

documentation. It seems to have been roughly square in plan, and its towers apparently protruded beyond the line of the walls. The two octagonal towers on its eastern side were probably given their present form a century later, by Philip's grandson, Ludovico of Achaea, when he made the castle his permanent residence. The piazza in front of the castle dates from the mid-fourteenth century, when twenty-four adjoining houses were demolished to create an open space for defensive and ceremonial purposes.

The building of Philip of Achaea's castle produced a striking change in the urban landscape, dramatically affirming the prince's authority. The city council, by contrast, was not housed in such an imposing edifice. In the middle of the thirteenth century it had taken over the emperors' old palace, a building with a tower and portico located somewhere near the northern gate. But this building had been badly damaged in the factional fighting that convulsed Turin at that time, and was probably not fully habitable. The council therefore tended to convene for its meetings in one or another of its members' private houses, or in the Franciscan monastery. Its records were entrusted to the Franciscan brothers for safekeeping. This provisional arrangement seems to have continued for a long time, until finally in 1375 the council purchased a large house from one of the city's merchants to serve as its official residence. This house occupied the site where the city hall stands today: it was demolished in the mid-seventeenth century to make way for the present building.

The Mendicant orders of Franciscans and Dominicans had established themselves at Turin in the thirteenth century. Unlike the traditional monastic orders, which tended to locate their houses away from populated areas, the Mendicants saw their mission as that of ministering to the poor of the fast-growing cities, which the older orders were neglecting. The Franciscans were the first to arrive at Turin: they are first mentioned there in 1228, the year their founder, St Francis of Assisi, was canonized. They soon acquired a site for their church and monastery; their church – San Francesco – still stands on the same site today, in the heart of the old city, though not in its original form: it was rebuilt in the seventeenth century. The Franciscans enjoyed close, cordial relations with the urban elite and the city council – as is evident from the council's use of the Franciscan monastery for its meetings – and also with the Savoyard princes. The Dominicans came later. In 1271 their church and monastery – which still stand today on their original site – are mentioned as “newly founded”. It seems that they quickly attracted a wide popular following, for in the early fourteenth century they demolished their original church and rebuilt it on a bigger scale,