5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

3612-28 Lancaster Avenue consists of a row of storefront dwellings, row buildings within the larger block of similar buildings on the southwest side of the aforesaid street in the Powelton Village neighborhood of West Philadelphia. The parcel is within a block that is bound by Lancaster Avenue at the northeast; 37th Street at the northwest; Warren Street at the southwest; and 36th Street at the southeast. Facing onto Lancaster Avenue, The buildings are situated on narrow, yet deep lots that were constructed in the typical row house format that defines much of Philadelphia's built environment. The property is situated on the southwest side of Lancaster Avenue.

The boundaries to be considered as part of this nomination are limited to the physical boundaries of the row of buildings. Beginning at east corner of 3612 Lancaster Avenue extending northwest approximately one hundred and sixty-two feet (162') to the north corner of 3628 Lancaster Avenue, making a ninety degree turn to the southwest. Thence continuing to the southwest approximately fifty-nine feet (59'), making a ninety degree turn to the southeast at the west corner of 3628 Lancaster Avenue. Thence continuing to the southeast approximately eighteen feet (18'), making a ninety degree turn to the northeast at the south corner of 3628 Lancaster Avenue. Thence continuing to the northeast approximately seventeen feet (17'), making a ninety degree turn to the northeast at the east corner of the el of 3626 Lancaster Avenue. Thence continuing to the southeast approximately thirty feet (30'), making a ninety

degree turn to the northeast at the south corner of 3624 Lancaster Avenue. Thence continuing to the northeast approximately fourteen feet (14'), making a ninety degree turn to the southeast at the east corner of the el of 3624 Lancaster Avenue. Thence continuing to the southeast approximately seven feet (7'), making a ninety degree turn to the southwest at the east corner of the el of 3622 Lancaster Avenue. Thence continuing to the southwest approximately twenty-seven feet (27'), making a ninety degree turn to the southeast at the west corner of 3622 Lancaster Avenue. Thence continuing to the southeast approximately thirty feet (30'), making a ninety-degree turn to the northeast at the south corner of 3620 Lancaster Avenue. Thence continuing to the northeast approximately twenty-seven feet (27'), making a ninety-degree turn to the southeast at the north corner of the el of 3620 Lancaster Avenue. Thence continuing to the southeast approximately seven feet (7'), making a ninety-degree turn to the southwest at the east corner of the el of 3618 Lancaster Avenue. Thence continuing to the southwest approximately twenty-seven feet (27'), making a ninety-degree turn to the southeast at the west corner of 3618 Lancaster Avenue. Thence continuing to the southeast approximately fourteen feet (14'), making a ninety-degree turn to the northeast at the south corner of 3618 Lancaster Avenue. Thence continuing to the northeast approximately seventeen feet (16'), making a ninety-degree turn to the southeast at the west corner of 3616 Lancaster Avenue. Thence continuing to the southeast approximately thirteen feet (13'), making a ninety-degree turn to the northeast at the south corner of 3616 Lancaster Avenue. Thence continuing to the northeast approximately fourteen feet (14'), making a ninety-degree turn to the southeast at the east corner of el of 3616 Lancaster Avenue. Thence continuing to the southeast approximately seven feet (7'), making a ninety-degree turn to the southwest at the north corner of el of 3614 Lancaster Avenue. Thence continuing to the southwest approximately twenty-eight feet (28'), making a ninety-degree turn to the southeast at the west corner of 3614 Lancaster Avenue. Thence continuing to the southeast approximately thirty feet (30'), making a ninety-degree turn to the northeast at the south corner of 3612 Lancaster Avenue. Thence continuing to the northeast approximately fifty-nine feet (59') to the east corner of 3612 Lancaster Avenue, the beginning point.

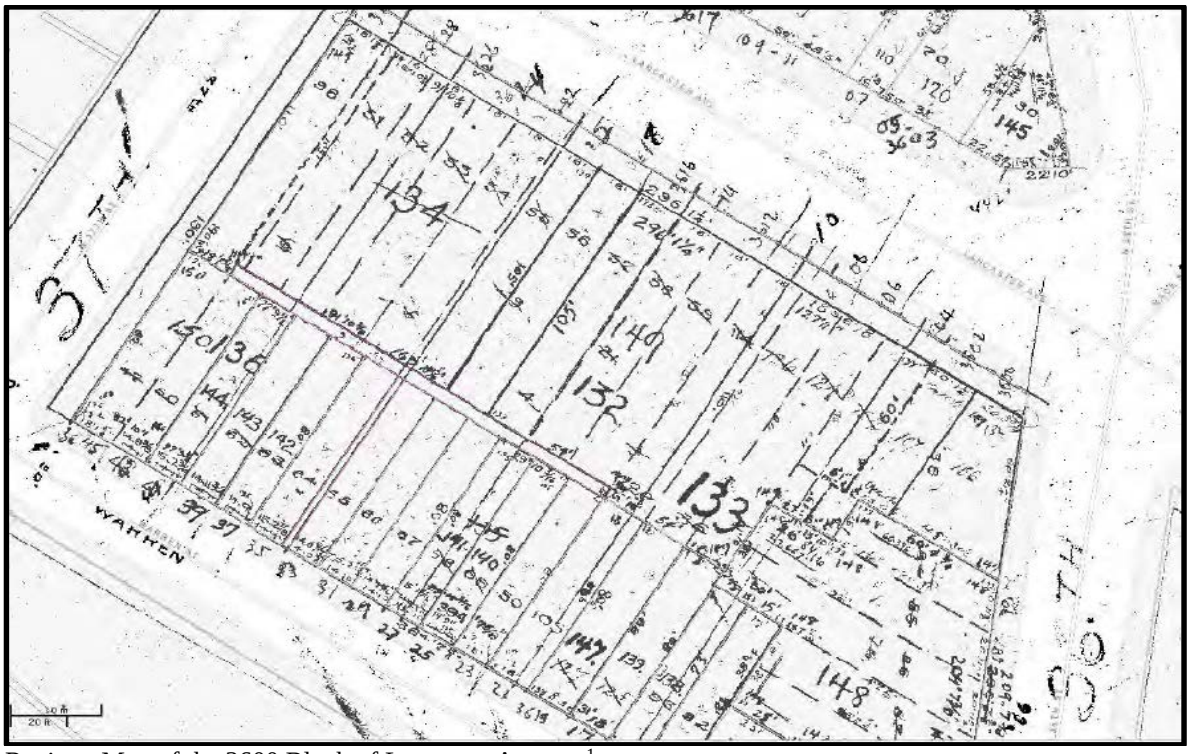
Being known as Parcel No 056N03-0149-00 (56N03-0149), Office of Property Assessment Account No. 881111200, the legal address for 3612-28 Lancaster Avenue is 3600-30 Lancaster Avenue.

Below please find a description of the entire legal parcel, which was taken from a deed related to the property:

ALL THAT CERTAIN lot or piece of ground situate in the 24th Ward of the City of Philadelphia, County of Philadelphia, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and described according to an ALTA/ACSM Land Title Survey made for Touchstar Partners, L.P. (Drawing No. 97037-01) prepared by VPH Associates, Land Surveyors, dated May 21, 1997 and last revised June 6, 1997, as follows, to wit:

BEGINNING at a point formed by the intersection of the Southeasterly side of North 37th Street (60 feet wide) with the Southwesterly side of Lancaster Avenue (80 feet wide); thence extending South 53 degrees 59 minutes 54 seconds East along the Southwesterly side of Lancaster Avenue, the distance of 296.104 feet to a point on the Northwesterly side of North 36th Street (60 feet wide); thence extending South 11 degrees I minutes 00 seconds West along the Northwesterly side of North 36th Street, the distance of 66.194 feet to a point; thence extending North 53 degrees 59 minutes 54 seconds West the distance of 60.396 feet to a point; thence extending South 36 degrees 00 minutes 6 seconds West the distance of 19 feet to a point; thence extending North 53 degrees 59 minutes 54 seconds West the distance of 27.667 feet to a point; thence extending South 36 degrees 00 minutes *6* seconds West the distance of 31 feet to a point; thence extending North 53 degrees 59 minutes 54 seconds West the distance of 54 feet to a point on the head of a 5 feet wide alley;

thence extending North 36 degrees 00 minutes *6* seconds East crossing the head of the alley, the distance of 5 feet to a point on the Northeasterly side of the alley; thence extending North 53 degrees 59 minutes 54 seconds West along the Northeasterly side of the alley, the distance of 163.865 feet to a point; thence extending South 36 degrees 00 minutes *6* seconds West crossing the bed of the alley the distance of 5 feet to a point; thence extending North 53 degrees 59 minutes 54 seconds West the distance of 18.135 feet to a point on the Southeasterly side of North 37th Street; thence extending North 36 degrees 00 minutes 06 seconds East (incorrectly listed as North 36 degrees 00 minutes 54 seconds East in vesting deed recorded in Deed Book JTD 330, Page 573) along the Southeasterly side of North 37th Street the distance of 110 feet to the first mentioned point and place of beginning.



Registry Map of the 3600 Block of Lancaster Avenue.[1]

[1] Registry Map. Recorder of Deeds, Department of Records, City of Philadelphia. Accessed April 2015.

6. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

3612-28 Lancaster Avenue consists of a row of nine attached, storefront row buildings located in the Powelton Village neighborhood, which is a densely constructed urban environment of residential and small scale commercial architecture with a smattering of period industrial and institutional buildings. The southwest side of the 3600 block was designed as storefront dwellings that were constructed between 1877 and 1880. Architecturally, the buildings are identical with slight variations of the storefront fenestration, which exist in two distinct styles and periods that will be described below. Interestingly, almost all of the shops maintain a commercial use and are constantly occupied with tenants. As a result, for much of its history, 3612-28 Lancaster Avenue, as well as the entire 3600 block, has always maintained a distinctive architectural and commercial presence within the local community.

With Italianate and other Victorian-era stylistic details, the nine buildings that encompass 3612-28 Lancaster Avenue retain almost identical features with some minor variations. The three-story buildings are of load-bearing masonry construction, featuring storefront fenestrations at the ground floor and brick fascia at the façade of the second and third floors. The brick in the second and third floor is laid in running bond. All of the buildings also feature original cornices with Eastlake-inspired decorative details. Each cornice is flanked and supported by brackets in the form of brick corbelling, further delineating the nine buildings. The second and third floor fenestrations are identical, featuring two apertures per floor. Each aperture is arched and of equal size punctuated by stone lintels and sills. The apertures contain double hung, two-over-two wood windows, the top sash being arched in compliance with the aperture. While all of the buildings maintain storefront, five of the nine are original. The four other storefronts appear to have been stylistically updated in the second quarter of the twentieth century. The renovations included replacement of the period storefront with an enclosed fenestration clad in multi-colored, but largely buff brick with brick corbelling in place of the storefront cornices.

Originally eleven rooms, each building features a flat roof and contains a real ell in varying lengths. The façades, as well as the building forms, retain a high degree of integrity; however, the rear elevations of the buildings are non-contributing to this nomination and will not be described. Also, mounted on the façade of each building in the area of the second floor are large metal pieces that are clearly recent and related to a larger civic signage engagement. The metal features are removal and does not detract from the physical integrity of each building.

To supplement the above general description, please see additional details regarding each of the nine properties below.

3612 Lancaster Avenue is the only building with buff brick, laid in a running bond, at the second and third floors, which appears to be period to the date of construction and/or a very early stylistic "improvement." The storefront of the building contains an original storefront fenestration that is fully articulated with intact surround. The surround consists of a projecting, overhanging cornice that is flanked and supported by brackets, which are supported by pilasters. The fenestration includes, left to right: 1. the commercial entrance—a double wood door each with three-quarter lights and a one-quart panel; 2. a projecting storefront bay window with a large single pane of glass skirted in paneling and bead board; and 3. a single residential entrance, featuring a wood door with a two-thirds light and a one-third panel. Within the residential entrance, the vestibule leads to the original staircase and newel post, which is visible from the sidewalk.

Looking southwest, 3612 Lancaster Avenue.

Looking southwest, 3612 Lancaster Avenue's storefront fenestration.

Residential and storefront entrances within the primary elevation of 3612 Lancaster Avenue.

Looking southwest, 3612 Lancaster Avenue's second and third floors.

Looking north, 3612 Lancaster Avenue, Rear Elevation.

3614 Lancaster Avenue contains the improved storefront. Enclosed with a solid wall of multi-colored, buff brick, the storefront fenestration contains two apertures: 1. a residential entrance, featuring single wooden door, with a two-thirds light and one-third panel configuration, with a transom above; and 2. a commercial entrance, featuring a full-light wooden door with a side light of equal size, but with a two-thirds light and a one-fourth panel configuration. A cornice of brick corbeling spans the entire facade, replacing the original storefront cornice.

Looking southwest, 3614 Lancaster Avenue.

Looking southwest, 3614 Lancaster Avenue's storefront fenestration.

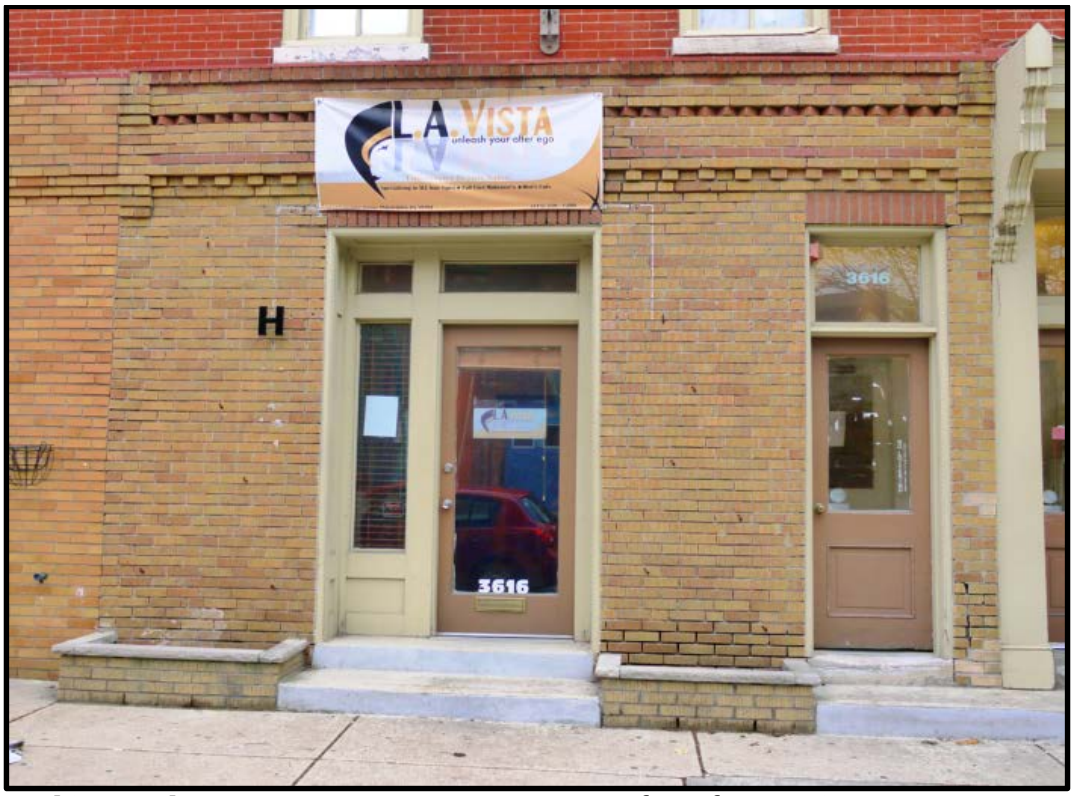
Residential and storefront entrances within the primary elevation of 3614 Lancaster Avenue.

Looking southwest, 3614 Lancaster Avenue's second and third floors.

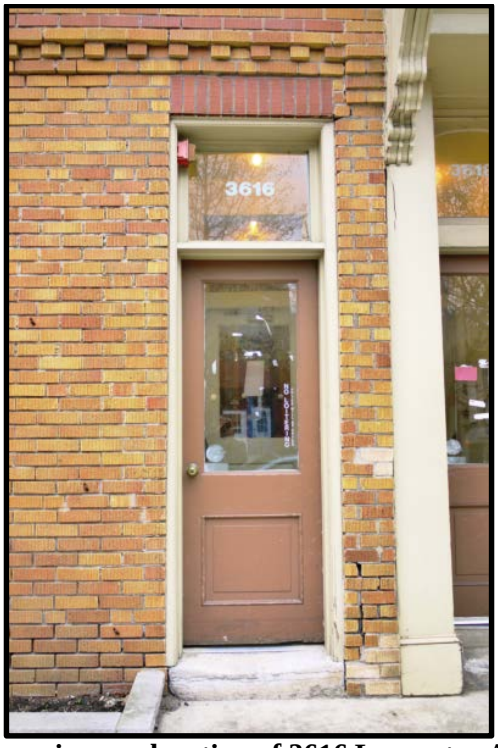
Looking north, 3614 Lancaster Avenue, rear elevation.

