

D R A F T

THE TWENTY-FIFTH MEETING OF THE PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

September 30, 1958

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

Mr. William J. Schwabe, representing Mr. Wm. T. Gennetti
Mr. Harry G. McDowell, " Mr. Richard J. McConnell
Dr. Margaret B. Tinkcom, Historian
Mrs. Charles J. Maurer, Executive Secretary

Mr. Grant M. Simon, Chairman

The Meeting came to order at 3:40 P. M.

The Minutes of the June 24th Meeting were approved.

Dr. Tinkcom's Report to Date

✓ HABI FORMS. 103 Worksheets were sent to Mr. Gennetti's office for typing, at his suggestion, early in July. Forty have been typed to date and mailed to Washington, accompanied by the required reduced photographs. Thirty-five more are typed and waiting for the $2\frac{1}{2} \times 2\frac{1}{2}$ photographs, the balance still being worked on in the Commissioner's office.

AREAS SURVEYED. Field Surveys have been completed for the Franklin Square area. In Kensington, 650 houses of possible interest are now being photographed. The survey of Washington Square West, with 400 houses (about 100 of which are already certified) is in process. Photographing of this area will be completed within a few days.

GRADUATE STUDENTS.. During the summer, four student historians worked on briefs of title in the Society Hill Area, in addition to records in the Recorder of Deeds office; tax records and directories were studied in an effort to date the houses as exactly as possible. East-West streets are finished; North-south streets are well begun and should be completed by December. Information gathered prior to September 24th was sent to Mr. Gane for use of the Redevelopment Authority. Insurance surveys

are being copied as fast as possible. Mrs. Maurer, being alone in the office, finds whatever time she can for this. Work is also progressing on the advertisements in THE PENNSYLVANIA GAZETTE 1770-1775. This information frequently adds another date to information about properties on the certified list, as well as considerable data incidental to the growth of the Old City. X

✓ THE HENRY GEORGE ANNIVERSARY. Mrs. Tinkcom spoke at their anniversary on the work of this Commission

✓ BENJAMIN RUSH HOUSE. Additional research has been done on the property at the request of Mr. Thomas Graham, who is trying to interest the County Medical Society in its preservation. Mr. Peterson reported that photographers would be ready in about a week to take pictures of the Rush House.

✓ SPRUCE & MATTIS STREET HOUSES. Additional work has been done on the history of these houses.

NEW PROJECTS. Briefs of Title for the Society Hill Area will be completed by the students before anything else is begun. Then a study of tax records (Mr. Corrigan has already done some of this work in connection with his work at the University) should be started. For example, this will supplement the research in process in the early newspapers. Later we plan to make a map, using Sanborn plates as the base and coloring it to show the age of certified houses.

CITY OWNED BUILDINGS. These will be surveyed this fall if possible.

✓ THE BUDGET. Recommendations for the 1959 Budget were originally approved, but have since been turned down. Present Budget for 1959 remains at the same figure as that for 1958, with no provision for a clerk-typist or increase in the executive secretary's salary. Attention was drawn to the fact that the students, for example, could have accomplished a great deal more of the research they were hired to do, if they had not had to type their reports. Mr. McDowell suggested that Public Property might be able to give the Commission some typing assistance. Mr. Schwabe offered to take the matter up with Commissioner Gennetti.

✓ THE PENNSYLVANIA HOSPITAL NURSES' HOME. It was reported by Mr. Batten that meetings went on all summer between Mr. Simon, himself and the officers of the Hospital. Mr. Simon reviewed the various plans submitted by Rogers and Butler, Architects of New York, saying that the last ones were an improvement and took into consideration the suggestions made by this Commission. The Chairman reported that the Hospital offered to submit samples of materials as the work progresses. He asked for a formal Motion of a proval of the work carried on during the summer recess, which was made and carried. It was mentioned in passing that eventually the rest of the block between Seventh and Eighth Streets will come down and the whole group be surrounded by a brick wall.

✓ THE REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY. Mr. Batten reported that this agency is the top authority in the City and outlined its power. Mr. Simon referred to his letter of July 29th to Dr. Perkins, Chairman of the City Planning Commission. No work has been heard since July 29th, in regard to the new jurisdiction of this Commission.

