



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL AND MUSEUM COMMISSION
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17120-0024
www.phmc.state.pa.us

CHAIRMAN

September 27, 2010

Mr. Joseph Lukach
Executive Director
Siloam
1133 Spring Garden Street
Philadelphia, PA 19123-3315

Dear Mr. Lukach:

The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) was notified that Siloam's request to demolish the Church of the Assumption to the Philadelphia Historical Commission (PHC) was approved based on a demonstration of financial hardship.

Despite the finding by the PHC, PHMC maintains that the church is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and the PHMC is concerned that Siloam intends to request or to use existing Commonwealth of Pennsylvania funds that it has already obtained by Siloam, to assist with the demolition of the Church. If this is your intention, the Pennsylvania History Code, 37 Pa. Cons. Stat. Section 500 *et seq.* (1988), also known as the Pennsylvania History Code, requires, under Section 510, that the PHMC be consulted on the design and proposed location of any project, building or other undertaking financed in whole or in part by Commonwealth funds, which may affect the preservation and development of a district, site or building listed on or eligible for the Pennsylvania Register of Historic Places. (By PHMC policy, the National Register of Historic Places serves as the Pennsylvania Register.)

Furthermore, the intention of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Keystone Principles for Growth, Investment and Conservation of Resources adopted by the Economic Development cabinet on May 31, 2005, is to foster sustainable economic development and conservation of resources through the state's investments in its diverse communities. The primary consideration in all Commonwealth investments is: *Redevelop First*. This Principle supports revitalization of Pennsylvania many cities and towns because Commonwealth funding preference is given to the reuse and redevelopment of previously developed sites in urban, suburban and rural communities for economic activity that creates jobs, housing, mixed use development and recreational assets. This Principle calls for conserving Pennsylvania's exceptional heritage resources and rehabilitation of historic buildings and neighborhoods for compatible contemporary uses.

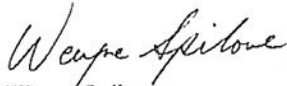
Any Commonwealth funding that has been provided to Siloam in the past or it may receive in the future, related to the Church should be used for seeking and planning for alternative uses for this building and maintaining it until another use can be found. Demolition of this building does not benefit the neighborhood or the City.

Commonwealth funding priority should be for preservation not demolition. The granting of public funds to demolish this historic building is contrary to the laws of Pennsylvania. If you decide to go forward with using Commonwealth funds for demolition of the Church, you could be putting Siloam and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania at risk. Someone could choose to exercise Section 512 of the State History Code which allows the Attorney General, the commission, any political subdivision, person or other legal entity to maintain an action in an administrative tribunal or court for the protection or preservation of any historic resource in this Commonwealth.

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Please contact Ann Safley in the Bureau for Historic Preservation at 717-787-9121 or rsafley@state.pa.us, to initiate consultation with the PHMC.

Sincerely,



Wayne Spilove
Chairman

cc: Senator Lawrence Farnese
Representative W. Curtis Thomas
Jonathan Farnham, Ph.D. Director, Philadelphia Historical Commission
John Gallery, Executive Director, The Greater Philadelphia Preservation Alliance
Barbara Franco, Executive Director, PA Historical & Museum Commission