

FINAL APPROVAL
March 31/59
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

A P P R O V E D

THE THIRTIETH MEETING OF THE PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

HELD IN THE COMMISSION'S OFFICE, 634 CITY HALL, at 3:30 P. M., February 24, 1959

Present were: Mr. R. Norris Williams, II.
Mr. Charles E. Peterson

Mr. Harry G. McDowell, representing Mr. McConnell
Mr. William J. Schwabe, representing Commissioner Gennetti
Mr. George I. Lovatt, City Architect.

Mr. Grant M. Simon, Chairman

Also present: Miss A. Adele Rudolph
Mr. Richard S. Fuller
Dr. Margaret B. Tinkcom, Historian
Mrs. Charles J. Maurer, Executive Secretary

THE MINUTES of January 27, 1959, were approved as circulated.

DR. TINKCOM'S REPORT

Records relating to the eighty-two houses which the Redevelopment Authority expects to acquire for rehabilitation are being accumulated. A full report will be ready for the next meeting.

The Chairman interposed a statement that Philadelphia's pride in her first families is well known. The study of these eighty-two houses is producing a report on these first families.

Dr. Tinkcom suggested the advisability of accumulating a collection of slides. When gathering slides for her recent illustrated talk at Fort Washington, she discovered that there are no slides of many of the major buildings in the City available to the Commission. The question was asked: Ought the Commission to have slides made and should those which we have access to be duplicated? The cost of duplicating them is thirty cents per slide. It was suggested that Mr. Guy Klett at the Presbyterian Historical Society, might have a considerable collection of important buildings among his slides. A MOTION was made by Mr. Schwabe that the Commission spend twenty dollars at a time to build up its collection of slides. This sum would not require a formal requisition. The Motion was seconded and carried.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

The Chairman introduced Miss Rudolph to the Commission. Miss Rudolph is doing research on the advertisements of the Pennsylvania Gazette and taking photographs for the Commission.

SECOND STREET MARKET

Mr. Lovatt was asked for his report. He said that as soon as the Mayor's signature was obtained, the restoration of the Head House and a portion of the Market

will gather momentum. Bids will go out immediately, which will be received by March 25th. They will be awarded by March 30th, and actual work will be started by the end of April.

The Chairman read a letter from Mr. G. Edwin Brumbaugh, dated February 17, 1959 corroborating Mr. Lovatt's report, and adding that he had found remains of a very early lightning rod installation in the attic of the Head House, much like that on Gloria Dei. Mr. Brumbaugh pointed out that in his opinion, the installation of the latter had been supervised by Benjamin Franklin; and although the one found in the Head House was not quite as early, it may well have been modelled upon the Franklin rods.

Mr. Peterson brought photostatic prints of early scale drawings of Second Street showing the piers of the market shambles in groups of four; the original width of Second Street and the additional footage acquired for the market; the ownership of the surrounding lots and other pertinent details. The Chair suggested that the Commission formally thank Mr. Peterson for finding this valuable material which will be forwarded to Mr. Brumbaugh as quickly as possible, on Motion from Mr. Williams.

MARSHALL'S COURT:

The secretary was asked to read a letter from Mr. M. O. Anderson, dated February 6, 1959, reporting the reasons for the National Park Service's decision to tear down the dwellings on Marshall's Court and to erect a service area. It was the opinion of those present that Mr. Anderson's opinion as to the value of these houses could be challenged. The Chair pointed out that it would be necessary for the Commission to make a constructive suggestion. Mr. Williams made the suggestion that the Commission go on record as saying that it believes Marshall's Court ought to be saved, since the interiors are largely intact. The suggestion was made in the form of a RESOLUTION that the Commission pursue the matter further since it has certified these buildings and believes that they maintain the character of the neighborhood in a way which a reconstruction, however good, would not do. Furthermore that the Commission looks to the Park Service to sustain the Philadelphia Historical Commission. Mr. Williams summed up his comments by saying that the Commission is not enthusiastic about the reconstructions already achieved by the Park Service. The Chairman cited the brick and iron work surrounding the garden on the south side of Locust Street, west of Fourth Street, which in his opinion is badly conceived. This opinion was sustained by Messrs. Brumbaugh, Martin and Willing.

MAPS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF STREETS:

Forty-one printed maps have already been received. The manuscript maps remain to be photographed. Mr. Peterson remarked that some of these should be reproduced on large film for future detailed study as an invaluable store of important information. Mr. Peterson agreed to work with Dr. Tinkcom on this. Mr. Schwabe asked if the subject of the Commission's receiving these maps from the Department of Streets might not be worthy of newspaper publicity. The Chair assented, suggesting that Mr. Hugh Scott or Mr. Paul Jones might be agreeable to featuring these maps in the near future. Mr. Schwabe will pursue the matter.

KIRKBRIDE'S.

KIRKBRIDE'S

Mr. Williams was asked if he had any information. He had not. The Chairman reported that at a recent meeting attended by himself and Mr. Hightes, City Architect, it was reported that Shoomac Park is to be torn down as well as "Kirkbride's". Mr. Paul Harbeson has been retained as architect for the preservation of only the main portico, the entire building with this exception will be demolished. Mr. Schwabe reported that Mr. Baker, Commissioner of Records is emphatic that "Kirkbride's" is not to be used for storage of City Records, but he agreed to speak further to both Commissioner Baker and to Mr. Hughes.

