

MINUTES OF THE FIFTY-SIXTH MEETING OF THE PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

October 31, 1961

Present were: Mr. Harry A. Batten
Mrs. Richardson Dilworth
Mr. Charles E. Peterson
Mr. George K. Trautwein

Mr. R. Norris Williams, II, Chairman pro tem at the request of
Mr. Simon, absent because of illness.

Also present: Mr. Philip Carroll, representing Commissioner Fred T. Corleto
Dr. Margaret B. Tinkcom, Historian
Mrs. Charles J. Maurer, Executive Secretary
Miss Constance F. Smith, Clerk

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

THE MINUTES of the September 26th meeting were approved as circulated.

REPORTS

Historic Values Committee. Due to Dr. Nichols' unavoidable absence, the Report was read by Dr. Tinkcom. It was approved as read and ordered to be filed with the official copy of the Minutes. Actions taken by the Commission, resulting from recommendations of the Committee are as follows:

A plaque for Frankford Monthly Meeting was approved.

A plaque for 626 Spruce Street was disallowed.

A Resolution to be transmitted by letter to Mr. William A. Day, approved:

The Philadelphia Historical Commission Resolved that all new "fill-in" houses to be erected in Washington Square East, Units I & II, should be designed so that they will be in keeping both in scale and character with certified houses around them. Rehabilitation specifications for existing but uncertified buildings which stand among certified buildings should be so drawn as to ensure that each rehabilitated building harmonized with its neighbors.

Architectural Committee. Mr. Trautwein voiced his regret for the intrusion of his committee on the Meeting of the Commission and said his Report would be presented at a later date.

Dr. Tinkcom's Report on the Commission's Activities. The Report was approved as read and ordered filed with the official copy of the Minutes.

October 21, 1961

Mr. Batten made the following requests:

A complete report on The Woodlands.

A copy of the Commission's Annual Report to give to Messrs. James Perry of the Sunday Bulletin and Abe Rosen of the City Representative's office. Dr. Tinkcom is working on this report and states that it is nearly complete.

Mr. Williams reported the receipt of a letter from Mr. Park H. Martin, Secretary of Highways, sent to the Commission as a result of a letter to the Hon. William A. Barrett, October 3, 1961, concerning the crosstown link of the Delaware Expressway as it affected the certified buildings between South and Bainbridge Streets. The situation was discussed at length. Mrs. Dilworth said she would endeavor to obtain a map showing the interchange from the City Planning Commission.

NEW BUSINESS

The Mitchell House, 276 South Third Street. Mr. Peterson pointed out that the threat to this house, for which the Redevelopment Authority secured a demolition permit last June, was very great. Licenses and Inspections have locked the house over and did not find it unsafe. Mr. Peterson inspected the premises a few hours before the meeting and found the building in not bad condition except that it has never been cleared out and the hatch cover had been removed and was lying on the roof. He closed it. This 1813 house is in the style of Robert Mills and is contemporary with the rest of the houses in the Bingham Estate. It serves as an architectural anchor to the whole block. Mr. Batten said that if the present structure is authenticated as the original 1813 building, he would attempt to get it authorized for sale. Fortunately, one builder, experienced in restoration, has expressed his interest in rehabilitating it. It was agreed that Messrs. Simon, Trautwein, and Peterson examine the building on Wednesday, November 1. This was done as a result of information, formerly incomplete, now much augmented by Mr. Peterson's inspection and a recently ordered brief of title.

The Stocker House, 402 South Front Street. Mr. Peterson pointed out that this brick mansion, for which the Historic American Buildings Survey has made measured drawings, is said to be in one of the current demolition contracts. This is apparently because of the Expressway interchange roads. Mr. Batten intends to follow this up as soon as possible. The house was built in the 1790s by Clement Stocker, a prominent merchant, who was one of the founders and a First Trustee of the Mutual Assurance Company.

The Meeting was adjourned at 5:15 P. M.

Respectfully submitted

Charles E. Peterson
Secretary