3616 Lancaster Avenue contains the improved storefront. Enclosed with a solid wall of multi-colored, buff brick, the storefront fenestration contains two apertures: 1. a commercial entrance, featuring a full-light wooden door, framed by a narrow side light and equal size transom above; and 2. a residential entrance, featuring a single wooden door, with a two-thirds light and one-third panel configuration, with a transom above. A cornice of decorative brick corbeling spans the entire façade between the first- and second- floors, replacing the original storefront cornice.

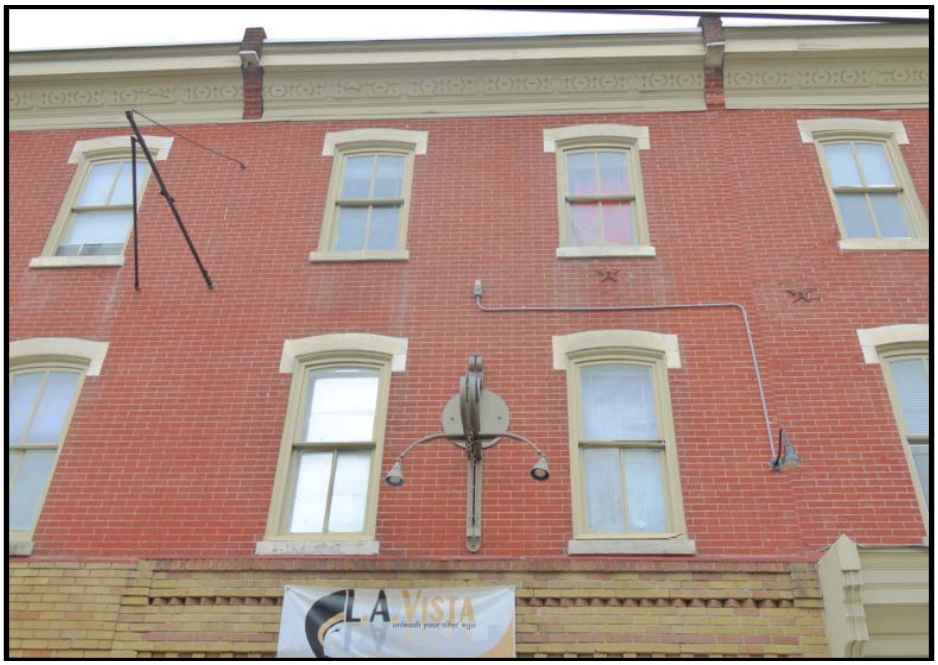
Looking southwest, 3616 Lancaster Avenue.



Looking southwest, 3616 Lancaster Avenue's storefront fenestration.



Residential and storefront entrances within the primary elevation of 3616 Lancaster Avenue.



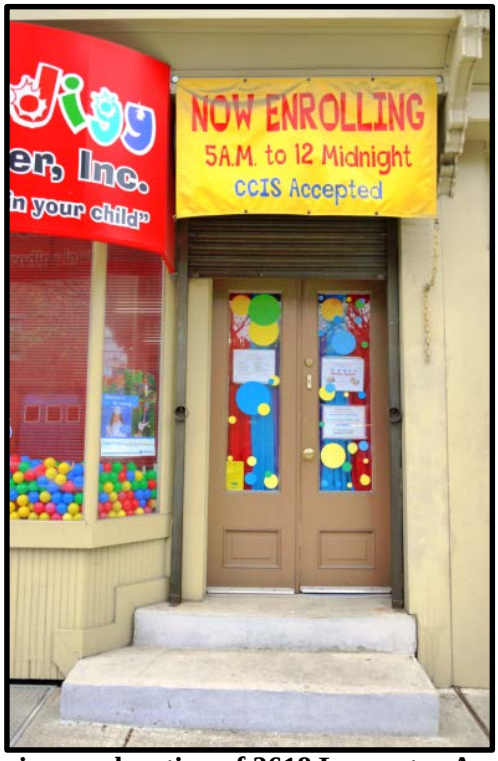
Looking southwest, 3616 Lancaster Avenue's second and third floors.

Looking north, 3616 Lancaster Avenue, rear elevation.

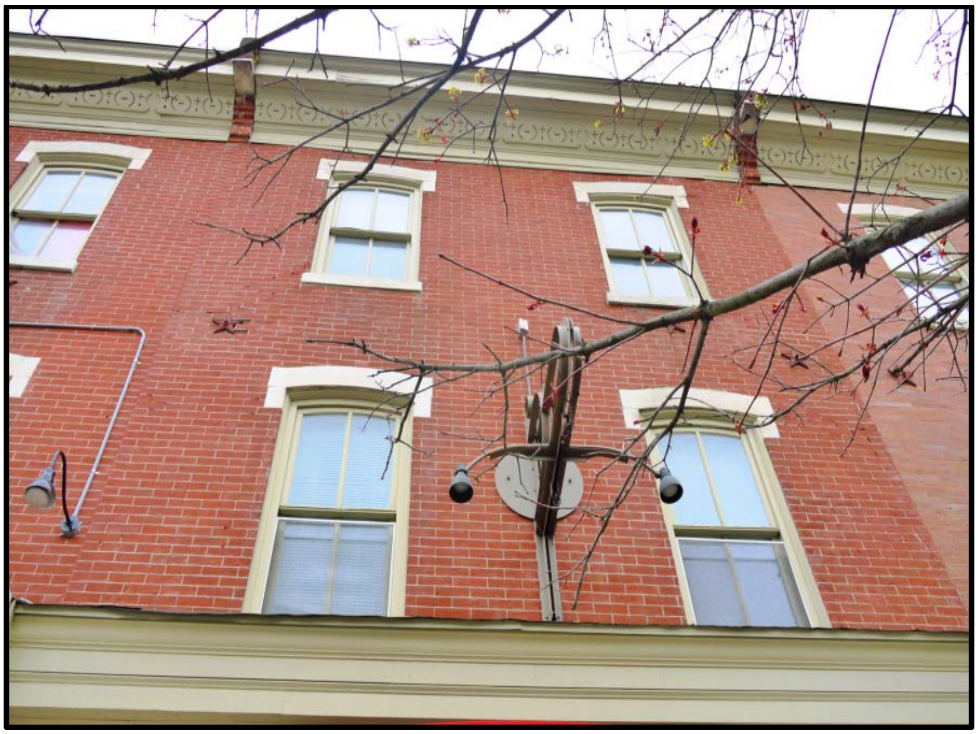
3618 Lancaster Avenue contains an original storefront fenestration that is fully articulated with intact surround. The surround consists of a projecting, overhanging cornice that is flanked and supported by brackets, which are supported by pilasters. The fenestration includes, left to right: 1. a single residential entrance, featuring a wood door with a two-thirds light and a one-third panel; 2. a projecting storefront bay window with three-part mullion window for display skirted in paneling and bead board; and 3. the commercial entrance—a double wood door each with three-quarter lights and a one-quart panel. Within the residential entrance, the vestibule leads to the original staircase and newel post, which is visible from the sidewalk.

Looking southwest, 3618 Lancaster Avenue.

Looking southwest, 3618 Lancaster Avenue's storefront fenestration.



Residential and storefront entrances within the primary elevation of 3618 Lancaster Avenue.



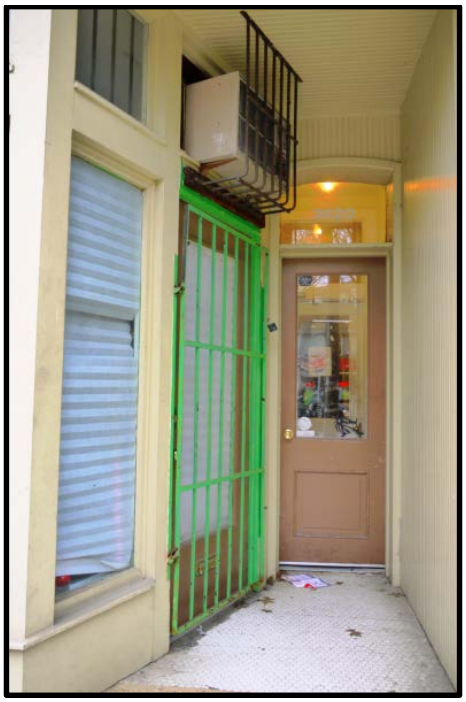
Looking southwest, 3618 Lancaster Avenue's second and third floors.

Looking north, 3618 Lancaster Avenue, rear elevation.

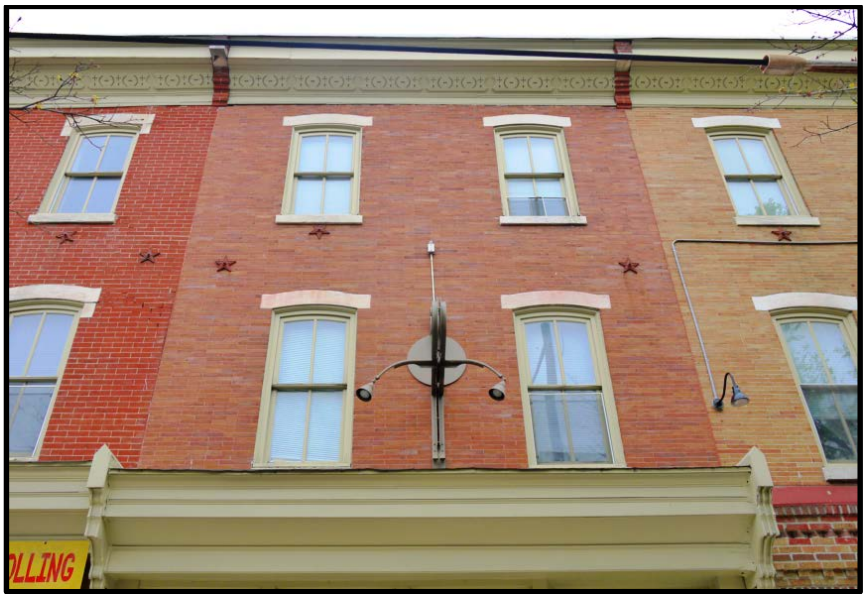
3620 Lancaster Avenue contains an original storefront fenestration that is fully articulated with intact surround. The surround consists of a projecting, overhanging cornice that is flanked and supported by brackets, which are supported by pilasters. The fenestration includes, left to right: 1. a three part transom and mullion window for display in paneling; 2.recessed within an open vestibule, the commercial entrance is a single wooden door with a three-quarter light and one-quarter panel set at an angle and the residential entrance, which is a like door. Within the residential entrance, the original staircase and newel post is visible from the sidewalk.

Looking southwest, 3620 Lancaster Avenue.

Looking southwest, 3620 Lancaster Avenue's storefront fenestration.



Residential and storefront entrances within the primary elevation of 3620 Lancaster Avenue.

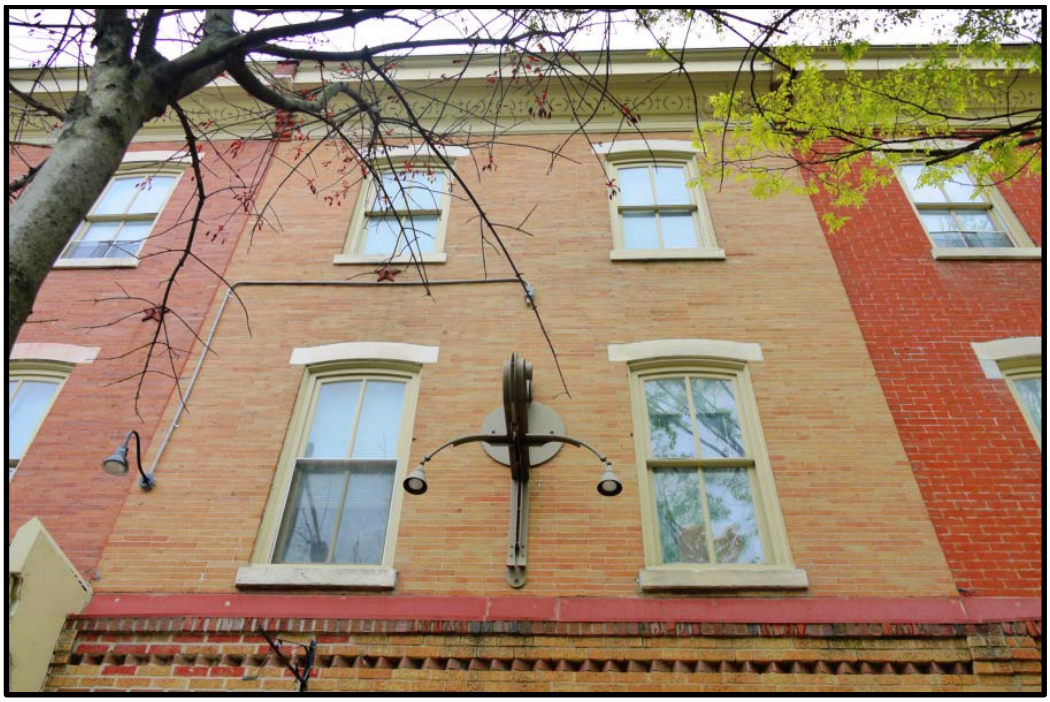


Looking southwest, 3620 Lancaster Avenue's second and third floors.

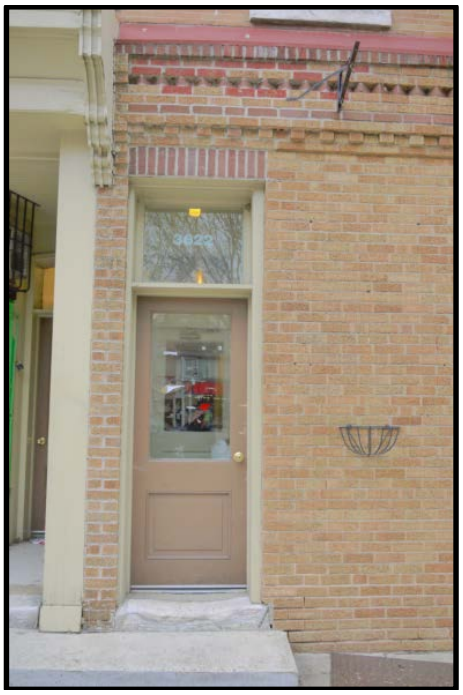
Looking north, 3620 Lancaster Avenue, rear elevation.

3622 Lancaster Avenue contains the improved storefront. Enclosed with a solid wall of multi-colored, buff brick, the storefront fenestration contains two apertures: 1. a residential entrance, featuring a single wooden door, containing a two-thirds light and one-third panel configuration, with a transom above; and 2. a recessed commercial entrance, creating an open vestibule and featuring a full-light wooden door framed by a side light of equal size, but with a two-thirds light and a one-fourth panel configuration. A cornice of decorative brick corbeling spans the entire façade between the first- and second-floors, replacing the original storefront cornice.

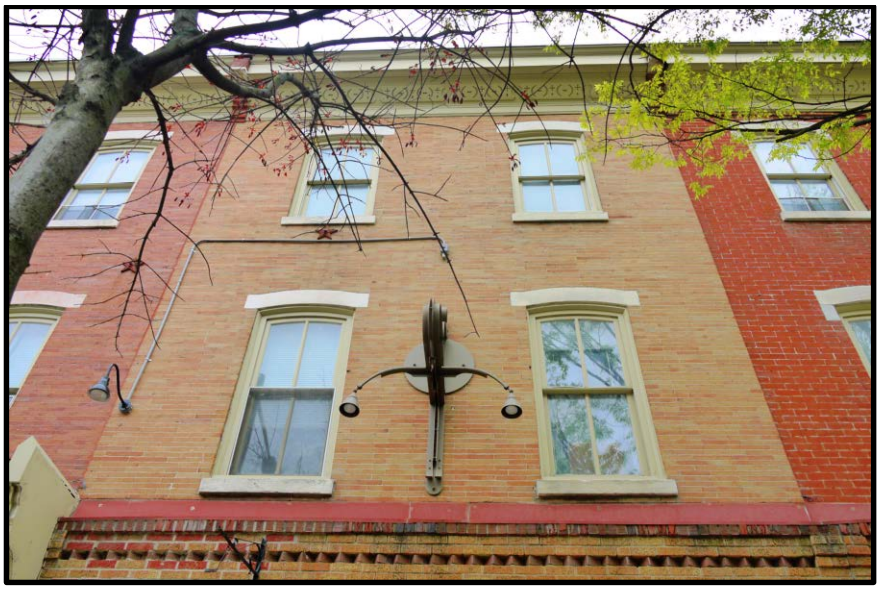
Looking southwest, 3622 Lancaster Avenue.



