

DESIGN
ADVOCACY
GROUP

of Philadelphia

January 2, 2008

William Wilson ASLA, Chair
Art Commission,
City of Philadelphia
C/o
William J. Burke, Jr
Executive Director
Art Commission
One Parkway Building' 13th Floor
1515 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19102

RE: Pennsylvania Convention Center Expansion

Dear Mr. Wilson,

Recent events lead us to contact you regarding the application of the Pennsylvania Convention Center Authority in which it requested and received approval from the Art Commission for its plans to expand the center. It is now a matter of public knowledge that the Convention Center Authority is no longer the responsible agency for this project that is now being implemented by the Department of General Services (DGS). DGS has likewise publicly stated that it does not intend to follow the plans that have been presented to the Art Commission with respect to the preservation of the Philadelphia Life Insurance Buildings (PLICO) located at 111-115 North Broad Street.

We ask you therefore, to suspend immediately the prior approval until it can be determined that the authority having jurisdiction, (DGS) has either agreed to uphold the same commitments that were previously represented to the Art Commission or has submitted a new application that is acceptable to the Art Commission.

Our organization, which represents more than 900 individuals dedicated to excellence in architecture and urban design in the Delaware Valley, monitored the design progress of the convention center and was in agreement with the incorporation of the PLICO buildings in the façade of the new convention center. Had we been aware of the current plan to demolish these buildings, we would have testified against it. We have thus been denied the opportunity to comment on an accurate application. We believe that these issues -- (1) the identity of the applicant, and (2) the good faith implementation of what is proposed in an approved application, are fundamental to the integrity of the Art Commission process and request that you review our request most carefully.

Thank you very much for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely yours,



George L. Clafien, Jr. FAIA, Vice-chair
Design Advocacy Group of Philadelphia.