

THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION
30 November 1998

18th Floor Conference Room, One Parkway, 1515 Arch Street
Wayne S. Spilove, Chair

Present

Wayne S. Spilove, Chair
Duane Bumb, Deputy Director, Chamber of Commerce
Melissa Heller Batzner, Office of City Council President
Warren Huff, Chief, Urban Design Group, City Planning Commission
Joseph James, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Public Property
David Perri, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Licenses and Inspections
Robert Thomas
Dennis Ward III
Scott Wilds, Deputy Director for Housing, Office of Housing and Urban Development
Caroline Wischmann

Elizabeth C. Harvey, Historic Preservation Planner
R. Scott Jacob, Executive Secretary
Laura M. Spina, Historic Preservation Planner
Richard Tyler, Historic Preservation Officer

Mark Zecca, Esq., Deputy City Solicitor

Hyman Myers, Acting Chair, Committee on Historic Designation

Also

Michael Sklaroff, Esq.
George P. O'Connell, Esq., Barbin Lauffer, & O'Connell, CP
John Sokoro, Esq., Duane, Morris & Heckscher, LLP
Robert M. Skaler, architect
Jeanette Toohey, Associate Curator, Delaware Art Museum
Gail Winkler, President, PA-East Chapter of American Society of Interior Designers
Patricia Wilson Aden, Vice President, Preservation Alliance
Penny Balkin Bach, Executive Director, Fairmount Park Art Association
Maevernon Varnum, Arts Defense League
Tom Nichols
Ann Saul
Harriet Jaffe
Kim Glunas
Karen Schwartz
Jane L. Istvan
Janet Mason

Elaine Grottman
Stephen Salisbury
James H. Steigerwald
Bob Luckuer
David Thomas
Randal Cotton
B. Edelstein
Michael F. Eichert
C.L. Compton
L. Griffith Boch
Roger W. Moss
Evy Simen
Doreen Newston
Diane Dalto
Aliko Strakes

Wayne Spilove, Chair, recognized the presence of quorum and called the Special Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission to order at 2:10 P.M.

At the start of the meeting, Mr. Sklaroff recused himself, did not sit at the table, and did not participate in the discussion or voting.

REPORT of the Committee on Historic Designation, 20 November 1998, Hyman Myers, Acting Chair.

Dream Garden, The Curtis Building Lobby, 170 South Independence Mall East

Estate of John W. Merriam, Owner

ARTISTS: Maxfield Parrish and Louis C. Tiffany

DATE: 1916

Committee on Historic Designation Recommendation: Approval.

This Special Meeting was called by the Chair pursuant to § 4.1 of the Rules and Regulations to consider the Committee on Historic Designation's report on *Dream Garden*. The Historical Commission staff provided notice of the meeting of the Committee and the Special Meeting of the Commission as prescribed by the historic preservation ordinance at §14-2007(6) of the Philadelphia Code and the Rules and Regulations at § 5.4. The Executrix of the Estate and its counsel, the owner of the Curtis Building, and the Maxfield Parrish Trust received this notice. The staff also distributed copies of the nomination form for *Dream Garden* to the members of the Commission, the owner and representatives of the owner in advance of this Special Meeting.

Mr. Myers reported that the Committee on Historic Designation unanimously recommends entry of *Dream Garden* on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places as an object. The Committee consisted of Mr. Myers, Acting Chair; Janet Klein, Chair,

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission; Ernest Leonardo, Chief, Comprehensive Planning, Philadelphia City Planning Commission, and Sandra Tatman, Ph.D.

The Commission staff introduced information and an expert witness, Jeanette Toohey, Associate Curator, Delaware Art Museum, to the Commission.

The Commission discussed the Report of the Committee and the nomination and heard testimony. Representatives of the Estate of John W. Merriam, the owner of *Dream Garden*, George O'Connell, Esq., and John Soroko, Esq., testified against the designation, presented the evidence and argument they chose to offer, and introduced Robert Skaler, architect, as an expert witness; Mr. Skaler spoke in opposition to the designation.

Various witnesses testified in support of the designation of *Dream Garden*. They included Patricia Wilson Aden of the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia, Penny Balkin Bach of the Fairmount Park Art Association, Gail Winkler of the Pennsylvania East Chapter of the American Society of Interior Designers, Maevern Varnum of the Arts Defense League, and Tom Nichols, Ann Saul and Harriet Jaffe as private citizens.

Mr. Ward made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Mr. Perri seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

The Special Meeting of the Commission adjourned at 2:15 P.M..

A complete record was made of these proceedings.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Tyler
Historic Preservation Officer