Looking southwest, 3622 Lancaster Avenue's storefront fenestration.



Residential and storefront entrances within the primary elevation of 3622 Lancaster Avenue.



Looking southwest, 3622 Lancaster Avenue's second and third floors.

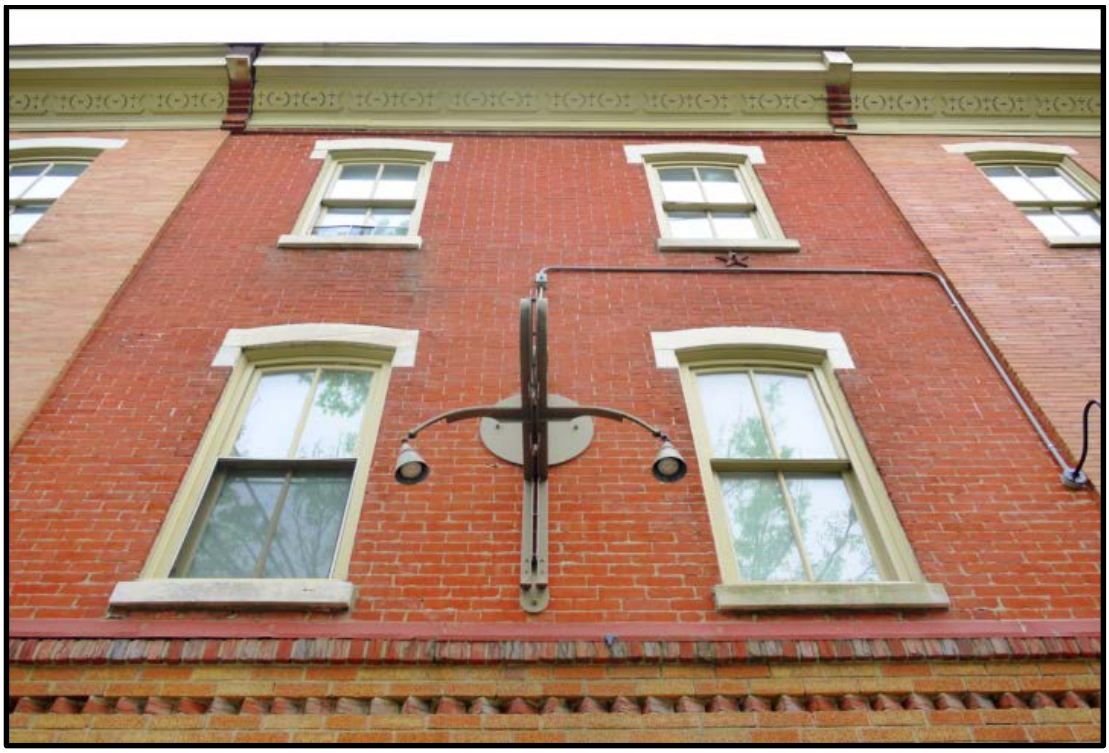
Looking north, 3622 Lancaster Avenue, rear elevation.

3624 Lancaster Avenue contains the improved storefront. Enclosed with a solid wall of multi-colored, buff brick, the storefront fenestration contains two apertures: 1. a commercial entrance, featuring a full-light wooden door framed by a narrow wooden side light (on left) and equal size transoms above; and 2. a residential entrance, featuring single wooden door, with a two-thirds light and one-third panel configuration, with a transom above. A cornice of decorative brick corbeling spans the entire façade between the first- and second-foors, replacing the original storefront cornice.

Looking southwest, 3624 Lancaster Avenue.

Looking southwest, 3624 Lancaster Avenue's storefront fenestration.

Residential and storefront entrances within the primary elevation of 3624 Lancaster Avenue.



Looking southwest, 3624 Lancaster Avenue's second and third floors.

Looking north, 3614 Lancaster Avenue, rear elevation.

3626 Lancaster Avenue contains an original storefront fenestration that is fully articulated with intact surround. The surround consists of a projecting, overhanging cornice that is flanked and supported by brackets, which are supported by pilasters. The fenestration includes, left to right: 1. a single residential entrance, featuring a wooden door with a half-light and half-panel and a transom above; 2. a projecting storefront bay window with single pane skirted in paneling; and 3. a commercial entrance—a double wooden door each with three-quarter lights and a one-quart panel, which features a vintage wooden screen door. Within the residential entrance, the vestibule leads to the original staircase and newel post, which is visible from the sidewalk.

Looking southwest, 3626 Lancaster Avenue.

Looking southwest, 3626 Lancaster Avenue's storefront fenestration.

Residential and storefront entrances within the primary elevation of 3626 Lancaster Avenue.

Looking southwest, 3626 Lancaster Avenue's second and third floors.

Looking southwest, 3626 Lancaster Avenue's Shop Window.

Looking north, 3626 Lancaster Avenue, rear elevation.

3628 Lancaster Avenue contains an original storefront fenestration that is fully articulated with intact surround. The surround consists of a projecting, overhanging cornice that is flanked and supported by brackets, which are supported by pilasters. The fenestration includes, left to right: 1. recessed within an open vestibule, the commercial entrance is a single wooden door with a full-light set at an angle and the residential entrance, which is a like door, both of which have transoms above; 2. a flush display window with a single pane of glass beneath a two part transom. A third entrance on the opposite side of the display window has been clocked with a blind wall of bead board.

Looking southwest, 3628 Lancaster Avenue.

Looking southwest, 3628 Lancaster Avenue's second and third floors.

Looking southwest, 3628 Lancaster Avenue's storefront fenestration.

Looking southwest, 3628 Lancaster Avenue's storefront fenestration.

Looking north, 3628 Lancaster Avenue, rear elevation.

Looking southwest, 3612-20 Lancaster Avenue.

Looking southwest, 3622-30 Lancaster Avenue

7. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

3612-28 Lancaster Avenue is a significant historic site that merits designation by the Philadelphia Historical Commission and inclusion on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), 3612-28 Lancaster Avenue is a row of attached storefront dwellings that contribute to the NRHP Powelton Village Historic District. Furthermore, 3612-28 Lancaster Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation A, H, and J, as enumerated in Section 14-1004 of the Philadelphia Code. 3612-28 Lancaster Avenue:

(a) Has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City of Philadelphia;
(f) Contains elements design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation;
(h) Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community, or City; and
(j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.

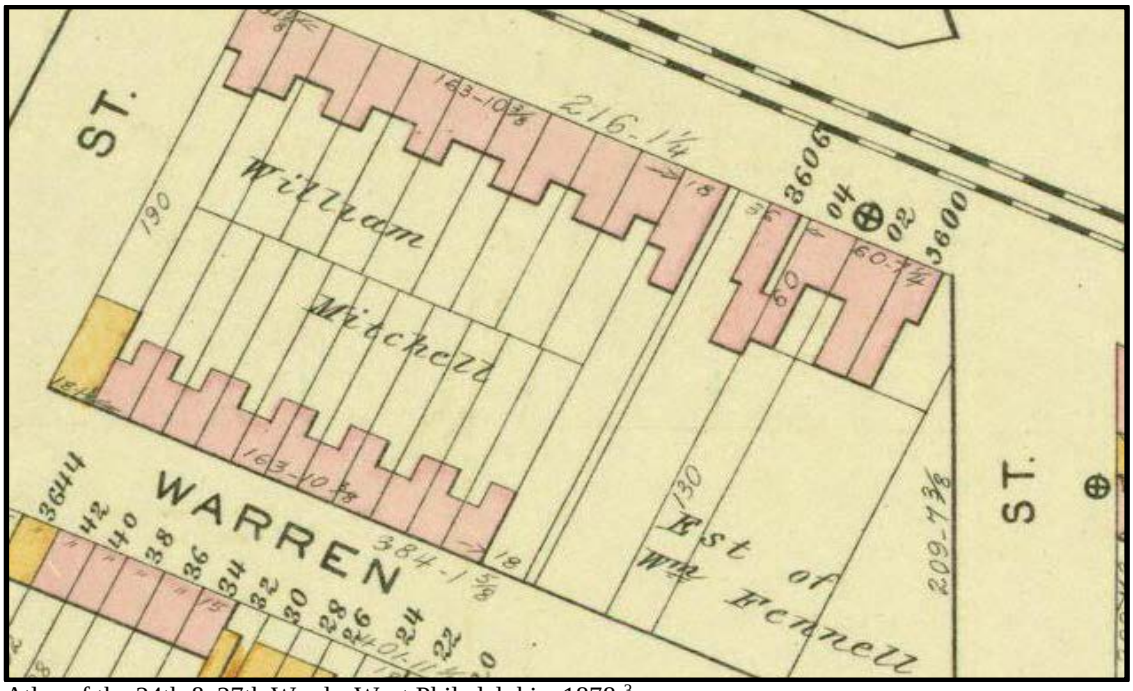
Looking west, the 3600 Block of Lancaster Avenue Streetscape, November 4, 1955.[2]
Courtesy of the City of Philadelphia.

[2] Cuneo. 36th and Lancaster Avenue. November 4, 1955, City of Philadelphia/DOR Archives, Philadelphia.
Balionis, Francis and Atheniasis T. Mallis. East View on Lancaster Avenue – From 3616 Lancaster Avenue. December 12, 1951, City of Philadelphia/DOR Archives, Philadelphia.

Criteria A: Has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City of Philadelphia; and
Criteria F: Contains elements design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation.

The nine storefront dwellings that encompass 3612-28 Lancaster Avenue has significant character, interest and value, representing the type of real estate development that emerged in the pre- and post-Civil War period in Philadelphia. In the colonial period and through the first half of the nineteenth century, Philadelphia's ground rent estate created an informal financial system that enabled the widespread development of individual homes and small residential developments in Philadelphia, which often included storefront dwellings. However, as laws related to ground rents became more democratic, and with the population boom of Philadelphia, in the second—and even third—quarter of the nineteenth century, use of the ground rent estate became obsolete and derivative methods of financing emerged. With its roots planted in the ground rent estate, entrepreneurs and small producers secured financing through "Bonus Building," a system regulated by "Agreement" documents filed with the Recorder of Deeds, which is explained in detail below. This system operated under the current of Philadelphia's world of real estate development between 1855 and 1881, beginning and end dates were entirely legislative in nature. 3612-28 Lancaster Avenue represents the bonus building system that derived from the ground estate when it was legislated into real estate development obscurity in 1855 through the use of bonus operations that were also brought to a legislated close in 1881.

Period of Significance: 1877-1880



Atlas of the 24th & 27th Wards, West Philadelphia, 1878.[3]

[3] Scott, J.B. *Atlas of the 24th and 27th Ward, West Philadelphia: From Official Records, and Actual Surveys, Based Upon Plans Deposited in the Department of Surveys*. Philadelphia: Scott, 1878.

The Ground-Rent Estate and Its Role in the Residential Development of Philadelphia

The Ground-Rent Estate: A Brief History

> Ground rents are of common-law origin, and in some shape were common in most of the original colonies; but, although ground rents are frequently found in Maryland and sometimes in Delaware and occasionally in New Jersey, and the old Rensselaer Wyck leases of New York partook of their nature, it is in Pennsylvania, and especially in Philadelphia, that this estate has attained its full development and most potent influence.[4]

In its early years, Pennsylvania and, in turn, Philadelphia was held by William Penn under "tenure of free and common socage," which created a sort-of American fealty between the colony and its founder. This was a system that prevailed in the form of quit and ground rent through the colonial period. After the American Revolution, the fealty was transferred from the British Crown to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. In 1779, the Divestiture Act was passed, divesting the Penn family of all rights and privileges, including quit rents, which, while similar in character, are not to be confused with ground rents.[5] Ground rents would continue on into the nineteenth century.

In 1888, Edward P. Allinson (1852-1901) and Boies Penrose (1860-1921) defined "ground rents" in a legal paper that was delivered at the Wharton School in February 1888 and subsequently published:

> A ground-rent is reserved by indenture. The deed is the act of both parties, and the value or principal of the estate is usually considered one of which the rent would be the annual return of six per cent, or about sixteen years' purchase. The deed usually has a clause of reentry and distress, a waiver of exemption, covenant for payment, and certain provisions as to redemption. Being a rent service, the clause providing for re-entry and distress on default is not necessary. Being also a separate estate from the fee, it is separately assessed and taxed as real estate, although now in all modern deeds the *terre-tenant*, or grantee of the deed, covenants to pay all taxes. The annual rent payments spring into existence and become debts when they are demandable, and carry interest from that time, and are liens on the land from the date of the deed; but all arrears are discharged by a judicial sale, which, however, does not affect the principal or estate. The principal, not being a debt, was not affected by the legal tender acts, although they gave rise to much litigation as regards ground rents, which was finally settled by the Supreme Court of the United States in Butler v. Horwitz, 1 Wallace, 258. It is therefore now accepted law that the rental of a ground-rent estate is not a debt within the meaning of any legal tender acts; rent reserved in coin dollars of a certain weight and fineness cannot be paid by dollars of a less weight and fineness, and a rent reserved in coin dollars cannot be paid in note dollars; rent payable in silver dollars can be paid in gold dollars; and where rent is reserved in so many dollars lawful silver money of the United States, though it cannot be paid in currency, yet it may be paid in any silver or gold coin which Congress has declared to be lawful money and a legal tender at the time when the payment is made. A ground-rent, being real estate, is sold and conveyed as such, and is liable to all its incidents, is subject to judgment, and may be mortgaged. It is the most perfect form of an incorporeal hereditament. It must be reserved by deed with apt words, and may be for a term of years, for life, or in fee; but, in Pennsylvania, it is invariably in the latter form.[6]

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[4] Allinson, Edward Pease and Boies Penrose. *Ground Rents in Philadelphia*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Series on Political Economy and Public Law, vol. [1], no. 3. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1888.
[5] Allinson and Penrose. *Ground Rents in Philadelphia*.
[6] Allinson, ibid.

Unlike other large American cities, such as Boston and New York, Philadelphia's landowners chose not to invest significant amounts of capital into construction as related to residential and other real estate development. For the first 150 years of Philadelphia's history, construction of residential properties was almost entirely limited to single houses, being built largely on narrow lots subject to ground rents.[7] Aside from Baltimore, founded much later than Philadelphia, few places in America knew the ground rent estate and, as a result, their great strides in home ownership came later.[8] However, it is not to be misunderstood that the homeownership component was the intension of the ground rent estate.

> Philadelphia investors therefore developed ground rents to serve as their own private form of low-risk perpetual debt. [9]

The question as to why the ground rent estate was established could be a simple answer—or it could be complex, but, it's more important to understand its largely positive effect on Philadelphia.

Ground Rents, House Building, and the City of Homes in Philadelphia, 1790-1855

> Most denizens of early America's other large cities (except for Baltimore, which also enjoyed ground rents) found it very difficult to save or cheaply borrow enough money to purchase their own homes. They usually found themselves trapped in a vicious cycle of high rents and low or now savings. Unable to break the cycle, they remained tenants throughout their lives.[10]

A simple explanation of the ground-rent estate and its use in building houses in Philadelphia: a parcel is subdivided into building lots by its owner with interest and/or willingness to sell lots while also retaining interest. Often for the sum of one dollar, the grantee enters the ground-rent estate, gaining ownership with the stipulation of paying annual ground-rent and an almost immediate requirement of "improving the property" (usually with one or more houses). Not having to pay for a lot at purchase, mechanic(s), developer(s), and/or any private individual of modest means could more readily afford to complete a single home and/or a development project.

While ground-rent estate was an important factor in Baltimore and a few other smaller places, for cities like Boston and New York, the construction of a home and/or development(s) by small entrepreneurs was almost always prohibited by the high cost of building lots.

> Ground rent is key to explaining the evolution of property and capital in Philadelphia, though geography compounded its influence. This land tenure form evolved from English law and custom and was peculiar [in its magnitude] among [most] other American cities.[11]

The First U.S. Census of 1790 recorded 44,000 Philadelphians.[12] In the six decades that transpired between that time and the beginning of the Civil War, the landscape of Philadelphia changed entirely. By

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[7] Rilling, Donna J. *Making Houses: Crafting Capitalism, Builders in Philadelphia*, 1790-1850. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2001.
[8] Hayward, Mary Ellen. *Baltimore's Alley Houses: Homes for Working People since the 1780s*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008.
[9] Wright, Robert E. *The First Wall Street: Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, & the Birth of American Finance*. The University of Chicago Press: Chicago & London, 2005
[10] Wright. *The First Wall Street.*
[11] Rilling. Making Houses.
[12] First Census of the United States, 1790. (NARA microfilm). Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29.