✓ THE BANNAKER SCHOOL, KINGSESSING. Dr. Tinkcom reported that a Mr. Charles Johnson had called Mr. Simon's attention to this school. The neighborhood wants to preserve the old building as a community green space or park. Contrary to reports in the press, the building seems to be in no immediate danger of being demolished, as the Philadelphia Housing Authority plans to recommend that the school and vacant ground on which it stands be made into a small park for use of residents of a new housing development in the neighborhood. Members of the Commission agreed that the Bannaker School be certified. This was done. It was suggested that Mr. Johnson try to collect a committee of persons interested in restoring the school and that he be advised that this Commission would do all in its power to help his committee to achieve its objective

✓ ST. JAMES, KINGSESSING. An Episcopal Church, built 1762-1763. The Commission agreed to certify this church.

- ✓ BLUE BELL TAVERN, built in 1762 was also certified. It is on the corner of 73d Street and Woodland Avenue.
- ✓ THE HENRY PASCHALL MANSION, said to have been the rectory of St. James Church at one time, was added to the list of certified buildings, pending further research.
- ✓ SHOOMAC PARK. Mr. Peterson reported on work he and several students accomplished during the summer, making measured drawings and taking photographs, copies of which will be available for the Commission. He reported that there is much panelling, that corner cupboards are still intact and that in his opinion, the public should be better informed as to the possibilities of restoring Shoomac Park. A discussion followed in which it was suggested that Dr. Tinkcom's research be used as the basis for a paper that might be published in THE MAGAZINE OF HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY. No definite action was taken.

CANNON BALL FARM. Nothing to report at this time.

- ✓ KIRKBRIDE'S. Mr. Schwabe reported that he understood that this building is to be demolished, but that two buildings, the Busti Mansion and the Gymnasium with its attached swimming pool and a classroom, were to be saved under jurisdiction of the Department of Recreation. A discussion concerning Commissioner Baker's emphasis on modern records versus archives under supervision of Mr. Hughes followed. Mr. Peterson reported that in some cities, such old buildings were preserved by turning them over to private agencies to be operated as a home for elderly people.

FORT MIFFLIN. Nothing to report at this time.

- ✓ PLAQUES FOR HISTORIC BUILDINGS. Mr. Batten reported that since the City cannot sell these, the S. H. Quint Company has decided to make the investment in die and plaques, selling these direct to applicants, if the Historical Commission furnishes them with a letter or certificate authorizing the Quint Company to issue them a plaque. They will cost \$6.50, will be made of aluminum painted black, will be numbered and will be sold complete with screws.

SUBMISSIONS. 126 Elfreth's Alley, under jurisdiction of the Landmark Society and the Elfreth's Alley Association. Work is to be done on the facade as part of its complete restoration. It was resolved that Mr. Peterson study the plans and report his opinion to the executive secretary by Friday.

✓ BIDDING. Mr. Simon reviewed the matter of competitive bidding and the practice of the Federal Government accepting the lowest bid, whether or not the bidder was qualified to restore a building properly, having historical significance. Mr. McDowell said that the City makes exceptions of a work of art. For this kind of work, bidders are qualified before they are allowed to bid. It was suggested that the Chairman write a letter to Judge Lewis, recommending that the Federal Government adopt similar procedure. Mr. Batten took with him a copy of the letter Mr. Simon wrote to Mr. M. O. Anderson on this subject, September 12th.

✓ THE HEAD HOUSE, SECOND STREET MARKET. Mr. Batten reported that work will begin about January 1, 1959 restoring the Head House of Second Street Market.

Mr. Batten suggested that a Motion, voicing the Commission's approval and appreciation of Mr. Simon's work during the summer, be made a part of the Record. This was done.

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

Respectfully submitted &c.

September 1958

PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

INTERIM LIST OF CERTIFIED DWELLINGS

WASHINGTON SQUARE, WEST (South of Market Street)

Spruce Street, 900 Block

North side	913	South side	900
	915		902
	917		904
	923		906
	929		908
	931		910
	933		912
			914
			916
			918
			920
			924
			926
			928
			930 SE cor 10th

Spruce Street 1000 Block

North side	1001 NW cor 10th & Spruce	South side	1004
	1003		1006
	1005		1008
	1011		1010
	1013		1014
	1015		1016
	1021 bay window 2nd floor		1030
	1023		1032
	1025		
	1031		
	1035		

Spruce Street 1100 Block

North side	1117	South side	1104
	1119 NE cor Spruce & Quince		1106
	1125		1108
	1127		1110
	1129		1112
	1131		1114 SE cor Quince
			1118
			1120
			1126
			1128
			1130

Also all the dwellings on CLINTON STREET 900 and 1000 Blocks