gowen Avenue and Boyer Street, and a number of buildings on the Pennsylvania School for the Deaf campus. It was a premier firm during the late 19th century whose brilliance suffered immeasurably from the early deaths of the two original partners, John Stewardson in 1896 and Walter Cope in 1902. Following Stewardson's death, the firm concentrated on the Georgian and Colonial Revival styles popular with its clientele. Excellent examples of their townhouse designs exist at 1631-1633 and 1630 Locust Street. The Leamy Home may exist as one of their most successful large buildings employing this style. Walter Cope's death did not dissolve the firm: Emlen Stewardson, John's younger brother, continued the work already in progress and retained the firm's noteworthy identity until 1912 when he elevated George B. Page to a partnership forming the firm of Stewardson & Page.

In 1979, an agreement between the Leamy Home, the Druim Moir Home for Retired Clergy, and Cathedral Village, merged the three organizations under the title of the latter. The last residents vacated the Leamy Home the following year and moved into Cathedral Village. Sale to a local real estate developer has resulted in the preservation of the complex as condominiums.

The Committee recommended unanimously that 115 Rounfort Road, the Leamy Home, be certified.

1249-1253 S. 19th Street: Memorial Church of the Holy Comforter
1874-1875: Furness & Hewitt, architects

The chief significance possessed by the collection of buildings at the southeast corner of 19th and Titan Streets comes from its design and connection with the architectural firm of Furness & Hewitt. On a lesser level, the buildings have played important roles in Philadelphia's religious history and contribute to the understanding of the entire Point Breeze neighborhood.

The location of this church in the Point Breeze section indicates the growth of this neighborhood of Philadelphia. Composed of farmland before the Civil War, development occurred primarily as a result of the location of many industries along Washington Avenue. By 1876, most of the area north of Washington Avenue had been fully developed. The spiritual needs of the Episcopalians were served by the Church of the Holy Apostles at 21st & Christian Streets. The 1876 atlas indicates that much development was in progress below Washington Avenue. However, only the Memorial Church of the Holy Comforter, a chapel of St. Peter's Church at 3rd & Pine Streets, served the community with a fully operational plant. Several other churches owned property and or buildings in the area but did not possess the extensive facilities of Holy Comforter. Of the church buildings located in the neighborhood in 1876, none save these buildings have survived.

The use of Furness & Hewitt as architects is not surprising considering the track record established by the partners in Episcopal ecclesiastical design. George W. Hewitt trained in the offices of Joseph Hoxie, John Notman and John Fraser. He probably worked on both St. Clement's Church at 20th & Cherry Streets and the Church of the Holy Trinity on Rittenhouse Square with Notman. He completed the latter church several years after Notman's death. His connections with Holy Trinity lead to the selection of Fraser, Furness & Hewitt as the architects of the Church of the Holy Apostles, a congregation established by Holy Trinity with assistance from other Center City parishes. This firm also executed work for St. James Episcopal Church at 22nd & Walnut Streets, St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Germantown, and St. Timothy's Episcopal Church in Roxborough.

Although a declining congregation forced St. Peter's Church to close this mission in 1944, the buildings continue to serve the Point Breeze neighborhood as the 19th Street Baptist Church. The only major alteration to the church has been the removal of its spire in 1954 owing to a deteriorated condition.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend the certification of 1249-1253 S. 19th Street, the Memorial Church of the Holy Comforter, extending their recommendation to include both the church and the parish house.

1400 N. 26th Street: Athletic Recreation Park
1912-1913: Philip H. Johnson, architect

The Athletic Recreation Park possesses significance not only upon its architectural merits but also upon its place in the history and development of municipal playgrounds within Philadelphia. Although only the third recreation center building constructed by the Board of Recreation, it now exists as Philadelphia's oldest surviving city-built center.

The concept of municipal playgrounds originated within the entire progressive and reform movements of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Social reformers, led by Jane Addams in Chicago and the Octavia Hill Association in Philadelphia, pleaded for the alleviation of crowded conditions which bred crime and disease. Much like the Juvenile Court Building at 22nd and Arch Streets represented reform of the judicial system, the Athletic Recreation Park represents the commitment of the City of Philadelphia towards providing sufficient open space and recreational facilities for its young, thereby providing structured outlets to allow children to play and gain a sense of "good citizenship".

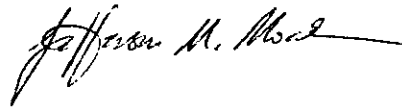
Philip H. Johnson designed the building in the Georgian Revival style which he employed for many of his early public buildings, including the Juvenile Court Building and the several building comprising Byberry Hospital. His Starr Garden Recreation Park design, unfortunately demolished, exhibited a talent for using classical details. The Athletic Recreation Park demonstrates that an architecturally pleasing edifice could indeed be suitable for an utilitarian purpose. Johnson, whose work for the City comprises much of his portfolio, closed his career with two civic landmarks: City Hall Annex and Convention Hall.

The Athletic Recreation Park has suffered a few alterations during its lifetime, most notably a number of openings closed on the front and end elevations. The rear elevation still remains intact. Early photographs of the building appear in the 1913 and 1914 Annual Reports of the Board of Recreation.

Mrs. Klein voiced some reservations about this building, requesting that interior photographs be taken and shown before the Committee. Mr. Myers also communicated his reluctance in voting for certification. The Committee then voted unanimously to table the nomination pending the receipt of the interior photographs, and additional information, if available.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:35 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Jefferson M. Moak". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Jefferson M. Moak
Executive Secretary