1850, the population had risen to 389,000.[13] By this time the city's built environment boasted 52,000 houses.[14] By and large, this achievement was enabled by the ground-rent estate. Many of the city's oldest families, having arrived in the first decades as followers of William Penn, were landholders through the eighteenth and into the nineteenth centuries. As said previously, rather than take on the risk of "real estate development" and/or the task of renting buildings to tenants at-large, descendants of the first purchasers preferred to perpetuate the ground-rent estate.

In the tradition of its conservative Quaker origins, Philadelphians who were "ground lords" preferred the guarantee of long-term and regular profits reaped by the ground-rent estate to the potential risks associated with construction finance and/or speculative development. This "system of fealty" influenced the price of small lots long after America's removal from Great Britain and William Penn's quit rents. While this is indicative of a perpetual system of the ground-rent estate, land in American cities was expensive in the late eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth centuries. In Philadelphia, the cost of building-lots was out of scale with the cost associated with construction, which is the reserve in most places. A small lot could cost upwards of $1,000, while a wood-frame tenement could be constructed for about $500. Escalated lot prices were often associated with potential urban development; however, in a more affordable city like Philadelphia, lot costs remained high due to the existence of a perpetual ground-rent estate. This made the tasks of both procuring a lot and building a house prohibitive for new entrepreneurs in cities like Boston and New York and, as it does now, development and ownership was largely limited to the upper classes. However, in Philadelphia, a developer could use the ground-rent estate and construction loans from wealthy Philadelphians to fund small residential development projects. Or a man of moderate means could construct their own home.[15]

> Owing to the lower immediate costs of obtaining land on ground rent property prices reflected the value of the house exclusive of the cost of the lot. In New York, a respectable brick house required from $2,000 to $3,500 to erect (in the decade of 1825-35); to that sum $500 to $1,000 would have been added for the lot. In Boston, too, builders found land prices a major hurdle.[16]

In terms of the actual costs of the ground rent, it was usually set at no more than six percent of the lot value. After a deed was drawn up, the contract usually allowed the ground rents to be redeemed within fourteen years, after which time one was presumably bound to perpetual ground-rent. For homeowners, this established a bittersweet culture, allowing homeownership for the "middling sort," who would have been unlikely candidates elsewhere, but leaving many "house poor."

In terms of "creating capitalism," the ground-rent estate enabled a wider range of Philadelphians to be involved in the physical development of their city. While the ground lord had the lowest risk, the developer too could easily take on the ground rent of a building lot, erect a dwelling upon that building lot with borrowed capitol, and sell or rent the house upon completion.[17] If sold, the ground rents would transfer to the new owner, making the estate particularly useful to certain savvy entrepreneurs. Developers of the period consisted of house carpenters, bricklayers, plasterers and other building mechanics, who bet their futures on selling row houses to the expanding residential real estate market.

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[13] Seventh Census of the United States, 1850. (NARA microfilm publication). Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.
[14] Allinson and Penrose. *Ground Rents in Philadelphia*.
[15] Rilling. Making Houses.
[16] Rilling. Making Houses.
[17] Hayward, Mary Ellen and Charles Belfoure. The Baltimore Rowhouse. Princeton Architectural Press: New York, 1999.

> Builders set Philadelphia's housing economy in motion by exploiting the city's unique ground-rent estate of property tenure. Ground-rent transactions put building parcels and credit for advance construction within the reach of artisans, making Philadelphia a promising and even rewarding venue for small producers. As long as the economy beckoned with cycles of growth and optimism, real estate development invited young men to take chances and become masters, and to anticipate great gains in the business.[18]

Atlas of West Philadelphia by G.M. Hopkins, 1872.

Despite the modern misnomer, it's important to understand that while the row house is an attached or semi-detached building type, it is still a private, single-family dwelling, which was epic in the dense context of urban Philadelphia—or any growing American city. And while these houses may not invoke the feeling of accomplishment today, these were important small houses to the people who had the potential to own for the first time in the history of their class level.[19] The row house defined Philadelphia's built environment from its earliest days to the current period and was a highly practical building type that maximized space and minimized maintenance, as applied to private houses that stand as their own physical entity within a premises. However, this house type and/or form is not one that was developed because of conscious principals in the new nation. Instead, it was an inherited, largely English, building type and/or form that was perpetuated in Philadelphia largely by the ground-rent estate and the maximization of ground rent that was possible through lots containing narrow attached houses.

Visually, the Philadelphia row house was of load-bearing masonry construction, with occasional wooden examples, that most commonly stood two and one-half or three stories high in alignment and separated from the street by the limits of a paved sidewalk. Most of the houses featured red brick facades, emulating the Georgian tradition of architecture, later known in America distinctively as Federal. The Greek Revival style was melding with the Federal to create a similar school of Philadelphia taste. Buildings that stood higher than three or four stories were rare in Philadelphia before the last decades of the nineteenth century.

> Visitors to the Quaker City found their uniformity and architectural monotonous, but these brick dwellings came to distinguish Philadelphia as the "City of Homes." This architectural consistency meant that the type of shelter for workingmen changes very little from 1790 to 1850. Architecture for both the "working class" and the "white collar" varied little in architectural style and form.[20]

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[18] Rilling. Making Houses.
[19] Wright. *The First Wall Street.*

Building accomplishments of the first decades of the nineteenth century led Philadelphia to become the "City of Homes." As early as 1840, columnists for Philadelphia papers, *The North American* and *Daily Advertiser*, referred to the City of Homes.[21] On January 31, 1848, a visitor, quietly identified as "H.W.B.," wrote an editorial for the *Christian Inquirer*, which was published on February 5:

> Going from New York to Philadelphia, seems like going from a city of hotels, and boarding-houses and exchanges, and theaters, and shops, and foreigners and strangers, to a city of homes, inhabited by a homogeneous population, where the comforts and quietude of domestic life form the principal feature.
>
> This appears in the endless blocks of neat and comfortable dwellings, rarely interrupted by anything magnificent or unclean. The city, for several square miles, appears to be chiefly occupied with moderately sized houses, wearing very much the same appearance, pretty and clean, and giving the idea of substantial comfort. You are persuaded that this is no city of boarding houses; that the population do not merely stay, but live here; and that the middle and largest class are all in possession of pleasant and convenient houses of their own. There is an air of ownership on these houses.[22]

Since over-analyzed as a pleasant ploy to satisfy working people in its entirety, this reference to Philadelphia continued after the Civil War and was not used towards any one particular class. By 1865, the phrase, "in our City of Homes," was used by prominent Philadelphians in a letter to General U.S. Grant, at which time he was house hunting in their city.[23] By 1870, Philadelphia boasted 112,336 private houses with an average of 6.01 inhabitants per.[24] The *New York Times* used this information to compare Philadelphia to New York City—then with 64,044 private houses with an average of 14.72 inhabitants per. As Philadelphia continued to grow and develop, the city would be physically defined by the row house and the high rate of home ownership it allowed through mid-twentieth century.

While Philadelphia had achieved this element of domestic status by the first half of the nineteenth century and perhaps earlier, the culmination of the term was in the 1893 book, Philadelphia: A City of Homes by Talcott Williams.[25]

Bonus Building: A Development Pattern in Philadelphia after the Ground Rent Estate: Post-1855
Eighteen-fifty-four initiated a period of great change for the City of Philadelphia. Known as the act of February 2, 1854, the Act of Consolidation was brought into law by the Pennsylvania General Assembly, creating the consolidated City and County of Philadelphia. This Act brought all of the former government systems of the county under one municipal government. In the following year, another important legislative act would forever change the transmission of real and personal estate in Philadelphia.[26]

> Only those who are accustomed to make or read briefs of title in Philadelphia, going back to the times of the first settlement, know how frequently occur ancient rent charges and ground rents,

[21] *The North American* and *Daily Advertiser*, 24 December 1840, Issue 546.
[22] H.W.B., Editorial. *Christian Inquirer*. 5 February 1848.
[23] "Philadelphia, special to the…," *New York Herald*. New York: 25 January 1865.
[24] Allinson and Penrose. *Ground Rents in Philadelphia*.
[25] Wright. *The First Wall Street*.
[26] Philadelphia Consolidation Act. Act of Feb. 2, 1854, P.L. 21, No. 16. Cl. 11. A Further Supplement.

> which the owners of the present day never heard of, and which generally have no doubt been honestly extinguished; while making this note the writer has such a single brief before him for an opinion, in which no less than three such charges occur as blemishes, grants, or reservations more than a century ago, which no person living has any knowledge of.[27]

On April 27, 1855, An Act to Amend Certain Defects of the Law for the More Just and Safe Transmission, and Secure Enjoyment of Real and Personal Estate was passed by the General Assembly, which, most importantly, ended the perpetual ground rent estate. This act created the statute of limitations related to real and personal estate transactions, as related to the sale and/or lease of land. The Act also limited the number of years one could collect ground rent, which, essentially, terminated the widespread use of the ground rent estate in real estate development.[28]

While the bank and the building and loan would shape home ownership in the second half of the nineteenth and through the twentieth century, real estate development did not entirely and/or immediately diverge from the private transactions that were inspired by Philadelphia's ground rent estate. In a city like Philadelphia, small scale development had been become so dependent on the ground rent estate that it naturally transitioned to a system known as bonus building and/or operations.

> Sometime before the war of 1861, there began a great activity in what was known as "bonus building," which maybe briefly described as follows:
>
> A, holding a tract of land of one or more acres ready for improvement, having divided it into city lots, would sell the same to an irresponsible party, – a man of straw, X, – who would give a bond and mortgage for each property, covering the supposed value of the same after the erection of the contemplated building. Under this advance-money mortgage, A was to advance to B, the builder and real purchaser, to whom an assignment of the property subject to the mortgage had been made by X, the difference between the agreed price for the land and the amount of the mortgage to be made as advances to the builder, payable, as specified, upon completion of certain steps in the building, – i.e., so much when first joists were laid, so much when the second floor was done, so much when under roof, etc. These mortgages, being a first lien, protected the mortgagee from mechanics' liens to the extent of his mortgage. For the above purposes, mortgages were preferred to ground rents, as they were more easily converted, sold, or placed; and, in the "flush" period after the war, the speculator would easily sell his houses for greater or less amounts over the mortgages. Sometimes, the mechanic or material men were paid; but, if the venture failed, they would often be "cut out" by the properties being sold under the mortgage, when they frequently would not bring the face value thereof. Individuals would suffer; but a net result was that the city had so many new houses, and the neighborhoods generally recovered from the effects of over-building and grew up to them, unless a mistake had been made in erecting too high a grade of house for the place or in calculating the somewhat arbitrary trend in the fashion of municipal emigration.[29]

While "agreements" filed with the Recorder of Deeds were known long before the advent of bonus building, this was merely a component of the ground rent estate. The agreement(s) filed with the Recorder of Deeds served as the principal document of the real estate transaction between a capitalist and a trades

[27] Wilson v. Iseminger, 185 U.S. 55 (1902)
[28] Conn, Steven. Metropolitan Philadelphia: Living with the Presence of the Past. Philadelphia: Pennsylvania Press, 2006.
[29] Allinson and Penrose. *Ground Rents in Philadelphia*.

person—essentially, the landowner and the builder. As described above, the acquiescence of the ground rent estate as changed in 1855 led to initial bonus building in the years prior to the Civil War.[30]

Another explanation of the bonus building system is as follows:

> The system [bonus operations] is very generally misunderstood; but I will give you an example that will serve to fully illustrate its workings: Suppose I am the owner of a certain lot, and am also a capitalist I go to you, who are a builder, and sell you my ground at say $50,000, which it is fair to presume nets me a handsome profit, agreeing to advance you an additional $50,000 in cash to build with—so much when cellars are dug, so much when the first floor joists are laid, so much when the second floor joists are laid….
>
> Mind, now you have do not pay me a cent in money for my ground, and receive, besides the property, a bonus of $50,000 in cash. The settlement is accomplished in this way: The property is deeded to a 'man of straw,' who is usually paid a handsome sum for the use of his name, then executes mortgages upon all the buildings to be erected, amounting in the aggregate to $100,000, the property having been previously surveyed…laid out lots…kind of houses agreed upon.
>
> The mortgages, accompanied by the usual bonds, are made in my favor and delivered to me, and I advance the bonus in the sums and at times decided upon, the bonus being divided up and paid as the work progresses, so that I will always be safe, with my advances covered by improved property. It is proper to state, though, that before a spade is stuck in the ground, at which time mechanics liens become valid against the operation, an agreement to build, on part of the operator, and to advance the bonus, on part of the capitalist, is executed and filed in the office of the Recorder of Deeds.[31]

Amos Ellis was one of the earliest known individuals in connection with the Bonus Business, being both "capitalist and operator" up until the time of his death. Ellis was an extremely wealthy man from this business operations, building many quality houses through the system; however, not without some bad rapport along the way.[32] Another important Bonus Builder was Charles M. Smith of Philadelphia. Smith made a great deal of money in the bonus operations that constructed St. Albans' place, the beautiful park-facing, pedestrian houses in South Philadelphia just to the east the Old Naval Hospital across Gray's Ferry Road. Unlike most houses in Philadelphia, the buildings in St. Albans' face into the court space of the block creating a wide promenade with an improved park and fountains. Only the east and west, sidewalls of the houses face onto a public street. Alleyways run behind each house. A later project, Madison Square is another beautiful, but unusual block of houses oriented in the same manner very close in proximity to St. Alban's.[33]

Other Bonus Builders of the day include Isaac E. Bliem, who built "fine houses" with capitol on loan from William Weightman, the chemist. These houses are extant in the block from Nineteenth to Twentieth Streets between Jefferson and Oxford Streets. James McElroy was another Bonus Builder of quality houses, including the properties that filled in Judge Stroud's estate. [34]

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[30] "Bonus Building in Philadelphia," *American Architect and Architecture*, Volume 4. 1878.
[31] "Bonus Houses: Egg-Shell Dwellings of the Outskirts," *The Times.* Philadelphia: 26 May 1875, p. 5.
[32] Budd, Henry and Ardemus Stewart. *American and English Decisions in Equity*. Philadelphia: M. Murphy, 1903
[33] "Bonus Houses" *The Times.*
[34] "Bonus Houses: Egg-Shell Dwellings of the Outskirts," *The Times.* Philadelphia: 26 May 1875, p. 5.

Previously, a property owner would sell land to a purchaser for one dollar with a contract for perpetual ground rents and a stipulation and/or clause requiring immediately construction of a building, usually a dwelling, to ensure that ground rents could be paid. In some cases the property owner funded construction, but often it was a private party of means. The developer would escape both perpetual ground rents and the mortgage for construction upon selling the house and/or subsidizing the payments with rental income. After the extinguishment of the ground rent estate, individuals who wished to purchase a home sought out opportunities with building and loan associations, and other "savings"-oriented institutions, while small developers followed a new system based on the old ground rent estate. A wealthy investor would purchase land from an old and/or larger landowner; subdivided the lots; and find a builder, carpenter, contractor, etc. to invest in a project.[35] Once secured, an agreement was drawn up in the form of a deed and the developer would purchase the property, making payments on the loan for a period of time. The contracts were not "simple" by any means. Not only were the number of lots stipulated, but also the number of dwellings, the construction schedule—the precise payment upon plastering, roofing, etc. The grantor often required specialized forms of fire insurance among other requirements:

a. …declaration[s] of "no off set" at any time when asked…for the amount of the purchase money and advances then secured by the mortgages; if …refuse[d], [grantor] could decline to advance any more money

b. [grantor] may at his option anticipate payment of any or all money advanced

c. [if grantee]…stop[s] building for 30 days without prior notice, [grantor] …can demand the purchase and any money advance according to the terms of the bonds (has specifics on how this is to be handled and actions taken, etc)

d. If any of the bonds or mortgages are assigned to someone else, any interest due on them shall be paid by…[grantor] to…[grantee] calculated on the purchase price and advances prior to…[specified date]

e. Taxes…will be adjusted "in the usual way" …[36]

Upon completion of a project, the grantee would either sell and/or rent the newly constructed buildings and this income would allow the developer to comply with the agreement, the capitalist making way with what were often the greatest profits of the particular bonus operation.[37]

As result of the Panic of 1873, the downside of bonus building was highlighted greatly by widespread failure of bonus operations. The financial downturn led to the sale of thousands of homes, some carrying first and second mortgages, and the widespread sale of such properties led to an overall loss, as the individual sales did not realize the "…face of the first mortgage…"[38] The mechanics and the suppliers suffered greatly as a result. The aide of the General Assembly was sought, but a legislative solution took many years. Finally, the Act of 1881 was passed:

> …which inhibited the creation of purchase-money mortgages for a greater amount than the actual

[35] "A Building System for the Great Cities—The Business and Social Influences of Buildings Systems Illustrated," *The Penn Monthly, Volume 8*. Philadelphia: 1877.
[36] Balionis, Francis and Atheniasis T. Mallis. East View on Lancaster Avenue – From 3616 Lancaster Avenue. December 12, 1951, City of Philadelphia/DOR Archives, Philadelphia.
[37] "Bonus Houses. *The Times.*
[38] Allinson and Penrose. *Ground Rents in Philadelphia*.

