

R. Tyler

PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION
COMMITTEE ON CERTIFICATION
MINUTES

16 November 1979

Present: Edward Flisowski, Member of the Philadelphia Historical Commission and
Chairman of the Committee on Certification.
John O. Higgins, Chief, Area Planning Division, City Planning Commission.
Janet S. Klein, Vice-Chairman, Philadelphia Historical Commission.
Herbert W. Levy, A.I.A., Chairman, Architectural Committee,
Philadelphia Historical Commission.
James R. Mooney, Director, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.
Hyman Myron, A.I.A.

Richard Tyler, Historian.
Patricia Siemontkowiak, Executive Assistant to the Chairman.
Marion Carroll, Architectural Historian.
Jefferson Hook, Historical Research Technician.

The second meeting of the Committee on Certification met at 2:30 p.m. on
Friday, 16 November 1979, in Room 1313, City Hall Annex.

SUBMISSIONS FOR CERTIFICATION

1221 and 1223 Locust Street. Nominated by the owner, Joseph E. Gaudet, P.E.,
Joseph E. Gaudet and Associates, Inc., Consulting Engineers. Although
both buildings clearly possess some degree of architectural merit, the
Committee voted to table the owner's request for certification at this
time. The nomination form, as presented, was determined to be lacking
in quality and substance and did not discuss adequately the significance
of the buildings. Items omitted included the date of construction,
the architect, and a detailed account of alterations to the original
structure. Under Item 8, Statement of Significance, the Committee
suggested both a discussion of the buildings' importance as a part of
the streetscape and the significance of the Princeton Club as a Phila-
delphia institution. Information on the latter may be obtained from
the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Finally, all entries in the
bibliography should include the name of the publisher and the date of
publication as well as the page reference number.

The Committee members agreed to reconsider this request for certification
upon submission of a revised nomination form containing the above
information.

Sansom Row, 3402-3436 Sansom Street. Nominated by the Philadelphia Historical Commission staff. Entered on the National Register of Historic Places on 27 December 1977, this row of eighteen houses erected between 1869 and 1871 remains essentially intact. Although two of the eighteen buildings have been altered significantly, the changes made were sympathetic to the original character of the block and within the same stylistic mode. With their round arched doorways, segmentally arched windows, heavy bracketed cornices and story high mangers pierced by round headed dormers, these buildings reflect contemporary building practice of the period.

As one of the last surviving examples of the post-Civil War building boom in this area and because of the architectural merit, the Committee recommended the certification of the buildings in Sansom Row.

2129 Cypress Street. Nominated by the owner, David B. Pudlin. Originally constructed as part of a row of ordinary, three-story houses in the mid-nineteenth century, 2129 Cypress Street was remodeled by Louis I. Kahn in 1957. Although altered by one of Philadelphia's most renowned architects, the Committee agreed that the building possessed little distinction in itself and did not contribute to the quality of the streetscape. It was determined that the Kahn association alone was not strong enough to warrant the building's certification.

The Committee recommended that this house not be certified.

Bergdoll Brewery. Nominated by the architectural firm of Alesker and Reiff. Each of the five structures included in the Bergdoll Brewery complex were considered by the Committee on an individual basis.

Of the five buildings considered, Building 1, the Bottling Plant, possessed the least architectural merit. Constructed sometime after 1882, the building, essentially a one-story structure of brick and steel, was determined to be an integral part of the brewery complex and, for that reason, merited certification.

The Committee recommended the certification of this structure. For the record, it is noted that Mr. Levy voted in opposition to the certification of Building 1; Janet Klein abstained from voting.

Construction on the Brewery House, consisting of Buildings 2A, 2B and 2C, was begun in 1856. Alterations and additions to the original buildings were undertaken at various periods arriving at the existing

configuration of the three buildings in 1888. The architectural detailing found on each of the three buildings clearly reflects a concern for quality design and workmanship in nineteenth century industrial Philadelphia.

The Committee recommended the certification of Buildings 2A, 2B and 2C.

The Peer Storage House, Building 3, while constructed in three stages, is nevertheless a highly unified composition. Built in 1882 as a three-story brick ice house with a slate roof, Building 3A was reduced to two stories sometime between 1888 and 1908. At the same time Building 3B was added and by 1917, the last addition to the southwest (Building 3C) had been made. It was agreed that these three structures contribute considerably to the character of the complex.

The Committee recommended certification of these buildings.

The most emblematic of the five structures, Building 4, constructed in 1874, remains virtually intact. Its two-story brick facade supports a third story shingled mansard containing a single dormer window centered in each bay. A square tower topped by a pyramidal crown dominates the center of the building and indicates the importance of the structure which housed the brewery's administrative offices.

The Committee recommended certification of this building.

The last structure, Building 5, constructed before 1908, housed the Cooper Shop until 1922 when it was subdivided into a garage and a stable. This building, too, remains basically as originally constructed. With its large arched openings and corbeled brick cornice, the building survives as an interesting example of the eclectic architecture being produced in Philadelphia at the turn of the century.

The Committee recommended certification of this building.

The Committee members agreed that certification of the Bergdoll Brewery buildings be contingent upon the Architectural Committee's review and approval of plans drawn by Alesker and Reiff. It was the Committee's understanding that plans for the rehabilitation of the five buildings had been drawn and that work on the complex was underway. If the proposed alterations proved to be acceptable to the Architectural Committee, certification, as outlined previously, is recommended.

