

MINUTES OF THE 162nd STATED MEETING OF THE PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

6 January 1972

Present: Charles R. Tyson, Chairman of the Commission
Richmond P. Miller, Vice Chairman of the Commission
Hon. John B. Kelly, Jr., Councilman-at-Large
Edward Pinkowski
William A. Costello, Commissioner of Public Property
Robert Silver, Deputy Commissioner of Public Property
Henry J. Magaziner, A.I.A., Architectural Advisor to the Commission
Isador Kranzel, Esq., Assistant City Solicitor
Mrs. Joseph Segal, Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority
Dr. Margaret B. Tinkcom, Historian
Mrs. Charles J. Maurer, Executive Assistant to the Chairman
Patricia Siemiontkowski, Secretary

Unless otherwise noted, all actions taken herein are the result of motions correctly made, seconded and carried.

THE MINUTES for the Stated Meeting 30 November 1971 were approved and directed to be filed. The Minutes of the Executive Session for 30 November 1971 were also approved.

REPORTS

The report of the Architectural Committee for 9 November 1971 was approved with one correction. At the request of Mr. Henry J. Magaziner the following statement will be added: "The Architectural Committee requests that the Chairman of the Historical Commission write a letter to Chester Brooks asking that the National Park Service follow up their letter of 3 April 1970 to the Department of Housing and Urban Development, relative to 5443-45 Germantown Avenue in view of that area's designation as a National Historic Landmark. The Minutes of the Architectural Committee meeting held on 14 December 1971 were also approved. Both reports were directed to be filed with the official copy of the Minutes.

The Commission approved the certification of the following buildings:

201-03 South Twelfth Street
2016 Spruce Street
1900, 2000, and 2100 blocks of Delancey Street (the 1800 block having been certified previously)
2023-25 Rittenhouse Street
213-15-17-19 Fitzwater Street
140-42 Race Street

The Commission's Activities, Dr. Margaret B. Tinkcom, Historian. Dr. Tinkcom reported that Mayor Tate, then Mayor-elect Rizzo, and the Bankers' Security Corporation received copies of the petitions signed at the John Wanamaker House on November 14, 1971 and that the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission passed a resolution, December 22, 1971, urging the preservation of this historically certified building.

The City Planning Commission is also studying the problem in an effort to help find a solution which would allow the retention of the Wanamaker House on its present site.

Dr. Tinkcom advised the Commission of a proposal received from the Landmarks Commission of Kansas City, Missouri, which would set up a National Council of Landmarks Commissions in America and asked about the Philadelphia Historical Commission's interest in such a Council. The Board reacted favorably but agreed that further inquiries should be made into this proposal before any definite decision could be made.

Dr. Tinkcom's Report was approved and directed to be filed with the official copy of the Minutes.

OLD BUSINESS

National Park Service Request relative to 5443-45 Germantown Avenue. (See page one of the Minutes under the Report of the Architectural Committee for November 9, 1971.)

20 South Twelfth Street, Friends' Meetinghouse. An application to demolish this historically certified building was received, January 5, 1972, in the Commission office. Mrs. Maurer asked whether the Board would like to refer the demolition request to the Architectural Committee who will meet on January 11 or whether they preferred to take final action today. Mr. Magaziner recommended that the permit be approved since every avenue to preserve the

building on its original site had been explored and rejected by the Society of Friends. The Historian noted that Dr. William Murtagh, Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places, and Dr. S. K. Stevens, Chairman of the President's Advisory Council, will not oppose the demolition of this structure. It will be removed from the National Register, however. A motion to process the application was made, seconded and carried. Mr. Miller, as a member of the Society of Friends, abstained. (The meetinghouse will be disassembled and moved to the campus of the George School where it will be reerected.)

305 Chestnut Street. James Martin of the Old Philadelphia Development Corporation after meeting with Mr. Charles Kurz reported to the Historian that the Keystone Corporation was not so much concerned with parking but with the extra space in their own building which they cannot rent until they can construct another elevator tower. The corporation is also considering buying more nearby properties on Chestnut and South Third Streets some of which are also historically certified structures. The matter has been referred to the City Planning Commission since the properties in question are part of the Old City Area.

NEW BUSINESS

The Historian recommended to the Board that Barbara Liggett be designated as the Historical Commission's Archaeological Consultant. It was pointed out that Miss Liggett would receive no fee for any services rendered to the Commission except those provided for by private funds granted the Philadelphia Historical Commission specifically for archaeological research. Conferring this title on Miss Liggett would permit the Commission to acquire funds more easily from private sources for further archaeological work. Commissioner Costello made a motion to approve Dr. Tinkcom's recommendation. This motion was seconded and unanimously carried.

Mrs. Segal reported that the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority would consider it desirable if the Historical Commission were involved in an early stage of planning in historically important project areas. The South Central Project Area, shortly coming up for review under the Department of Housing and Urban Development, is an area important to Philadelphia both historically and architecturally. Mrs. Segal recommended that the Historical Commission request the Redevelopment Authority to insert in their budget a proposal for a contract to provide funds to cover the preparation of historical surveys which would lead to the establishment of programs for this particular area. Dr. Tinkcom was directed to prepare a proposal and a letter of transmittal to be sent to Mr. Francis Myers, Director of the Redevelopment Authority. A motion was made to approve the above suggested action which was seconded and unanimously carried, with Mr. Magaziner abstaining.

Reissue of the Philadelphia Historical Commission brochure. Since the Commission's supply of brochures is rapidly dwindling the Historian was authorized to make any revisions necessary in the text and send it on to the printer.

Plaque for Girard Avenue Bridge. The Historical Commission was asked by the Art Commission to comment on the wording of the plaque to be placed on the newly constructed Girard Avenue Bridge. Dr. Tinkcom suggested that the names of the architect and engineers for the 1874 bridge be included on the plaque as well as the date of the cast iron structure. The Board unanimously agreed to give the Historian authorization to make the suggested changes and any others which may be needed.

Penn Tower Lobby Mural. A representative of the Commission was invited by the Art Commission to a meeting on January 11 at 3:30 P. M. when the proposal for a mural for the Penn Tower Lobby will be up for discussion. The invitation must be respectfully declined, however, since the Historical Commission's Architectural Committee meets on that same day at the same time. It was requested that the Art Commission come back to the Historical Commission with a report on their decision in the matter.

OTHER BUSINESS

Italian Fountain. Mr. Magaziner informed the Commission of the Fairmount Park Commission's desire to demolish this fountain located behind the Art Museum on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway, and stated the American Institute of Architects' strong opposition to its demolition. A recommendation was made that the fountain be nominated for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. If the fountain were placed on the Federal Register funds could be made available on a matching basis for its restoration. Mrs. Segal further suggested that perhaps the matching funds could be taken from the fund set up under the 1% Fine Arts Clause. Mrs. Segal will look into this matter and make a report. Commissioner Costello requested background material on the fountain which he will submit to the Building Committee of the Fairmount Park Commission of which he is a member. If that committee agrees that the fountain could be restored at a minimum cost to the city, a proposal will then be presented to the Fairmount Park Commission and the Philadelphia Historical Commission for consideration. A motion to nominate the Italian Fountain for the National Register was made and unanimously carried.

Kosciuszko House, 301 Pine Street. Mr. Pinkowski requested that a copy of the Philadelphia Historical Commission's Resolution on the Kosciuszko House (also copies of correspondence with the National Park Service, etc.) be forwarded to Senator Allen Bible to present