> value of the unimproved land, at least subordinating the lien of any thus created to liens of mechanics, etc.[39]

The Act of 1881 essentially ended the bonus building period of real estate development, much as it had the much longer-lived ground rent estate. However, this did, for a short time, restore credence and necessity for the use of the limited ground rent estate, as a means of safeguarding risk.

The Development of 3612-28 Lancaster Avenue

According to the Atlas of West Philadelphia of 1872, the south side of the 3600 block of Lancaster Avenue contained two private houses situated separately within the easterly portion of the block's parcels—3606 and 3610 Lancaster Avenue.

On April 26, 1869, John F. Miller, a contractor, purchased a lot from William Fennell, a gentleman of Philadelphia, at 3606 Lancaster Avenue, which contained thirty feet front on Lancaster Avenue and one-hundred and ninety feet in depth to the north side of Warren Street. Miller purchased the lot from Fennell for one dollar, fee simple, and agreed to pay "one hundred and eight dollars lawful money of the United States of America in half yearly payments on the first day of the month of November and May in every year hereafter forever." While the deed included the typical "…requirement to build a dwelling…" it doesn't appear that this portion of the deed was ever executed. Nevertheless, by 1872, Miller had constructed a residence and was living at 3606 Lancaster Avenue.[40] On July 1, 1869, Thomas Coleman, an engineer, purchased a lot from Fennell at 3610 Lancaster Avenue, which contained eighteen feet front on Lancaster Avenue and one-hundred and ninety feet in depth to the north side of Warren Street. Like Miller, Coleman paid one dollar, fee simple, at the time of purchase; similar ground rent arrangement; and a stipulation regarding the construction of a house, which was blank and, in turn, null and void. Coleman too soon constructed a dwelling, which was also shown on the 1872 Atlas, as mentioned above.[41]

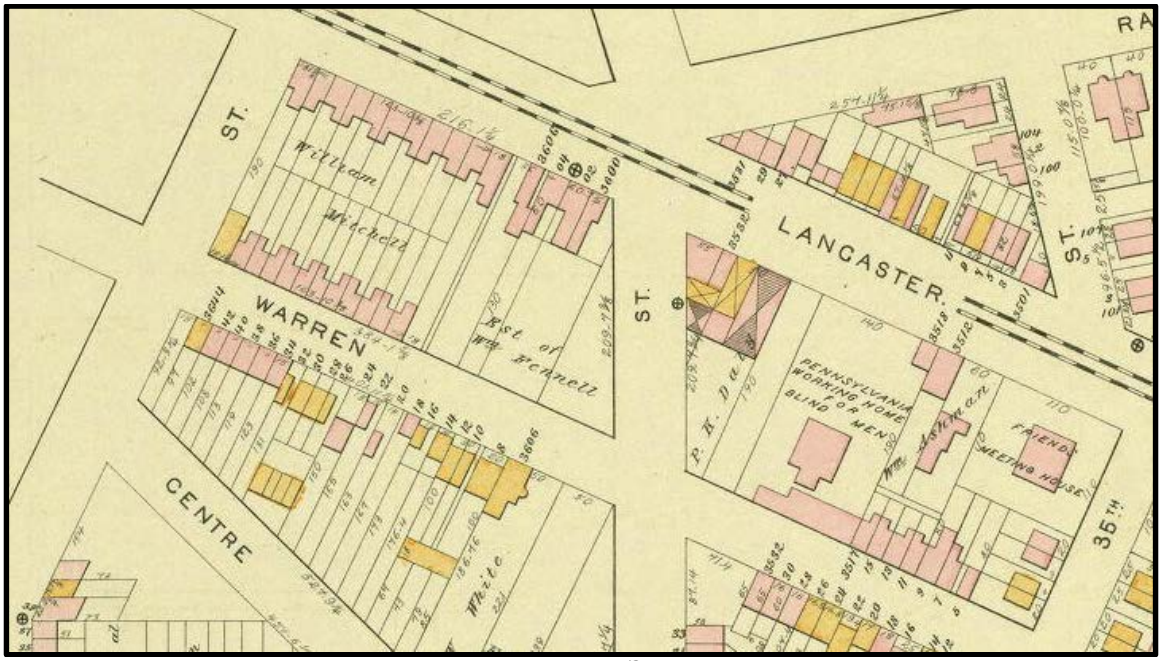
Mary Fennell acquired the land in July 1841 through Trustees of the Greenville Estate—James Dundas and Andrew D. Cash. At the time of Mary Fennell's demise in 1872, what had been known as Lot Nos. 31, 33, and 34 of the subdivided Greenville Estate was then divided equally among her heirs—Eliza Fennell Eyre, Maria Fennell, Margaret Fennell, Thomas P. Fennell, Susan T. Fennell, Anna M. Fennell Tees, Amanda P. Fennell and William Fennell, consisting of her eight children. The subdivision of the Fennell property that became the south side of the 3600 block of Lancaster Avenue passed through the hands of Thomas Fennell to his brother-in-law, Henry M. Phillips or likely what was known as Henry M. Philips, et. al.

Henry M. Phillip, et. al. soon sold the parcel to James A. L. Wilson—a gentleman of Philadelphia. Almost immediately after purchase, an agreement was drawn up between Wilson and William Mitchell, a carpenter, and John T. McHugh, a builder. Because Wilson carried the note, it appears that he required "An Agreement" with Mitchel and McHugh that stipulated the subdivision of the parcel into twenty building lots, as well as the construction of nineteen houses on the subject parcel. The price of the lot was $37,950, which was valued as follows: the nine lots facing northwest on Lancaster Avenue were valued at $2,750 and the eleven lots facing southeast on Warren Street were valued at $1,200 each.

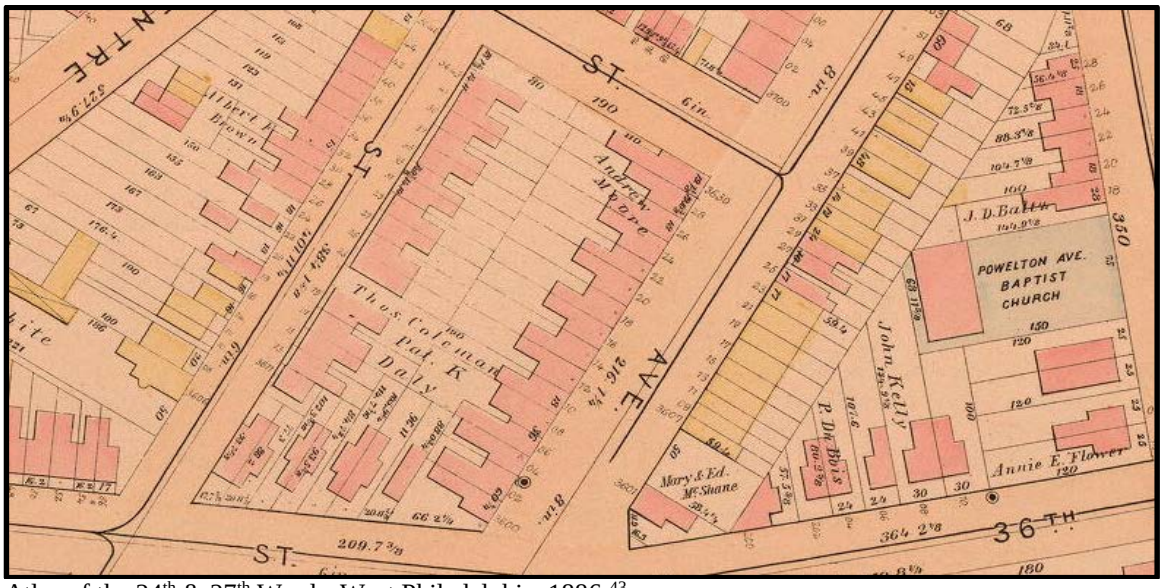
Mitchell and McHugh then received title to the property. Mortgages were drawn up for each individual dwelling and the new owners eventually took on mortgages. However, the nine dwellings at 3612-28

[39] Pamphlet Laws, 1881, p. 56.
[40] Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Deed Book J.T.O.: 235-238.
[41] Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Deed Book J.T.O. 536-541.

Lancaster Avenue appear to have been used as rental properties through much of their lifespan with subsequent owner occupancy over the years and at varying of the addresses. Nevertheless, these houses represent a fully documented and a successful specimen of the bonus building that dominated the undercurrent of real estate development in Philadelphia between 1855 and 1881.



Atlas of the 24th & 27th Wards, West Philadelphia, 1878.[42]



Atlas of the 24th & 27th Wards, West Philadelphia, 1886.[43]

[42] Scott. *Atlas of the 24th and 27th Ward*. 1878.

[43] Bromley, George W. and Walter S. Bromley. *Atlas of the 24th and 34th Wards, West Philadelphia: From Actual Surveys and Official Plans of the Survey Department*. Philadelphia: G.W. Bromley, 1892.

As part of the Agreement, the nine lots on Lancaster Avenue would contain nine three-story brick storefront dwelling houses to contain eleven rooms each and the ten lots on Warren Street would contain eleven three-story brick dwelling houses to contain nine rooms each. Nineteen mortgages were issued by Mitchel and McHugh to Wilson—nine for $4,500 and ten for $2,100, as they had been advanced nearly $30,000 by Wilson for construction. Fire insurance was required by a company approved by Wilson, which is an interesting insight to the requirements of the period. [44]

Other terms were outlined, was typical in most agreements of this type and time period.

3612-28 Lancaster Avenue: Additions, Alterations, and/or Improvements

Over 125 years since construction, the building facades have undergone relatively few changes. **3612 Lancaster Avenue** appears to have be the subject of Permit No. 2699 for minor alterations to the building in 1906, which included the installation of a new storefront window and surround improvements. However, little else occurred until the 1930s.[45] In 1932, Permit No. 976[46] was again for minor alterations, as was Permit No. 2465 in 1938.[47] **3614 Lancaster Avenue** remained relatively stagnant until 1957 when it received not only alterations, but an addition at the rear of the building. At that time the building was six units.[48] **3618 Lancaster Avenue** also underwent minor changes in 1960.[49] **3620 Lancaster Avenue** was a store and dwelling in 1926, when permits were issued for the improvements to the building; however, no major structural changes were required at the time.[50] **3624 Lancaster Avenue** underwent alterations in 1957; however, the precise permit record is unknown. According to the Powelton Village Civic Association, the entire block was subject to a tax credit project in the late 1980s or early 1990s. The Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority gained ownership of the properties in 1986 and the entire parcel was assembled and later sold to the Lancaster Mews Associates, which was a long process that took place between the late 1980s and early 1990s.

The most prominent physical change to the façade of the nine buildings affected four of the previously mentioned buildings with the replacement of original storefront fenestrations with “improved” brick versions no later than 1951, as determined in the enclosed photographic evidence.

Criteria H: Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community, or City

Located in the Powelton Village neighborhood of West Philadelphia, 3612-28 is a distinctive and substantial component of the larger block of storefront dwellings. While the houses have since been subdivided into apartments, each of the buildings maintains an original and/or period storefront at the first floor of its primary elevation. After the Civil War, Lancaster Avenue developed as one of the commercial hubs for the neighborhoods of West Philadelphia. In Powelton Village, much of the commercial density that once lined Lancaster Avenue has vanished to modern development, as well as other uses. 3612-28 Lancaster Avenue, within the larger 3600 block, is a familiar visual feature in the neighborhood, as one of the last intact rows of storefront dwellings.

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[44] City of Philadelphia. Recorded in Deed Book D.H.L., No. 124, p. 262, CAP.
[45] Permit No. 2699. City of Philadelphia. 1906, CAP.
[46] Permit No. 976. City of Philadelphia. 1932, CAP.
[47] Permit No. 2465. City of Philadelphia. 1938, CAP.
[48] Permit No. 3573. City of Philadelphia. 1957, CAP.
[49] Permit No. 2358. City of Philadelphia. 1960, CAP
[50] Permit No. 5343. City of Philadelphia. 27 April 1926, CAP

Period of Significance: 1877-1955

The Origin and History of Powelton Village

Prior to the 1950s, the name Powelton Village was nothing more than the name of a cluster of houses owned by landlord and investor Max Pfeiffer on 32nd Street. The city's Health and Welfare Council also referred to the area as the "Powellton area," characterizing certain families that lived north of Powelton Avenue from 38th Street.[51] Urban legend tells many other tales of how and when the area was called Powelton Village; however, the story goes back to the establishment of Philadelphia.

The boundaries of Powelton Village include Lancaster Avenue at the south; Mantua and Belmont at the west; Spring Garden Street at the north; and the Pennsylvania Railroad at the east.[52]

William ap Howell—William Powel, also spelled Powell, was a Welsh carpenter that arrived in Philadelphia in the days of William Penn, first becoming one of the early settlers of Blockley. At the time Penn arrived he authorize and established a ferry over the Schuylkill River at what was the line of High Street (now Market). Penn appointed Samuel England to operate the ferry; however, this appointment proved to be unreliable and the ferry was constantly out of commission and/or poorly maintained. Noticing that England wasn't so great at his job, Powel established his own ferry at what would become the Spring Garden Street bridge in 1692-93 without seeking the proper approval of the British government or the proprietary. For the duration of the decade, Powel, his Welsh counterparts, and others who preferred his service went back and forth with Great Britain and William Penn to no avail. Finally, in 1700, he gained his rights to operate the ferry. That same year a road from Powel's Ferry to the Haverford Meeting House and, eventually, to Chester County, later to become Haverford Avenue.[53]

The Lancaster Pike—now Lancaster Avenue opened in 1730 and Powel's business picked up, leading him to open a tavern—later to become the Upper Ferry Tavern.[54] However, in the years after the Lancaster Pike opened, Powel retired from his life's work, passing the business on to one named Schull, operating it until about 1750.[55]

While William Powel had first lived on the west bank of the Schuylkill, it was his descendant—Samuel Powel (1739-93) who became then became the owner of "Powelton." Mayor of Philadelphia during the American Revolution, Samuel Powel owned the famous Powel House at 242 South 3rd Street and was the last mayor under the City Charter of 1701, as well as the first mayor under the City Corporation of 1789. While the precise date is not known to the author at this time, Samuel Powel purchased about 100 acres west of the Schuylkill, which became known as Powelton. Having passed down from his ancestor—Samuel Powel, Originally named John Powel Hare, his name became John Hare Powel (1786-1856) when he was adopted by his aunt. Powel added to the parcel through his successful marriage into the Baring family and erected a impressive Greek Revival mansion as his summer place, truly creating a name for Powelton.[56]

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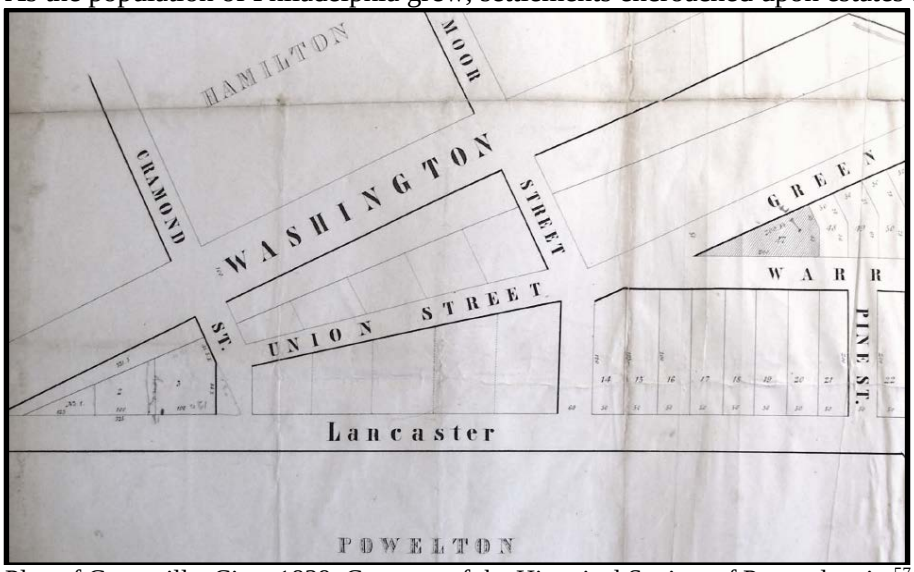
[51] Rosenthal, Leon S. *A History of Philadelphia's University City*. Philadelphia: Produced by the Print. Office of the University of Pennsylvania for the West Philadelphia Corp., 1963.
[52] Skaler, Robert Morris. *West Philadelphia: University City to 52nd Street*. Charleston: Arcadia Press, 2005.
[53] Rosenthal, Leon S. *A History of Philadelphia's University City*.
[54] Weaver, William Wallace. "West Philadelphia: A Study of Natural Social Areas." PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1930.
[55] Soderlund, Jean R. and Richard S. Dunn. *William Penn and the Founding of Pennsylvania*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983.
[56] Jordan, John Woolf. *Colonial Families of Philadelphia, Volume 2*. New York and Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1911.