Subsequent to the 16 November 1979 meeting, members of the staff learned that plans for the rehabilitation of the brewery buildings have not yet been finalized and that it is the intention of the architect to present his drawings to the Architectural Committee for review and approval before work begins.

In view of this fact, certification of all of the buildings nominated by Alesker and Reiff is recommended.

Spring Garden Neighborhood. Nominated by the Spring Garden Civic Association. The buildings recommended for certification are located within the Spring Garden National Register Historic District created 21 December 1978. Before reviewing each building separately, it was agreed that only those buildings of distinction or those clearly contributing to the character of the Spring Garden District be given favorable consideration. Because of the complexity of the planning issues in Spring Garden, marginal buildings should be deferred at this time.

Built c. 1855, the five houses situate at 520, 522, 524, 526 and 528 North Twenty-first Street do not possess sufficient integrity to warrant their certification by the Philadelphia Historical Commission. Indeed, the building, 528 North 21st Street, has been radically altered and, as such, detracts from the quality of the row.

The Committee recommended that these buildings not be certified.

The building situate at 505-509 North Twenty-first Street clearly reflects the Victorian character of the Spring Garden Historic District and merits certification. Built in 1857, this three story, brick, semi-detached, structure comprises two houses. Executed in the Italianate styles, the building contributes to the Victorian character of the district expressed in the more pedestrian context of the rowhouse design.

The Committee recommended the certification of this building.

Built about 1865, the row of seven houses situate at 602, 604, 606, 608, 610, 612 and 614 North Twenty-first Street do not warrant certification for the reason cited in the recommendation for 520 to 528 North Twenty-first Street. This row, too, has suffered some mutilation.

16 November 1979

The Committee recommended that the buildings, 602, 604, 606, 608, 610, 612 and 614 North Twenty-first Street not be certified.

Following considerable discussion concerning the merits of the building located at 624 North Twenty-first Street, action was tabled pending the receipt of additional information. Of particular concern to the Committee was whether the house had been constructed originally as part of a row or whether it had always been a free-standing structure. The staff agreed to undertake a search of early atlases and report its findings to the Committee at its next meeting.

The Committee recommended that the Commission not act on the certification of 624 North Twenty-first Street at this time.

Because of its distinctive architectural features, the Committee gave favorable consideration to the nomination of the twentieth century warehouse situate at 632 North Twenty-first Street.

The Committee recommended the certification of the building located at 632 North Twenty-first Street, a.k.a., 2100-10 Fairmount Avenue.

Like most of the houses situate in the 2200 block of Green Street, the buildings at 2225, 2229 and 2231, built about 1860, represent the wealthier sector of the Spring Garden area. Except for the removal of the heavy wood cornice from 2229 and 2231, these three buildings are virtually intact.

The Committee recommended the certification of these three houses.

Upon the recommendation of the staff, the Committee considered for certification the elegant, brownstone structure at 2227 Green Street. This exceptionally fine 1890's facade, probably originally identical to 2225, reflects the changing architectural tastes of the late nineteenth century in its eclectic grandeur.

The Committee recommended that action on the certification of 2227 Green Street be tabled. While an important building, the Committee directed the staff to consult with the Spring Garden Civic Association on the advisability of certification before making a decision.

Constructed c. 1857, this row of five houses situate at 2327, 2329, 2331, 2333 and 2335 Pennsylvania Avenue, has undergone considerable alteration and no longer maintains the Victorian character of the district.

The Committee recommended that these buildings not be certified. Hyman Myers abstained from voting in this instance.

2123-2125 Spruce Street, D. Webster Dougherty House. Nominated by Alvin Holm, A.I.A., and Satcho I. Parker, Ph. D. Built in 1889 as part of a row of seven Victorian houses, 2123 and 2125 Spruce Street were combined into one unit in 1900-1901 by architect Wilson Eyre, Jr. Eyre's free interpretation of the classical elements in the building's facade result in an unrestrained geometric order giving the building a vitality characteristic of Eyre's work.

The Committee recommended the certification of this building. Under Item 8 in the nomination form, the members agreed that there did not exist a social/humanitarian significance to the building as indicated by the nominee.

3001 Amber Street. Nominated by the owner. As requested by the Committee at its meeting of 13 February 1979, a member of the Commission staff conducted an on-site inspection of this early frame house and photographed the building. The series of photographs showed that the original structure had been altered considerably and that it stands within a mixed context of two and three story row houses and a number of one story garages.

The Committee recommended that this house not be certified.

1217 North 4th Street. Nominated by the owner. This small two-and-a-half story house, constructed circa 1810, remains as one of the few surviving frame structures to be found in the Northern Liberties. Its commercial ground floor, added sometime during the middle of the nineteenth century, is not an intrusion but rather a sympathetic alteration indicative of the changing character of the area.

Because a nomination form had not been submitted with the owner's request, the Committee voted to table this request pending the receipt of a completed form.

The Committee asked that, in the future, all nominations for certification proposed by the Commission staff be submitted on the official Historical Commission nomination form. For buildings already listed on the National Register of Historic Places, this will require essentially the completion of the first and last page of the form. The architectural

16 November 1979

description and the statement of significance portions of the National Register nomination form may be photocopied and attached directly to the local form.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Siemientkowski
Executive Assistant to the Chairman

PS:mk