



PRESERVATION ALLIANCE

for greater philadelphia

PRESERVATION

MATTERS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE PRESERVATION ALLIANCE FOR GREATER PHILADELPHIA

WINTER 2007

Advocacy Set Backs



Zoning Board Approves 218 Arch Street

On December 15, 2006, the Zoning Board of Adjustment approved all variances for a 278 foot high condominium tower (the "Americana") in the Old City Historic District in Philadelphia, not withstanding opposition from the Old City Civic Association, the Preservation Alliance, Christ Church, other organizations in the area and numerous residents of Old City — and in spite of a City Council ordinance establishing a 65 foot height restriction for the district.

Although the Zoning Board had agreed to hold its decision until after the City Planning Commission had a chance to review the proposal, the Board surprisingly went ahead in December prior to the scheduled Planning Commission meeting. The proposal had already been presented to the Historical Commission, which tabled its review for a period not to exceed six months so as to allow for evaluation of the significance of Little Boys Way, an historic street located on the property.

In addition to exceeding the 65 foot height limit established by City Council, the proposed tower would significantly exceed the height of the historic Christ Church steeple (192 feet), a landmark on the city skyline for over 300 years—and for 100 years the tallest building in the country. This National Park Service expressed concern about the impact on the view of the Christ Church steeple in a letter to the Zoning Board, which stated that the proposed development could have an adverse impact on Christ Church's designation as a National Historic Landmark.

The Preservation Alliance, the Old City Civic Association, and Christ Church have filed appeals of the Zoning Board decision.

Germantown Avenue Repaving

PennDOT held two community meetings in Northwest Philadelphia in December to discuss its proposed plans for repaving two sections of Germantown Avenue. At one of these meetings PennDOT's representatives stated that they did not feel bound by the Historical Commission's decision, which required PennDOT to maintain the historic street paving in the 5200 to 5400 blocks of Germantown Avenue, since they had complied with the Section 106 Review Procedure required of state agencies. They were therefore proceeding with plans that would maintain the Belgian block paving only along the sides of the street and replace the block with concrete in the center surrounding the trolley tracks. This plan had been rejected by the Historical Commission after community groups, individuals and the Preservation Alliance expressed opposition to the plan at Historical Commission meetings.

PennDOT's statement that the Historical Commission only has an "advisory" function raises a significant policy issue regarding the protection of historic sites in Philadelphia. The Alliance has urged the Historical Commission and the City Law Department to take legal action to protect the Commission's review authority over state projects that have an adverse impact on historic resources in Philadelphia.

Historic Designation Nominations

The City's Historic Preservation Ordinance allows the designation of historic objects as well as historic buildings. A number of objects have been designated by the Historical Commission, including the Eagle in the Grand Court at Macy's (in the Wanamaker Building), the Winged Angel at 30th Street Station, and the Dream Garden mural in the Curtis Building.

In 2006, the Preservation Alliance submitted nominations to the Historical Commission for designation of several objects in the Strawbridge and Clothier store at 8th and Market streets. These include murals over the elevator doors, the ornate elevators doors themselves, and the statue "Il Porcellino" (The Wild Boar). Strawbridge and Clothier purchased and installed the boar statue in the store in the 1966. It was original-

ly commissioned by Ferdinando Martinelli of Florence and designed by Pietro Tacca (1577-1640) and cast circa 1613.

The multiple Art Deco, highly stylized metal elevator doors line the lobby of the store's ground floor. Above each set of doors are colorful Art Deco murals by Philadelphia artist William P. Sparks, depicting historical events at Strawbridge and Clothier and in the city's history.

Mark Flood, a Philadelphia resident and Alliance volunteer, researched and wrote the nomination for 507 South Broad Street, a property that the Circle Mission Church, Home and Training School of Pennsylvania, owns and maintains beautifully. The brownstone and terra cotta house has a storied past; it was designed by Furness, Evans and Company as a residence and owned by members of the Lippincott and Cramp families, respectively of publishing and ship building fame.



2006 Year-End Easements

At the end of 2006 four historic structures in Philadelphia were placed under preservation easement protection. Earlier in the year easements were donated on the Marine Club (South Broad Street at Washington Avenue) and 266 Pearl Street, the one-time electric company headquarters in Hartford, CT, converted to condominiums by developers Philadelphia Management.

The Marine Barracks a.k.a., Building #100 is prominently sited in the heart of the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard Historic District and faces the southern terminus of Broad Street across a large, open grassy area which once served as a parade ground and athletic field for the Naval Yard.

Originally serving as barracks for Marines stationed at the Naval Yard, the property was built in 1901 according to the Romanesque-style design of Chicago-

based architect Henry Ives Cobb. The building is being converted to offices by P&A Associates.

Originally known as The Zimmerman Slaughterhouse and Meat Packing Building, 431 Fairmount Avenue is situated in the Northern Liberties National Register District. It was built by Daniel B. Zimmerman (1863 - 1928) when he was at the height of his success in the cattle industry.

Zimmerman built his Slaughterhouse and Meat Packing Building in 1911 in the thriving German enclave in Northern Liberties. Adorning the top of the building are four terra-cotta steer heads and a globe with the letter "Z" superimposed. Now known as "Fairmount Quarters", the property is being developed as condominiums.

Easements on two residential properties were donated by their home owners: a late Victorian twin house in Chestnut Hill and a Classical revival style rowhouse in Society Hill.



The Marine Barracks.

THANK YOU!

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ANNOUNCE THE RETURN OF...

The Old House Fair!

Saturday March 17, 2007 | 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Germantown Friends School Fieldhouse | 31 West Coulter Street

PHILADELPHIA AREA RESTORATION AND RENOVATION FANS, MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Join over one-thousand of your fellow neighbors and residents of historic homes for an exciting one-day fair featuring:

- ➔ 50 Professional Vendors and Consultants from the region's preservation and restoration industry.
- ➔ Service and product workshops, demonstrations and presentations offered throughout the day.
- ➔ FREE 15 minute private consultations with field specific specialists at the "Ask the Experts" table.
- ➔ The Old House Fair Resource Center.

SPONSORS (TO DATE): Tague Lumber | Milner + Carr Conservation

For tickets or more information contact: George Hoessel, Old House Fair Coordinator
215.546.1146 x7 / george@preservationalliance.com or visit www.preservationalliance.com

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