As the population of Philadelphia grew, settlements encroached upon estates and by the third quarter of



Plan of Greenville, Circa 1839. Courtesy of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.[57]

the nineteenth century Powel descendants couldn't refuse to offload their ancestral acreage, allowing West Philadelphia to develop residential neighborhoods form its open lands. In 1852, a large part of the estate was sold to the Pennsylvania Railroad and eventually all that was left was a small plot at 33rd between Powell and Race Streets. The Powel Mansion was located west of 32nd Street between Howell and Race Streets. At last, the mansion was owned by E. Spencer Miller and Anna Emlen Hare.[58] The mansion was purchased by E. Spencer Miller who lived in the house up until 1883. The mansion was purchased by Evert Jansan Wendell of Wendell and Smith, builders, who developed much of the neighborhood, cutting two streets through the property and erecting a number of cottage homes.[59]

By the time the Wendells starting building cottages in West Philadelphia in the 1880s, development of the area now known as Powelton Village had been taking place since the 1860s. From the 1860s through the end of the nineteenth century, the area was densely built up with detached, semi-detached, and row houses in all manner of Victorian-era styles, creating a suburban environment of dense semi-urban architecture. The earliest architectural styles included the Italianate. Even the main building of the Pennsylvania Working Home for the Blind, built in 1874, was articulated in the form of a massive Italianate mansion. Semi-detached, twins came in all manner of styles, including some rare Italianate versions, as well as many in the Second Empire and Queen Anne revival styles. Aside from the construction of beautiful, elegant blocks of houses, there were also numerous churches and institutions in the neighbor. Lancaster Avenue served as one of the primary commercial streets. Always the most numerous many of the residential building survive, while the commercial and institutional buildings continue to dwindle. Even in the residential sections of the streets, there are few blocks with all of the original buildings. However, this is even more so the case regarding commercial and industrial buildings.

[57] Suplee, Nathan. "Plan of Greenville, Situate on the west side of the River Schuylkill in the Borough of West Philadelphia." Philadelphia: Nathan Suplee, 1839.
[58] Vieira, M. Laffitte. *West Philadelphia Illustrated: Early History of West Philadelphia*. Philadelphia: Avil Printing Co., 1903.
[59] Vieira. *West Philadelphia Illustrated*.

Looking west, the 3600 Block of Lancaster Avenue, 1951.
Courtesy the City of Philadelphia.[60]

Criteria J: Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.

3612-28 Lancaster Avenue is a row of nine storefront dwellings designed for shopkeepers to occupy both the shop and the dwelling. While this type of dwelling was known in Philadelphia since the earliest decades of the colonial period, 3612-28 Lancaster Avenue represents an evolved pattern of storefront dwelling development that emerged and prospered in the mid-nineteenth century. In the second quarter of the nineteenth century, development of storefront dwellings shifted from individual and/or small scale development to long rows of identical buildings that may or may not have been owned by the occupant. In the post-Civil War period, street railways had become a primary mode of transportation in Philadelphia, allowing business owners and/or employees with means to "live out" or reside in neighborhoods removed from their employment and/or business interests. While this naturally gave rise to widespread sprawl in a suburban, but still somewhat dense format, it affected the design of storefront dwellings, creating a new format. The separation of the commercial and the residential became apparent at the façade of the building with separate entrances respectively. While this form was not unknown before, it became standard by the end of the nineteenth century. The architectural shift was two-fold: a live-in shopkeeper could separate his business from his home; however, if the shopkeeper lived out, a landlord could easily rent the dwelling to a separate tenant. These quarters could also more easily be divided into smaller apartments without necessarily affecting the shopkeeper's domain. The domestic and commercial history of 3612-28 Lancaster Avenue shall illustrate this cultural and social shift in society.

[60] Balionis, Francis and Atheniasis T. Mallis. East View on Lancaster Avenue – From 3616 Lancaster Avenue. December 12, 1951, City of Philadelphia/DOR Archives, Philadelphia

The domestic and commercial history of 3612-28 Lancaster Avenue will also illustrate the economic trends of the neighborhood and city thorough the occupants and their lives, which are described briefly below.

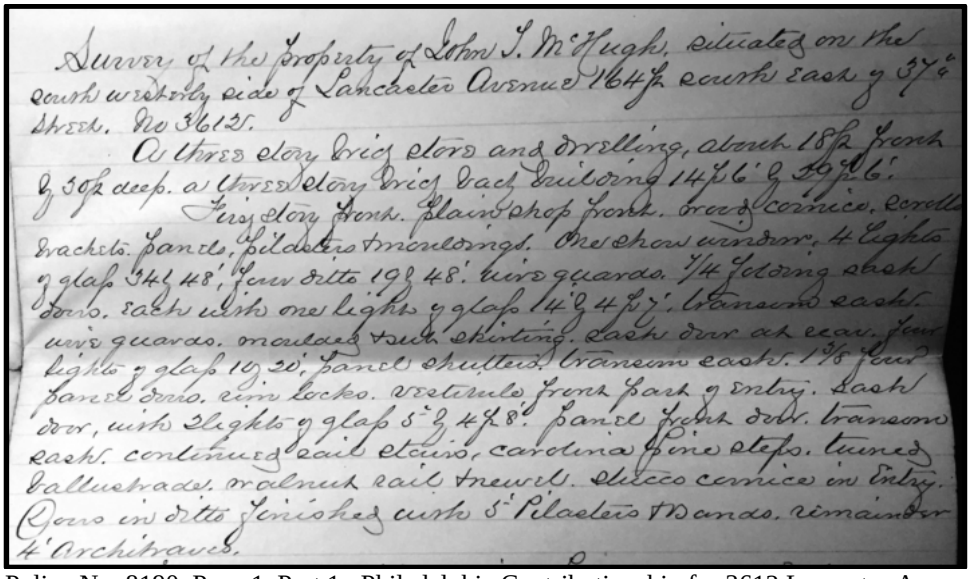
Lastly, when William Penn founded his "City of Brotherly Love" his hope was that a wide range of religious groups could live together in harmony through mutual respect; however, the history of Philadelphia illustrates successes and failures in this plan throughout the centuries. The context below shall illustrate the incredible diversity that existed in just one block that represent the cultural and social conditions of the area, as well as staggering diversity that appears within the nine storefront dwellings from the time of construction through the 1930s.

Period of Significance: 1877-1951

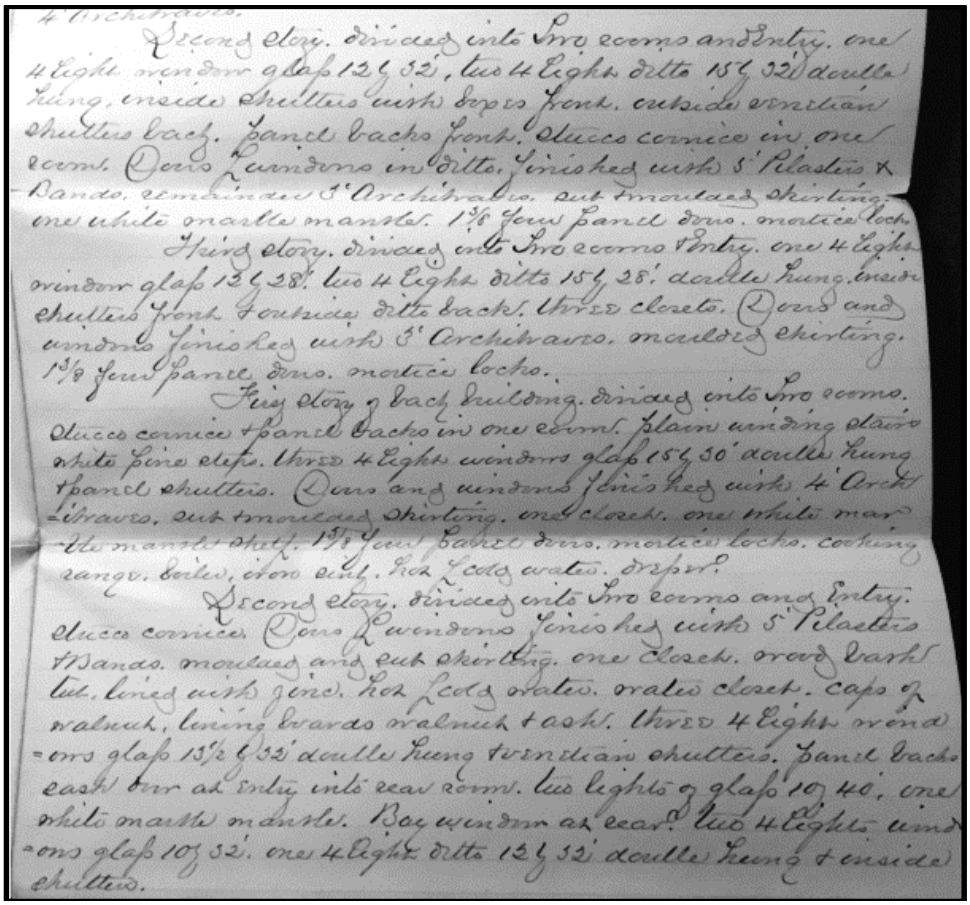
The Domestic and Commercial History of 3612-28 Lancaster Avenue

While the scope of this nomination is not to provide an in-depth study of each and every occupant that lived and/or worked in the buildings that comprise 3612-28 Lancaster Avenue, the point is more so to provide a representation of each building and its occupants—their backgrounds, families, and occupations—to illustrate the historical significance of the block in relationship to the facts presented above.

3612 Lancaster Avenue


Survey of the property of John T. McHugh, situated on the south westerly side of Lancaster Avenue 164 ft south east of 37th street. No 3612.
A three story brick store and dwelling, about 18 ft front & 30 ft deep. a three story brick back building 14 ft 6 in & 39 ft 6 in.
First story front. Plain shop front. Brick cornice. Scroll brackets. Panels, pilasters & mouldings. One show window, 4 lights of glass 3 ft 4 in 48 in, four ditto 1 ft 8 in 48 in. wire guards. 1/4 folding sash doors. sash with one lights of glass 1 ft 4 in 4 ft 7 in. transom sash. wire guards. moulded & with skirting. Sash door at rear. four lights of glass 10 in 20 in, panel shutters. transom sash. 1 3/8 four panel doors. rim locks. vestibule front part of entry. Sash door, with 3 lights of glass 5 in & 4 ft 8 in. panel front door. transom sash. continued rail stairs, carolina pine steps. turned balustrade. walnut rail & newel. stucco cornice in entry. Room in ditto finished with 5 in pilasters & bands. remainder 4 in architraves.

Policy No. 8190, Page 1, Part 1., Philadelphia Contributionship for 3612 Lancaster Avenue, which will be discussed later in this document. Courtesy of the Historic Society of Pennsylvania. Issued on March 4, 1878.



4 Architraves.

Second story. divided into two rooms and Entry. one 4 light window glass 12 by 32, two 4 lights ditto 15 by 32 dcuble hung, inside shutters with hinges front. outside venetian shutters back. panel backs front. stucco cornice in one room. Doors & windows in ditto. finished with 5" Pilasters & Bands. remainder 3" Architrave. cut & moulded skirting. one white marble mantle. 1 3/8 pine panel doors. mortice locks.

Third story. divided into two rooms & Entry. one 4 lights window glass 12 by 28. two 4 lights ditto 15 by 28. dcuble hung. inside shutters front & outside ditto back. three closets. Doors and windows finished with 3" Architrave. moulded skirting. 1 3/8 pine panel doors. mortice locks.

First story of back building. divided into two rooms. stucco cornice & panel backs in one room. plain winding stairs white pine steps. three 4 lights windows glass 15 by 30 dcuble hung & panel shutters. Doors and windows finished with 4" Architraves. cut & moulded skirting. one closet. one white marble mantle shelf. 1 3/8 pine panel doors. mortice locks. cooking range. boiler, iron sink. hot & cold water. dresser.

Second story. divided into two rooms and Entry. stucco cornice. Doors & windows finished with 5" Pilasters & Bands. moulded and cut skirting. one closet. wood bath tub. lined with zinc. hot & cold water. water closet. caps of walnut, lining boards walnut & ash. three 4 lights windows glass 15 1/2 by 32 dcuble hung & venetian shutters. panel backs. sash door at entry into rear room. two lights of glass 10 by 40. one white marble mantle. Bay window at rear. two 4 lights windows glass 10 by 32. one 4 light ditto 12 by 32 dcuble hung & inside shutters.

Policy No. 8190, Page 1, Part 2.

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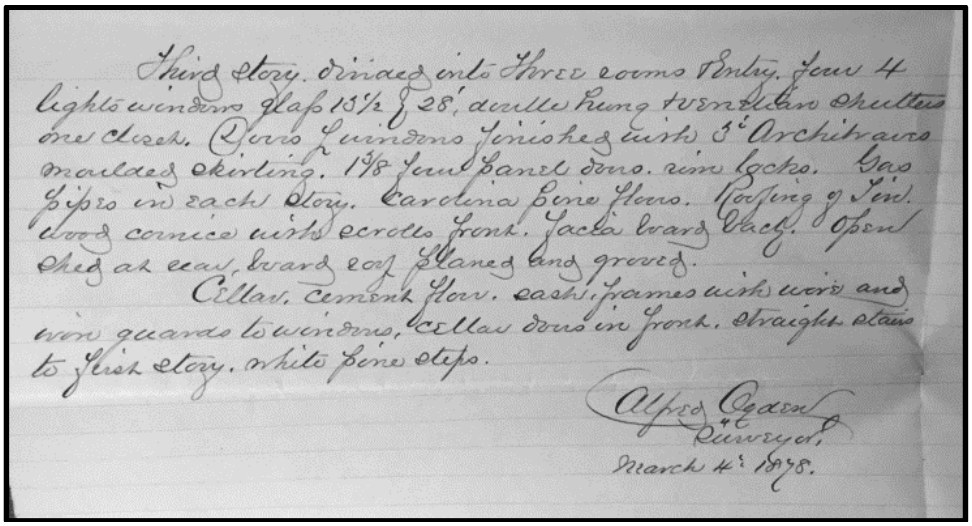

Third story. divided into three rooms & Entry. four 4 lights windows glass 15 1/2 by 28. dcuble hung & venetian shutters one closet. Doors & windows finished with 3" Architraves moulded skirting. 1 3/8 pine panel doors. rim locks. Gas pipes in each story. Carolina pine floors. Roofing of tin. wood cornice with scrolls front. facia board back. open shed at rear, board roof planed and grooved.

Cellar. cement floor. sash, frames with wire and iron guards to windows, cellar door in front. straight stairs to first story. white pine steps.

Alfred Ogden
Surveyor.
March 4th 1878.

Policy No. 8190, Page 2.

Policy No. 8190 from the Philadelphia Contributionship was taken out on 3612 Lancaster Avenue as a stipulation of the aforementioned deed regarding the bonus operations described earlier in this document.

