

(Collection 137)

Philadelphia City Planning Commission

A Finding Aid for
Architectural Drawings and Photographs for Two
Planning Studies, 1927-1936
in
The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania

May 28, 2002

Archival Description

Descriptive Summary

- Title: Architectural Drawings and Photographs for Two Planning Studies, 1927-1936.
- Coll. ID: 137.
- Origin: Philadelphia City Planning Commission.
- Extent: Architectural Drawings: 2 originals,
Photographs: 3 photoprint reproductions.
- Repository: The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania
102 Meyerson Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104-6311
(215) 898-8323
- Abstract: The collection comprises 2 architectural drawings and 3 photoprints for two planning studies (1927-1936) on permanent loan from the Philadelphia City Planning Commission .
- Indexes: This collection is included in the Philadelphia Architects and Buildings Project, a searchable database of architectural research materials related to architects and architecture in Philadelphia and surrounding regions:
<http://www.philadelphiabuildings.org>
- Cataloging: Collection-level records for materials in the Architectural Archives may be found in RLIN Eureka, the union catalogue of members of the Research Libraries Group. The record number for this collection is PAUP02-A9.
- Publications: O'Gorman, James F. et al. *Drawing Toward Building: Philadelphia Architectural Graphics 1732-1986*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986: p. 208-209.
- Brownlee, David B. *Building the City Beautiful: The Benjamin Franklin Parkway and the Philadelphia Museum of Art*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1989: p. 85-87.

Biographical/Historical Sketch

The Philadelphia City Planning Commission is a municipal agency established by an Ordinance of April 13, 1929. At its foundation (and continuing through the period of this collection) the commission was composed of twelve mayoral appointees, two members of City Council, and one of the Commissioners of Fairmount Park. The duties of the commission were to make recommendations to City Council concerning proposed changes in the city plan or any new public facilities. Its reports, correspondence, plans, minutes, and scrapbooks from 1929 to the present are found in the Philadelphia City Archives, Record Group 145.

Scope and Content Note

The collection, on permanent loan from the Philadelphia Planning Commission, comprises two architectural drawings and three photoprints for two planning studies prepared between 1927 and 1936. Both studies are related to the Benjamin Franklin Parkway and nearby buildings and streets.

The earlier project was begun before the foundation of the Commission and was presented to the Commission in the month after its founding. In 1924 Paul Philippe Cret had suggested a plan for demolishing City Hall while retaining its tower as the focus of the new Parkway and the other streets that converge at Centre Square, the central point of William Penn's original layout of the city. At the request of the Philadelphia Commission (a group of private citizens formed by Edward W. Bok devoted to the "beautification" of the city) Cret further developed the scheme with his former student Harry Sternfeld, and together they presented a comprehensive plan to the City Planning Commission in May 1929. The proposal was never built. This project is represented in the collection by one original drawing, a large (48" x 30") presentation elevation in pencil on board.

The second project, designed in 1935-1936 by the staff of the City Planning Commission, projected the further development of the Fairmount Parkway in relation to an emerging vision of the Market Street corridor between City Hall and the newly built 30th Street Station. The plan, titled "Fairmount Parkway and Connections," was a significant expansion of the earlier Parkway plans, and was the forerunner of development plans by Louis I. Kahn (Triangle Area Redevelopment Plan and Civic Center Plan) and by Edmund Bacon.

A full index to projects represented in this collection is found in Appendix A.

Access Points for Indexing

Philadelphia City Planning Commission
Cret, Paul Philippe, 1876-1945.
Sternfeld, Harry.
Philadelphia Commission.
City Hall (Philadelphia, Pa.)
Architects--Archives.
Architectural design--History--20th century--Sources.
Architectural drawing--United States.
Architecture, Modern--20th century--United States--Designs and plans.
Public buildings--Pennsylvania--Philadelphia.
City planning--Pennsylvania--Philadelphia.
Benjamin Franklin Parkway (Philadelphia, Pa.)
Philadelphia (Pa.)--Buildings, structures, etc--History--Sources.
Architectural drawings--American.

Administrative Information

Restrictions on access: This collection is available for research by appointment only.

Preferred citation: Philadelphia City Planning Collection, The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania.

Acquisition: On permanent loan from the Philadelphia City Planning Commission, 1979.

Processing: The collection was processed and the finding aid prepared by William Whitaker, Nancy Thorne and Emily Cooperman.

Container list

Series I. Architectural Drawings.

Extent: 5 items (2 original architectural drawings, 3 photoprints).

Arrangement: Arranged by item in chronological order.

Call#	Descriptive Title
[137.1]	“The City Hall Tower Remodeled;” elevation, Paul P. Cret and Harry Sternfeld, May 24, 1927 (pencil on board, 48 x 30 inches).
[137.2]	“Fairmount Parkway and Connections;” aerial perspective, [Augustine A.] de Porreca, delineator, dated 1935 (ink on paper, 24 x 32 inches).
[137.3.1]	“Fairmount Parkway and Connections;” aerial perspective, dated 1936 (photoprint, 24 x 32 inches). Note: image identical to 137.3.2.
[137.3.2]	“Fairmount Parkway and Connections;” aerial perspective, dated 1936 (photoprint, 11 x 14 inches). Note: image identical to 137.3.1.
[137.4]	“Fairmount Parkway / Scheme F;” plan, dated 1936 (tinted photoprint, 24 x 32 inches).

Appendix A

Project Index

Design for Remodeled Philadelphia City Hall Tower

The Philadelphia Commission (Edward W. Bok, Eli Kirk Price and others)

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

holdings dates: 1927

note/s: Unbuilt, 1924-29, Paul P. Cret and Harry Sternfeld.

holdings:

[137.1] “The City Hall Tower Remodeled;” elevation, Paul P. Cret and Harry Sternfeld, May 24, 1927 (pencil on board, 48 x 30 inches).

Fairmount Parkway and Connections (planning study)

Philadelphia City Planning Commission

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

holdings dates: 1935-36

note/s: Items 137.3.1 and 137.3.2 are different sized prints of an identical image.

holdings:

[137.2] “Fairmount Parkway and Connections;” aerial perspective, [Augustine A.] de Porreca, delineator, dated 1935 (ink on paper, 24 x 32 inches).

[137.3.1] “Fairmount Parkway and Connections;” aerial perspective, dated 1936 (photoprint, 24 x 32 inches). Note: image identical to 137.3.2.

[137.3.2] “Fairmount Parkway and Connections;” aerial perspective, dated 1936 (photoprint, 11 x 14 inches). Note: image identical to 137.3.1.

[137.4] “Fairmount Parkway / Scheme F;” plan, dated 1936 (tinted photoprint, 24 x 32 inches).