



PRESERVATION ALLIANCE

for greater philadelphia

May 3, 2010

The Honorable Michael Nutter
Mayor, City of Philadelphia
City Hall Room 215
Philadelphia PA 19107

Dear Mayor Nutter,

A short while ago the Philadelphia Inquirer published a letter to the editor I wrote concerning the future of the historic Family Court Building on Logan Square. I received more email responses to this than I usually receive from a letter to the editor, all urging the Preservation Alliance to establish a task force to explore whether there is a feasible way to keep the Family Court Building in public use. I am therefore planning to organize such a task force and would like your support for this effort.

My intent to is try to explore whether there are practical and economically feasible uses for the Family Court Building that would keep all or a substantial part of the building in public use and that would be able to use the building without adding to it or demolishing its significant interior spaces. This exploration would include ideas for a mixed-use project with public and private activities, so long as these can be accommodated along with preservation of the buildings historic character. I also wish to make this a practical exploration – that is, I want to test ideas against the economic realities of adapting the building and operating it in the future.

Since the City owns this building, I am requesting your support in the following ways:

1. Indicate that you support the Preservation Alliance in undertaking an exploration of this type. I have not as yet approached individuals to be members of a task force, since I would like to be able to indicate that this effort has your support.
2. Designate a person or persons to be liaison between the City and the Alliance. Commissioner Joan Schlotterbeck would be a logical choice or Gary Steuer might be a possibility; however, since I want to be sure that economic issues are carefully considered it would be useful to have someone like Duane Bumb involved. Duane was very helpful when the Preservation Alliance was exploring ideas for the Boyd Theater before developers came along.

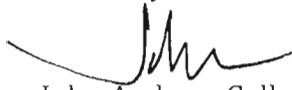
3. Provide access to the building for a site visit and whatever plans of the building exist so that we can be aware of conditions and constraints.

4. Provide a matching grant to help us hire a consultant to look at the economic issues. When the Alliance was conducting a similar study of the Boyd Theater, the Street Administration provided a grant through the Department of Commerce to assist with that work. I do not know if such grants are still available.

5. Agree not to make any commitment to a private use or a sale or lease of the building for private development for six months to enable this study to be completed.

This is an important public building. It should not be turned over to private development until it is clear that no public uses are feasible. I hope that we can count on your support to enable this alternative to be considered.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Andrew Gallery', written over a horizontal line.

John Andrew Gallery
Executive Director

cc. Alan Greenberger
Gary Steuer
Joan Schlotterbeck