The policy was delivered to John T. McHugh on March 1, 1878, at which time the building was likely still under construction. The policy was likely updated as construction progress, which would have mimicked the deed related to the bonus operation. The total amount insured was $4,500.[61] Given that construction was underway when insurance coverage was procured, Policy No. 8190 was certainly a specialized version of the Contributionship's usual issuance. Upon completion of construction Policy No. 8190 was likely voided and Policy No. 8358 was issued for the completed building on November 6, 1879, transferring ownership from McHugh to Samuel Welsh, listed as Trustee.[62]

> A three story brick store and dwelling, about 18 feet front and 50 feet deep, a three story brick back building 14 feet 6 inches by 29 feet 6 inches.
>
> First story front. Plain shop front, wood cornice, scroll brackets. panels. pilasters & mouldings. one show window of glass 34 by 48 inches, four ditto 19 by 48 inches. wire guards. 7/4 folding sash doors. Each with one light & glass 14 inches by 4 foot-7 inches. transom sash. wire guards. moulded sub skirting. sash door at each end. Four lights of glass 10 by 20 inches. panel shutters. transom sash…[63]

In September 1879, 3612 Lancaster Avenue was transferred from Mitchell and McHugh by the sheriff to Samuel Welsh, a trustee of the Fennel Estate and thence on to Fanny Welsh, remaining in the Fennell family until the building was purchased by an outside party several years later.

James Irvin, a paper hanger, and his wife Amanda appear to have been the first tenants. In their thirties, the Irvin's subsidized their rent by operating an informal boarding house on the property, which included the following tenants: J.W. Gould, also a paper hanger; Logan G. Thayer, a railroad agent; Josie Lewis; Fannie Lewis, working at a drape manufactory; Minnie Lewis; and Frances F. Carr.

East view of 3612 Lancaster Avenue, 1951. Note new storefront is being completed.[64]
Courtesy of the City of Philadelphia.[65]

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[61] Ogden, Alfred. Policy No. 8190. The Philadelphia Contributionship. 1 March 1878.
[62] Ogden, Alfred. Policy No. 8358. The Philadelphia Contributionship. 6 November 1879.
[63] Ogden, Alfred. Policy No. 8190. The Philadelphia Contributionship. 1 March 1878.
[64] Balionis, Francis and Atheniasis T. Mallis. East View on Lancaster Avenue – From 3612 Lancaster Avenue. December 12, 1951, City of Philadelphia/DOR Archives, Philadelphia.
[65] Balionis, Francis and Atheniasis T. Mallis. East View on Lancaster Avenue – From 3612 Lancaster Avenue. December 12, 1951, City of Philadelphia/DOR Archives, Philadelphia.

By 1897, the Irvins had moved on and George H. and Lucy Hunt were in residence for a short time.[66] Another short-lived, but somewhat important tenancy, the Mobley family had taken over by 1899. English-immigrant, Edwin H. Mobley, then thirty-eight years old, had arrived in America in 1881 and, by this time, was living at 3612 Lancaster Avenue with his wife—Ida, a native of Pennsylvania and their children: Leah, Florence, Edwin, Jr., Lillian, and Emma. Like the Irvins, the Mobleys also took in boarders—Anna B. Layer, a seventy year old German-born immigrant; and Albert Harenberg, an aging locksmith.[67] Mobley appears to have used the storefront and the dwelling, selling graphophones—as well as bicycles, etc. Produced by the Hawthorne & Sheble Manufacturing Co. of Philadelphia, one of his sound machines included the Busy Bee Talking Machine—a cheaper, but affordable alternative to Victor, Columbia, and Edison. While in residence at 3612, Mobley not only sold the "Busy Bee," but also worked to improve the product and other such machines through various inventions that led him to file several patents over the years. Mobley had worked for the company on and off and had "pioneered" the use of "miracle metal" aluminum for reproducing diaphragms.

> It [Mobley's invention] proved to be a brilliant idea, as attested to by the fact that the final (and best) acoustic soundboxes from the late 1920s employed aluminum diaphragms. The Busy Bee soundbox was, like the rest of the instrument, quite simple, but very effective in the loud, full results it produced.[68]

While Mobley did not remain at this address for long, it appears that it was here that he patented his improvements to the phonograph and/or gramophone.

STOP THAT SCREECHING with a Mobley patent diaphragm in your phonograph or graphophone and get natural reproduction with double the volume. Dealers and 3612 Lancaster ave.

Advertisement for Mobley's new patent, August 1900.[69]

Issac Feinstein, known as commonly as "Ike," took ownership of 3612 Lancaster Avenue on August 19, 1908.[70] Emigrating from Russia in 1888 (also stated as 1890), the Russian-Jew was already a trained tailor by the time he was in residence and obviously purchased the building because of its configuration as a storefront dwelling. He and his wife Anna were Yiddish speakers, as were most Jews from Russia. Their household included three children: Adele, a stenographer; Isadore, a student; and Clara. Naturally, Feinstein operated his shop at the ground floor of the building.[71] Feinstein owned the property from the time of purchase in 1908 until his death in 1932, at which time it was transferred to his wife and would remain in the family until 1953, when the building was sold to James E. and Minnie Clark in 1953.

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[66] *Good Roads: Devoted to the Construction and Maintenance of Roads*, Volume 26. 1897.
[67] Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900. (NARA microfilm publication T624, 1,178 rolls). Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.
[68] The Busy Bee. www.phonophan.com.
[69] "STOP THAT SCREECHING," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. Philadelphia: August 1900.
[70] Thirteenth Annual Census of the United States, 1910 (NARA microfilm publication T624, 1,178 rolls). Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.
[71] Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920. (NARA microfilm publication T625, 2,076 rolls). Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.

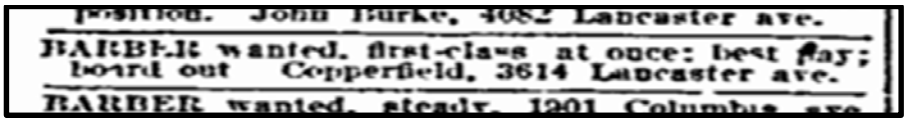
3614 Lancaster Avenue

In December 1879, 3614 Lancaster Avenue was transferred from Mitchell and McHugh by the sheriff to William Lambson, and thence, almost immediately, to the Penn Guarantee Association. The property would be held by the association until June 1886 when it was first sold to an outside party. Clarence P. Piers owed property from 1886 until the time of his own death, at which time it was will to Sallie G. Piers. However, it appears that the Piers owned the building as a rental property.

Since the turn of the twentieth century, the building appears to have been divided into at least three units—the shop, and two apartments.

> APARTMENTS, completely furnished, for housekeeping, may be had at moderate rent. Respectability absolutely maintained. Guarantee Apartment Co., 3614 Lancaster Avenue.[72]

The storefront at 3614 Lancaster Avenue was home to John Steck, Jr.'s barbershop by 1900. While he had been born in Louisiana, his mother was from Pennsylvania, as was his wife Cecelia R., at which time they were renting the entire building. All of their children had been born in Pennsylvania as well: Marie T., Margarette, John J., Jr. and Edward. Steck's brother Harry, an electrician, was also in residence.[73]



Advertisement from the *Philadelphia Inquirer* for John Steck Jr.'s Barber Shop at 3614 Lancaster Avenue.[74]

After Steck departed 3614 Lancaster Avenue, the house was divided into three apartments. Nellie E. Miller occupied the first apartment. A widow at twenty-eight, her children included Earl and Ethel, who were nine and five respectively. Living with the family as a boarder was Silas E. King, a blacksmith for a railroad company. George W. Mitchell, also a blacksmith for a railroad company, rented the second apartment. Mitchel was married to Alice with one daughter, Alma. The third apartment was rented by John W. Baldwin, a carpenter. His wife Minnie, his brother Clark and Clark's wife Mary were also in residence.[75]

Some occupants over time were more "respectable" than others. In 1912, Howard Waddell, then twenty-three years old, was living in one of the apartments. He was arrested and convicted of assault and battery on Lavina Kenny of 3610 Mt. Vernon Street. Judge Carr sentenced Waddell to nine months, which ended his time at 3614 Lancaster Avenue.[76] It was around this time that the property was purchased by Mary O'Hara in August 1912, having purchased 3616 Lancaster Avenue in 1911. O'Hara held the property until July 1920 at which time she sold it to James and Bridget McElhiney, her tenants next door.

By 1920, the tenants had changed. The first apartment was rented to Walter Strohm, having with him one lodger, Nellie Tentch. The second apartment was rented to Ralph Rogers, a milliner, and his wife Maud, having two children: La Mar and Herbert. The Rogers household even included Maud's mother, Margaret Hamson, also a milliner. The third apartment was rented to George W. Douglas, a horse dealer, and his

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[72] "Two nice rooms," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. 15 June 1902.
[73] Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900. (NARA microfilm publication T624, 1,178 rolls). Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.
[74] "Barber, wanted." *Philadelphia Inquirer*. Philadelphia, 2 December 1902
[75] Thirteenth Annual Census of the United States, 1910 (NARA microfilm publication T624, 1,178 rolls). Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.
[76] Annual Report of the Mayor of Philadelphia. Philadelphia: 1912.

wife Marie. George and Marie Douglas also took in at least one lodger, James H. Moore, a pork packer. The fourth apartment was rented to Ellis Weisman, a machine hand press operator, and his wife Susan, having one son, Harry, who was an errand boy for a large store. The fifth apartment was rented to James O'Brien, a teamster, and his wife Mary, a laundress.[77] The McElhineys owned the building until April 1957 when it was sold to Dunbar, Inc.

3616 Lancaster Avenue

In April 1883, 3616 Lancaster Avenue was transferred from Mitchell and McHugh by the Sheriff to the Penn Guarantee Association. Almost immediately afterwards, the building was purchased by Clarence Piers who would go on to purchase the adjacent building..

In 1880, the property appears to have been divided into two units. The first unit was occupied by Samuel Scull, a music teacher, and his wife Mary J, as well as their children: Alfred S., Samuel W. and Winnie. Scull took in one boarder at that time: Jacob L. Hehr, a hand in a flourmill. Living in the second unit was William Faulkner, an Oysterman, and his wife Maggie.[78] Another early occupant and/or business seems to have been the Draughtsman, Goodell & Waters Machine Shop, operated by Charles W. Phillips, Class of 1878, a graduate of the Worchester County Free Institute of Industrial Science.[79]

An Indiana transplant and baker journeyman, Hugh Perrell owned the property by 1900. One of the apartment appears to have been rented to James McElhiney a Massachusetts-transplant was also in residence with his wife Bridget and their five children: Mary, James H., Annie, Sarah, and Harry.

In 1900 Frank H Hauagut was living at 3616 Lancaster Avenue—likely in one of the apartments. He was a Polish emigrant to the United States.[80] In 1908, James and Bridget McElhiney purchased the property from the Piers.

By 1910, James McElhiney, still in residence, was listed as a sheet metal worker from Massachusetts, except now, he owned the building and his large family occupied the house with no boarders or apartments, as the sole occupants. Still married to Bridget, the household also included his children: Mary; Anna, a stenographer; Sarah, working in telegraphy; Harry, a sheet metal worker; and Catherine, also a stenographer. Apparently at least one of his children had issue, but had not married—Patricia and Lorraine McElhiney were their young grandchildren.[81] Sadly, it appears that the Sheriff transferred the house to the North Star B & L Association by June 1911, indicating that the house had been repossessed from the McElhineys. Swalling their pride, they moved next, purchasing that house nearly a decade later. 3616 Lancaster Avenue was then sold to Mary O'Hara a few weeks later in late June 1911. O'Hara owned the property for roughly ten years, selling it to the McElhineys in March 1921. The McElhineys maintained ownership of the property through the 1940s.

3618 Lancaster Avenue

In December 1879, 3618 Lancaster Avenue was transferred from Mitchell and McHugh by the sheriff to William Lambson, and thence, almost immediately, to the Penn Guarantee Association. The property

[77] Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920. (NARA microfilm publication T625, 2,076 rolls). Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.
[78] Tenth Census of the United States, 1880. (NARA microfilm publication T9, 1,454 rolls). Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.
[79] Annual Catalogue of the Worcester County Free Institute of Industrial Science. 1878.
[80] Sokol Americky. 1906.
[81] Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920. (NARA microfilm publication T625, 2,076 rolls). Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.

would be held by the association until May 1883, when it was first sold to an outside party. Levy Goldsmith appears to have owned the property April 1883 when it was purchased by Virginia Mackin. Mackin owned the property, likely as a rental, for nearly twenty years when it was sold to Albert E. Zackert in October 1906.

Aaron Grimes, a native-Pennsylvanian, was a shoemaker, which was housed in the storefront at 3618 Lancaster Avenue. By 1900, Grimes was 73 and his wife Mary was 71. The household included their grown children: Mary—a dressmaker; Della—a nurse in training; and Mary A. who lived in the house with her own family.[82] Mary A. Grimes was married to Henry C. Gormley, a "provision dealer," and had one son, J. Harold.[83]

3618 Lancaster Avenue had been divided into two apartments as early as 1910. Bart Flanagan, a brass polisher for a railroad company from Maine, rented the first apartment with his wife Dorah and their son George. The Flanagans had taken a family as lodgers—Benjamin F. Wright, a furniture packer, and his wife Ola. The second apartment was rented to a widow, Lynnie Burgess, and her three daughters: Jessie, Winifred, and Bessie. Her sister, Jessie Williams, was also in house.[84]

Additional apartments were carved out in about 1919 when the property changed hands once. The building was sold to Charles F. Mason and his wife Sarah in October 1919. They occupied the first unit. A native of Maryland, Charles F. Mason was the proprietor of a fish market—about forty-six years old at the time of purchase. Mason's unit included his wife Sarah and their daughter Margret. The second apartment was rented to Archie Murchison, a riveter, and his wife Marsha, having just one son: Daniel. Archie and Marsha Murchison immigrated to America from Canada in 1914 and from England in 1915, respectively. The third apartment was rented to William Robertson, a clerk in a plumbing supply house, then forty-eight, and his wife Violet, then twenty-six. William Robertson had emigrated from Canada in 1918. The fourth apartment was rented to Thomas Coulter, a machinist at a shipyard, and his wife Sarah.[85]

3620 Lancaster Avenue

In June 1878, 3620 Lancaster Avenue was transferred from Mitchell and McHugh by the Sheriff to Randolph E. Bender, and thence, almost immediately, to the Penn Guarantee Association. The property would be held by the association until January 1883 when it was sold to Clarence C. Converse and his wife Catherine, then in their thirties. The Converses owned and operated an upholstery business at the storefront of 3620 Lancaster Avenue. While it appears that the Converses occupied much of the building, they took in tenants here and there over the years. Even in 1880 a second apartment was prepared and rented to Thomas Windfield, a clerk in a dry goods house and his wife Mary—both native Pennsylvanians.[86] At times the apartment was vacant and at other times it was occupied. For example, in 1900, the second apartment was rented to Michael Call, an Irish immigrant and railroad Forman for the Pennsylvania Railroad, and his wife Annie, who were both in their fifties, having arrived in America in 1850 and 1853 respectively.

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[82] Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900. (NARA microfilm publication T624, 1,178 rolls). Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.
[83] "Gormley, Henry C." Boyd's Co-partnership and Residence Business Directory of Philadelphia. Philadelphia: 1900.
[84] Thirteenth Annual Census of the United States, 1910 (NARA microfilm publication T624, 1,178 rolls). Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.
[85] Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920. (NARA microfilm publication T625, 2,076 rolls). Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.
[86] Tenth Census of the United States, 1880. (NARA microfilm publication T9, 1,454 rolls). Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.

In June 1893, it appears that business wasn't going so well for the Converses as their house repossessed by the sherrif on behalf of the Mantua Building Association. That said, the Converses must have made good soon after, as they remained in residence until 1921, paying the Mantua Building Association on special terms all the while.

One of the Converses' last tenants was James Magee, who rented a room in the house. Magee was a listed artist, selling plaster busts via ads he placed in local newspapers.[87]

By 1910, the Converses have given up their tenants and are living alone in the house, remaining on the premises through 1920s. [88] In their early sixties, the Converses still ran the upholstery shop.[89] The Converses represent the traditional Philadelphia and/or European shopkeeper, renting at the same address for decades, establishing oneself, etc. The property changed hands several times in the early 1920s—going on to the Kellys in the 1920s-1940s, and then on to the Schwartzs in 1944.

3622 Lancaster Avenue

In June 1878, 3622 Lancaster Avenue was transferred from Mitchell and McHugh by the sheriff to J. Clayton Erb, and thence, almost immediately, to the William Lambson and on to the Penn Guarantee Association by December 1878. The property would be held by the association until December 1880 when it was first sold to an outside party. Charles S. Hansell purchased the property, owning it from 1880 to 1885, at which time he sold it to Moses A Johnson.

