

THE SEVENTIETH STATED MEETING OF THE PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

26 March, 1963

Present were: Dr. Roy Franklin Nichols
Mr. John Taxin
Mr. R. Norris Williams, II.

Mr. Grant M. Simon, Chairman

Also present: Mr. Philip Carroll, Administrative Assistant, Dept. Public Property
Dr. Margaret B. Tinkcom, Historian
Mrs. Charles J. Maurer, Secretary

Mr. Frank E. Elliott, Vice President, Hyman Korman, Inc.
Mr. Murray G. Isard, Vice President, Hyman Korman, Inc.

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

THE MINUTES, 26 March, 1963, were approved as read.

REPORTS

The Committee on Historic Values, Dr. Roy Franklin Nichols, Chairman
The Report was approved as read. A resolution that a letter be sent to the Zoning Board of Adjustment and to City Planning Commission stating that the Historical Commission opposes any zoning change which will down grade an area adjacent to or in the neighborhood of certified buildings was proposed. This was approved.

The Architectural Committee, Mr. Charles E. Peterson, Chairman pro tem.
In Mr. Peterson's absence, the secretary read the report which was approved.

The Commission's Activities. Dr. Tinkcom's Report was approved as read.

The above reports were ordered to be filed with the official copies of the Minutes.

OLD BUSINESS

Preston Retreat. The Chairman introduced Messrs. Elliott and Isard who had been invited to appear at this meeting to state their case.

Hyman Korman, Inc. had purchased the property from the Scott Construction Company believing that the way had been cleared for the demolition of the building. Since then, the firm had learned that demolition of a certified building cannot be begun until the Philadelphia Historical Commission's permission is given. This was withheld in February. Mr. Elliott outlined plans for the site if some other use which would permit the preservation of Preston Retreat was not discoverable.

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Old Business continues - Preston Retreat

The Chairman asked whether, if the legal delay of six months were imposed by the Commission, it would constitute a hardship. Mr. Elliott answered in the affirmative, Mr. Isard concurring.

The question was then raised whether or not the Commission can be assured that the portico will be preserved. Mr. Elliott replied that this is indeed planned. Messrs. Elliott and Isard were thanked for attending the Stated Meeting and assured that they would hear from the Historical Commission within the month.

The Chairman reviewed the Commission's efforts to find a use for the building over the past two years, noting that the Commission on Education is getting estimates on the cost of altering the building for use as a City College. Meanwhile, Mr. Taxih agreed to telephone Secretary Adams in Harrisburg to ask for a written reply stating the State Department of Welfare's position in the matter.

A motion was proposed that in the event of a flat rejection of the Retreat by the City's Commissioner of Education and by Secretary Adams, the Historical Commission will agree to release the building for demolition. Assurance that the portico is to be preserved if practicable, was noted.

NEW BUSINESS

"Wharton", Mappsville, Virginia, on the Eastern Shore. A request for a plaque has been received from the owner, Mr. Charles R. Busch. It was approved that authorization to purchase an honorary, unnumbered plaque may be sent to Mr. Busch and it was resolved that people outside the City may have unnumbered plaques, if the requirements of the Commission, in regard to full restoration, have been met.

Twelve South Twelfth Street. The matter is to be carried over until the next meeting, when more information regarding the proposed opening of a street between the Friends' Meetinghouse and the Philadelphia Saving Fund Society building will have been made available.

The Chairman reported a conversation with Mr. Rafsky in regard to 1035 Spruce. The owner has agreed to conform to the Commission's restrictions. In regard to Musical Fund Hall, Mr. Rafsky reported that, if the Musical Fund Society can raise sufficient money to restore the Hall, a reasonable purchase price can be arranged for the Society with Yahn & McDonnell.

There being no further business, the Meeting was adjourned at 4:45. P. M.

Respectfully submitted &c....