312 DELANCEY STREET:

The Chairman reported that the owner wants to restore the building, if the Redevelopment Authority will agree not to demolish it for the route of the proposed Greenway. The house was built by Robert Blackwell, assistant to Bishop White. In a recent telephone conversation with Dean Perkins, the Chairman said that in the opinion of the Commission, the buildings are more important than the greenway. Mr. Andrade and Mr. Simon are trying to find another place where this greenway might be cut through to Pine Street. This walk should be casual, not artificially planned, and could wander rather than pursue a straight course. Mr. Williams suggested that both 312 and 314 be saved and that the greenway be moved further west, perhaps to 316, which is less important. The City may be criticized if it save a now vacant house and tears down the house immediately to the west, which is owner-occupied (314). Dean Perkins maintained that the walkway should remain as shown in the plans. The matter of preserving 312 and the adjacent buildings, was tabled for a future meeting.

216, 218 ST. JAMES STREET:

In Mr. Andrade's opinion, it would be well to save these, reported the Chairman. Apparently they were built by the Federal Government around 1800, but more research is required to verify this. Mr. Andrade has asked for additional data to evaluate these two small dwellings.

Mr. Williams was emphatic in saying that it would be dangerous to classify the eighty-two buildings (mentioned on page one of these Minutes) in any way. This suggestion was approved by the Commission.

SOCIETY HILL -FRONT TO SECOND, WALNUT TO SOUTH:

No buildings in this general area have been certified, first because of the probability of their being demolished to make way for the Expressway; and second, because of the urgency of certifying the buildings in the Redevelopment area. However, it was the opinion of the Commission that it would be neglectful of its obligation, if it did not gather data on many of these buildings and record it. There are a great number of unusual buildings in this district and should be preserved, or if this is impossible, at least they should be recorded in as much detail as possible. This matter is to be carried forward to the next meeting.

Mr. Peterson submitted a list of twenty-seven buildings on both sides of the 100 block of DeLancey and Pine Streets and recommends certification of all of them. This list corresponds to the listing already prepared by Dr. Tinkcom, but which has not as yet been certified. Mrs. Tinkcom was asked to add this list to the proposed one for Water and Front Streets.

Feb. 24, 1959

NEW BUSINESS:

IN reporting at greater length on Dr. Tinkcom's illustrated talk at Fort Washington on February 17th, it was made evident that a standard talk of similar kind should be prepared for future occasions. This will be done.

FRANKFORD TOWN HALL, Southeast corner of Frankford Avenue and Ruan Streets;. Mr. S. C. Flood, Real Estate Officer, sent a form to this Commission, asking if it has any interest in this old structure, which is said to be in deplorable condition. Mr. Lovatt volunteered to look at the building in a few days and will then report to the Commission. Mr. Schwabe agreed to ask Mr. Flood to extend the time limit for its disposition so that further research may be done. The present date of March 13th, when a report will be required from the Historic Commission

SUBMISSIONS.

The facade of 318 Delancey was discussed. Mr. Peterson thought we should raise the criteria for approval of it, is going to be advertised as the sign reads: "By the Approval of The Philadelphia Historical Commission. He asked if he might review the drawing submitted for the exterior changes proposed for 511 DeLancey Street, in which he might be able to guide the owners into adopting more authentic period details.

THE BIRTHPLACE OF BENJAMIN RUSH

Mr. Peterson mentioned that he planned to send an Historical American Buildings Survey architect and a photographer out to make a record of that house to be accompanied by Mrs. Kirkbride. They also plan to make a record of the Peale House at 8100 Frankford Avenue in Byberry.

The Meeting was adjourned at 5:30 P. M.

Respectfully submitted

Charles E. Peterson
Secretary.

CHARLES E. PETERSON

MEMBER
AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS
SOCIETY OF ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIANS

334 Spruce St.
~~XXXXXX~~
PHILADELPHIA 6, PENNSYLVANIA
TELEPHONE MARKET 4-1620
Walnut 3-2400
Ext. 759 - 786

February 24, 1959

Memorandum

To: Chairman Simon, Philadelphia Historical Commission
From: Charles E. Peterson
Subject: Buildings for Certification, Society Hill

Pursuant to my offer at a previous meeting, I have inspected the fronts of the houses in the 100 block of Delancey and Pine Streets and recommend certification of the following:

Delancey Street

South Side

106 122 ✓
108 124
110 126
112 128
114 130
120 ✓

North Side

105 (This is a picturesque half-gambrel warehouse--est. date 1825--with features resembling the Latour warehouse on Water Street)

Pine Street

North Side

115 125
117 129
119 131
121 133
123

South Side

108 120
110
112
114
118

Some of the above are more interesting than others, but all contribute to the general effect. If the interiors could be seen, there might be more buildings selected for certification.

Charles E. Peterson

In duplicate