

The meeting of the Advisory Commission on Historic Buildings was held on July 31, 1956 at 3:30 p.m., in Room 813 City Hall Annex. The following members were present:

Mr. Grant M. Simon, Chairman
Mr. Harry A. Batten
Mr. Charles E. Peterson
Mr. R. Norris Williams, 2nd
Mr. William T. Gennetti, Deputy Commissioner of
Public Property for Commissioner Regalbuto

Also present were:

Dr. Margaret B. Tinkcom, Research Historian
Mr. Charles E. Hughes, City Archivist
Mr. Albert W. Martin, Assistant to the City Architect

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved.

Appropriation for Expenses: A letter from Mr. Donald C. Wagner, Managing Director, was read in which it was stated that the budget of \$40,000 for 1956 and \$100,000 for 1957 requested for the use of the Commission could not be provided. However, the Commission was advised that on further consideration and the advice of Council-at-large Victor E. Moore, Mr. Wagner favored a budget of \$28,000 for 1956.

Inventory of City Real Estate: Mr. Hughes pointed out that there was a good inventory of City property made by the WPA in 1937. Dr. Tinkcom has a copy of the inventory of 1951. At the present time the inventory is being brought up to date by the Department of Public Property.

Old House at 5901 Woodland: Mr. Simon has been to see the house, but was not able to get inside. It stands in 59th Street which has not been opened. Mr. Batten suggested that in view of the alleged antiquity of the house it would be desirable to have an opinion outside of the Commission as to its value, and offered to have G. Edwin Brumbaugh inspect it. Dr. Feldman has made a title check back as far as 1860.

Submission Forms: The need for some kind of a minimum presentation when buildings are suggested for the consideration of the Commission was discussed.

Criteria: Mr. Gennetti asked just how an old building can be called significant. The new pamphlet of the National Trust defining the degree of importance of historic buildings was shown and read in part. The Secretary offered to procure copies for the members for further discussion.

Date of Meetings: It was reaffirmed that the regular date for Commission meetings is the last Tuesday of each month. There will be no meeting in August.

New Market House: The letter (June 10) of Mr. Carl W. Getter of Wyncote in behalf of the Market House was read in part. It has been acknowledged and Mr. Getter advised of the recommendations of the Commission.

Tinkcom Services: The bill from Dr. Tinkcom for historical researches (\$325.00) was approved.

Shoomac Park: A letter from Mr. Hal Noble, Secretary, Fairmount Park Art Commission, was read. It stated that a decision had not yet been reached regarding the location of the City Line-East River Drive traffic interchange.

Historic Structure Marker: Mr. Batten suggested that each structure approved for the historic list be marked on the exterior with something like an old fire insurance mark. He offered to have a design made for the consideration of the Commission and this was approved.

Rent Controls and New Commission: Mr. Peterson remarked that rent controls tended to keep many owners from maintaining their properties in good condition. Mr. Batten stated that such problems will be recognized and taken care of by the new corporation for the redevelopment of the Old City (not yet named). The Board of this corporation is to be announced soon.

Kirkbride's Hospital: It was reported that the Philadelphia Housing Authority has definitely approved the Kirkbride location for one of its projects. Mr. Lancelot Sims, Director of Planning for that agency, is strongly in favor of preserving as much of the old structure as possible. It was moved and seconded that the Secretary write a letter urging preservation be sent to the Authority.

Student Research: Dr. Tinkcom has consulted Drs. Smith and Tatum of the Department of History of The School of Fine Arts of the University of Pennsylvania concerning the use of students for research. Such students will not be available until the latter part of 1957.

Bell's Court: Mr. Peterson reported that half of Bell's Court (est. built about 1815) on the site of William Bingham's garden (now South Orianna Street) had just been pulled down. The pair of half-hambrel back buildings (on properties fronting Fourth Street) were picturesque and unique. Though not pretentious architecturally, they contributed a valuable part of the character of Society Hill.

Dr. Tinkcom was requested to continue with her research on the Market at 2nd and Lombard and proceed with the listing of historic buildings in the area, Delaware Avenue to 9th, Vine to South, and the final checking of the 100 buildings already approved.

Charles E. Peterson,
Secretary