

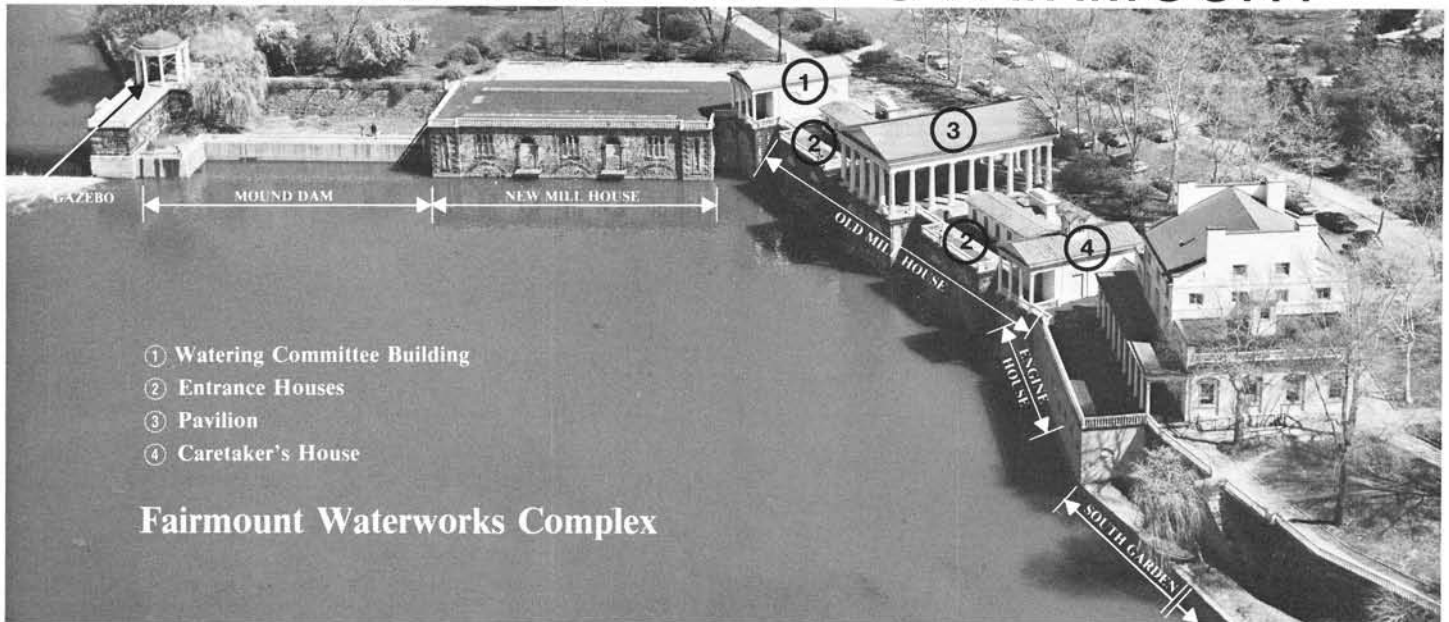
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BIG PLANS FOR PHILLY'S FAIRMOUNT



Fairmount Waterworks Complex

Philadelphia's Fairmount Waterworks on the Schuylkill River, an extraordinary engineering, architectural, and public works landmark complex of national significance, is undergoing the first phase of a multimillion-dollar restoration and reuse program. A hydroelectric plant, major restaurant, and interpretive center eventually will occupy the 19th-C buildings, the project funded by over \$12 million from private developers committed to strict archaeological and restoration specifications. An additional \$2.6 million necessary for major structural stabilization will come from a fund-raising project undertaken by the Junior League of Phila.

Fairmount Waterworks is a complex of nine buildings erected between 1812 and 1871, with the original construction under the direction of Frederick Graff, an apprentice of Benjamin Latrobe. The earliest structure, the "Engine House" (1812), was designed to replace the city's original 1799-1801 Latrobe pumphouse at Center Sq., now the site of City Hall. Both these plants were steam

powered. A new up-river location had been chosen to put the pumps near the elevated reservoir under construction at Morris Hill (or "Fair Mount"), the highest point near the city. The resulting gravity system eliminated the need for the distribution pump at Center Square.

Due to operation and maintenance difficulties the steam pumps never proved economically viable and the waterworks converted to waterpower by building a dam, excavating a forebay, and building a wheelhouse for wooden wheels which began operation in 1822, supplanting the engines. This first wheelhouse is now called the "Old Mill House" and serves as the massive base (9,500 sq. ft.) upon which five of the familiar and recognizable waterworks buildings sit. At each end are identical small, porticoed administration buildings, the "Caretaker's House" and the "Watering Committee Building" (both 1822). Between them are three structures built in 1871 as part of the last major renovation of the plant. At center is the large, open temple known as the "Pavillion" and its two flanking "Entrance Houses," which gave access and light to the wheelhouse below.

In 1835, the classically styled "Gazebo" was built on the outer end of the earthen dam as an ornament for what was becoming a popular public garden. The space between the Gazebo and the Old Mill House was filled in 1861 by the "New Mill House," designed to house vertical Jonval turbines to supplement the wood-and-iron wheels then used in the adjoining Old Mill House. All the old wheels were replaced with turbines during the 1871 renovations.

The Phila. Water Dept. traces its origins to "The Watering Committee" appointed in 1797 by the Joint Committee of Select and Common Councils. The Committee built the first large-scale, steam-driven pumping system in the nation and created the first

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Fairmount Waterworks. William H. Bartlett, engraver, c1835. Free Library of Phila.