Shortly after its construction the building was leased to a Cattle Dealer—Joseph S. Chain, a forty-four year old native of Pennsylvania, and his wife Adelaide, then thirty-seven. By 1880, the Chains had four children: Mary, George, Joseph, and Ada. Joseph Chain also boarded his twenty-three year old nephew John W. Chain, who was a butcher. The Chains also took in non-familial boarders as well—Charles McCormick, a printer; Harry Hieffer, a dealer in provisions, and Jessie M. McIntyre, a servant were just a few.[90]

In the mid-1880s, the building was used partly as a loan office specializing in loans on unsettled estates and mortgages, a business that obviously took up very little space, but certainly adds to the varied history of the building's occupancy.[91] Moses Johnson likely just rented out the property and, eventually, sold it to Harriet B. Young in September 1890.

At least through the turn of the twentieth century, the building appears to have been a single-family home with a shop on the ground floor. In 1900, Matilda Frederick, a widowed housekeeper in her fifties, was head of the house. Her children included the following: Albert H., a "broommaker" in a factory; John H., a car carpenter for the Pennsylvania Railroad; Nellie; and Milton T., an apprentice to a printer. Frederick also took in boarders—Irish immigrant, Patrick Gallen, a "Team Driver;" and Lewis M. Coolbaugh, also

[87] American Art Annual. 1900.
[88] "Five First Class Paper Hangers." *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. 30 December 1921.
[89] Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920. (NARA microfilm publication T625, 2,076 rolls). Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.
[90] Tenth Census of the United States, 1880. (NARA microfilm publication T9, 1,454 rolls). Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.
[91] Advertisement. *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. 27 February 1885.

a broommaker, likely with young Mr. Frederick.[92] Even a barber had moved in by 1905, although just as a boarder, as he was seeking employment through advertisements placed in the Philadelphia Inquirer.[93]

East view of 3622 Lancaster Avenue, 1951. Note new storefront has been completed. Courtesy of the City of Philadelphia.[94]

Charles Stanley occupied the building with his family and a small army of lodgers as early as 1910. Married to Minnie, an English emigrant, Stanley's household included four children: Gladdis, Mable, Minnie, and Charles E. The five lodgers in residence included: John M. Kern, an organ builder; Annie Crouse; Cora Nuss; Mary B. Rice; and Martha S. Clapp.[95] Through the 1910s and 1920s the house went through several owners in a rapid succession.

By 1920, the building had been divided into four apartments. The first apartment was occupied by Francis J. Gallagher, a laborer on ironwork, and his wife Edna. The second apartment was occupied by Francesco and Bambino Marsilio--who bought and lost the property on more than one occasion. "Frank," a laborer on house wrecking and his wife emigrated from Italy in 1895 and 1906 respectively. The Marsilios must have either been packed in like sardines or occupied the largest apartment. Their seven children included Stella, Adeline, Rose, Aurther, Charles, Francis, and Austin. Also in house was Frank Marsilio's nephews—John Dessino, a machinist; and Ralph Dessino, as well as his niece Philemina Dessino, a spinner in a silk mill. The third apartment was occupied by Annie Gannon, a laundress, and her husband Owen, an Irish-born truck driver for an express company. The fourth apartment was occupied by John

[92] Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900. (NARA microfilm publication T624, 1,178 rolls). Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.
[93] "Barber." *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. 11 December 1905.
[94] Balionis, Francis and Atheniasis T. Mallis. East View on Lancaster Avenue – From 3622 Lancaster Avenue. December 12, 1951, City of Philadelphia/DOR Archives, Philadelphia.
[95] Thirteenth Annual Census of the United States, 1910 (NARA microfilm publication T624, 1,178 rolls). Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.

Gargan, an insurance agent, and his wife Florence. The Gargans were both emigrants, arriving from England in 1900 and Nova Scotia in 1905, respectively.[96]

3624 Lancaster Avenue

In June 1878, 3624 Lancaster Avenue was transferred from Mitchell and McHugh by the sheriff to J. Clayton Erb and thence William Lambson, and thence the Penn Guarantee Association. The property would be held by the association until December 1878 when it was sold to Charles T. Hansell, who used the building as a rental property.

Edgar Whitaker opened a small shop for groceries in the storefront of 3624 Lancaster Avenue in 1880, just after the building was completed. A New Jersey native, Whitaker had tried to make his way in Tennessee nearly a decade earlier, but soon returned to the Philadelphia area with his wife Anna and their three daughters: Lillie, Maggie, and Nellie.[97] Whitaker was also involved with the Board of Public Education in Philadelphia, serving on the Board of Directors for the Twenty-Fourth Ward.[98] By 1885, Cummings & Forgy, leather manufacturers, were located at 3624 Lancaster Avenue.[99] Between 1890 and 1897, the house passed through the hands of Mary McGonegle and on to Joseph R. Rhoads.

A young New York transplant, William H. Elliot was in residence at 3624 Lancaster Avenue by 1900.[100] His wife Della, a Pennsylvanian, as well as his mother Harriet, English-born, and his sister Jennie. It more than likely that all of them worked in Elliot's restaurant, which was a small business that he owned. To subsidize their rent, the Elliots took in boarders—father and son: Edward E. Gardner, a special officer;" and Edward H. Gardener, a general laborer.[101] One of the tenants appears to have hoped for a government job, advertising for employment, "institution; city or county," in 1904.[102]

A decade later, the building had been subdivided. The Elliots occupied the principal portion of the building. The second apartment was rented by George Jones, and his wife Lillian.[103]

Rhoads' ownership ended in 1917; however, the next owner, Elizabeth R. Taylor, didn't move in until 1920. After William Elliot died in the 1910s, Della lived at 3634 Lancaster Avenue with her four daughters: Edith, a labeler in a candy factory; Marie, a telephone operator; Edna; and Blanche, by 1920. The second apartment was occupied by George W. Jones, a bartender, and his wife Lillian. They took in boarders to subsidize their rent—William J. Graham, working in ornamental structural ironwork; Lillian E. Whelen, a waitress; and Maude Ewing, a bookkeeper.

3626 Lancaster Avenue

In June 1878, 3626 Lancaster Avenue was transferred from Mitchell and McHugh by the Sheriff to J. Clayton Erb to William Lambson, and thence, almost immediately, to the Penn Guarantee Association.

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[96] Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920. (NARA microfilm publication T625, 2,076 rolls). Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.

[97] Tenth Census of the United States, 1880. (NARA microfilm publication T9, 1,454 rolls). Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.

[98] First School District of Pennsylvania. Board of Public Education. Annual Report of the Board of Public Education. Philadelphia: 1881.

[99] Kelly. The Leather Trades. 1885.

[100] "Elliot, William H." *Boyd's Co-partnership and Residence Business Directory*. Philadelphia: 1900.

[101] Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900. (NARA microfilm publication T624, 1,178 rolls). Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.

[102] "Institution; city or county." *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. 13 May 1903

[103] Thirteenth Annual Census of the United States, 1910 (NARA microfilm publication T624, 1,178 rolls). Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.

The property would be held by the association until December 1878 when it was sold to Samuel S. Kohn, who sold the property to Andrew Moore the next year. The house was largely used as rental property by numerous owners over the years including Charles Hall, purchased in 1892; Horatio C. Wood, purchased in 1898; Herman Wene, purchased in 1919; and also Samuel Rosenthal, a 1919 purchase.

The earliest known residents at 3626 Lancaster Avenue were the Meads, who were in house by 1883. A native of Pennsylvania, Frank W. Mead had likely defied his family's wishes when he married Irish-immigrant Matilda. As a master moulder, Mead, then in his mid-fifties, provided for his wife and their five children: Georgianna; Andrew J., a compositer; James P., heaters and ranges; William B., a book keeper; and Warden.[104] Meade and his son James were both dealing in stoves and heaters by 1883.[105]

Meat and provisions appear to have been sold within the storefront by 1900.[106] Irish-immigrant Thomas Cox and his wife Sarah were renting the house with their children—Joseph M., a student at St. Joseph's College; Nellie W.; and Alphonsus M. The Coxes had one servant who lived in house—Ellen Barrett, a widowed Irish immigrant. The Coxes also took in one boarder, Mary A. Mulenaphy, also an Irish-born widow.[107] In 1905, Cox's business appears to have been doing well, as he advertised for "a butcher" and taking on additional hands was usually a sign of progress in a business of that size.[108] The butcher held out for a while; however, eventually a "cigar, candy, stationary store" occupied the premises, which was offered as "for sale" in April 1912.[109]

In 1916, Frank Marsilila, a laborer in house wrecking and his wife Babina, their seven children, Stella, Adeline, Rose, Aurther, Charles, Francis, and Austin, as well as their niece and nephews—Philemina, John and Ralph Dessino, were living at 3626 Lancaster Avenue. Agent W.F. H. of the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture's Dairy and Food Division had cited Marsilia on September 27, 1915 for selling distilled vinegar, colored for fermented syrup vinegar. The hearing had taken place on October 15, 1915.[110]

Through 1920, 3626 Lancaster Avenue remained a rental building and, by then, had also been divided into four apartments. The first apartment was occupied by Thomas S. King, a commercial salesman. The second apartment was occupied by Herbert Jenkins and his wife Ella. While Herbert was a structural iron worker, Ella trimmed ladies' hats. The third apartment was occupied by George G. Fish, a pipe fitter for the U.S. Marines and his wife Jane, having just one child: Charles B., the small apartment was fine. The fourth apartment was occupied by Harry Strizid, manager at a packing business, and his wife Bessie.[111]

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[104] Tenth Census of the United States, 1880. (NARA microfilm publication T9, 1,454 rolls). Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.
[105] Blodget, Lorin. Census of Manufacturers of Philadelphia. Philadelphia: 1883.
[106] "Cox, Thomas." *Boyd's Co-partnership and Residence Business Directory of Philadelphia*. Philadelphia: 1900.
[107] Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900. (NARA microfilm publication T624, 1,178 rolls). Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.
[108] "A Butcher..." *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. 9 January 1905.
[109] "Advertisement." *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. 14 April 1912.
[110] Monthly Bulletin on the Pennsylvania Department Agriculture. Harrisburg: Printing Office, 1916.
[111] Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920. (NARA microfilm publication T625, 2,076 rolls). Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.

Southeast corner of the 37th and Lancaster Avenue, 1951. Courtesy of the City of Philadelphia.[112]

3628 Lancaster Avenue

In June 1878, 3626 Lancaster Avenue was transferred from Mitchell and McHugh by the Sheriff to J. Clayton Erb to William Lambson, and thence, almost immediately, to the Penn Guarantee Association. The property would be held by the association until December 1878 when it was sold to Samuel S. Kohn, who sold the property to Andrew Moore the next year. The house was largely used as rental property by numerous owners over the years including Charles Hall, purchased in 1892; Horatio C. Wood, purchased in 1898; Herman Wene, purchased in 1919; and also Samuel Rosenthal, a 1919 purchase.

In 1880, Thomas Shank, a butcher, was operating his shop at 3628 Lancaster Avenue. He and his wife Mary M., as well as their children: Philena, Walter E., and Thomas, were all born in Pennsylvania. They rented the entire building, including the shop and took in one board to subsidize their rent—Rachael Boehm.[113]

A Spanish immigrant to Philadelphia, the fifty-four year old Sautiago J. Coll, a cigar manufacturer, was operating a cigar shop on the premises by 1900. Coll was married to Katie, a native of Maryland and the couple was renting the house and shop at 3628 Lancaster Avenue. Living with them was their son Jose, a cigar salesman; Margaruite; and Walter. A cigar shop appears to have occupied the shop in 1900. The cigar business must have been less lucrative than Coll might have liked as the family had taken in four boarders—Alexander Work, a broommaker; Charles Williams, a blacksmith; Martin Sheehan, also a broommaker, and Charles McCue, a clerk for the Pennsylvania Railroad.[114]Tenants came and went over

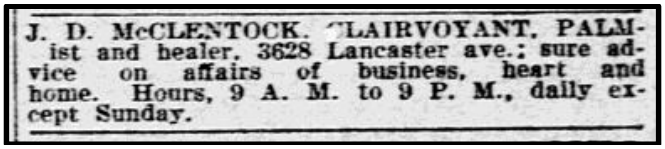
[112] Balionis, Francis and Atheniasis T. Mallis. Southeast Corner-37th Street and Lancaster Avenue. December 12, 1951, City of Philadelphia/DOR Archives, Philadelphia.
[113] Tenth Census of the United States, 1880. (NARA microfilm publication T9, 1,454 rolls). Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.
[114] Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900. (NARA microfilm publication T624, 1,178 rolls). Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.

the years, requiring Coll to advertise, "two nice rooms."[115] Female tenants advertised their services for private families and/or houses over the years as well.[116]

Coll & Co., as Coll's business was known officially, was located at both 3628 Lancaster Avenue and 251 North Ninth Street.[117] By 1904, the business was known as Santiago J. Coll's Son.[118] Apparently, Coll was not easily turned off by diversity among his tenants, as J.D. McClentock, a "clairvoyant, palmist and healer" was in residence by April 1905, placing several advertisements in the newspaper.[119]

A glimpse of 3628 Lancaster Avenue on left of its subject neighbor, circa 1839. Courtesy of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

By the 1910s it appears that several vendors were using the property. The Uneeda Paper & Metal Co. was operating at 3628 Lancaster Avenue, selling "...Furniture, Carpets, Stoves, and Rugs."[120] In residence during that period were several related parties living in the same house. Dennis Orourke, a broommaker at a factory, and his wife Sarah, keeper of a candy store, were head of the house. Orourke's daughter Carrie had married Walter Francis, also a broommaker, and had one child Sarah M. Other relatives Mertie Bowden, a candy maker in a factory, and Lizzie Hancock were also on the premises. Also in house were two other relatives: Harry Hancock, a railroad worker, and his brother Jessie, an errand boy in a store. Two boarders also occupied the house: James J. Halpin, a laborer for a railroad company, and his brother Aloisus, a machinist for a railroad company.[121] In 1918, *White-Orr's Reference Register* listed Gross Morris at 3628 Lancaster Avenue, selling "bottlers supplies."[122]

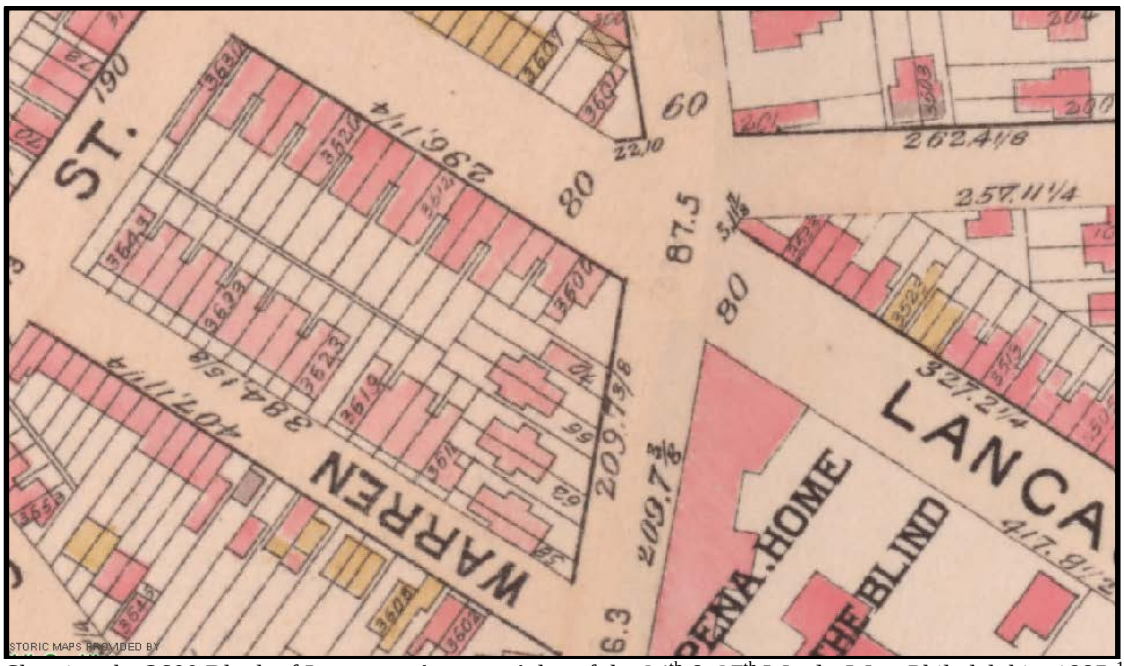

J. D. McCLENTOCK. CLAIRVOYANT. PALMist and healer. 3628 Lancaster ave.: sure advice on affairs of business, heart and home. Hours, 9 A. M. to 9 P. M., daily except Sunday.

Advertisement for J.D. McClentock, Clairvoyant, Palmist and Healer.[123]

Mollie Wene, then twenty-nine years old, first generation America, and off Russian-Jewish origin, was listed as the head of her household in 1920 with her husband Herman next in line. He sold second hand furniture. She apparently owned the building, having subdivided it into four small apartments. She and

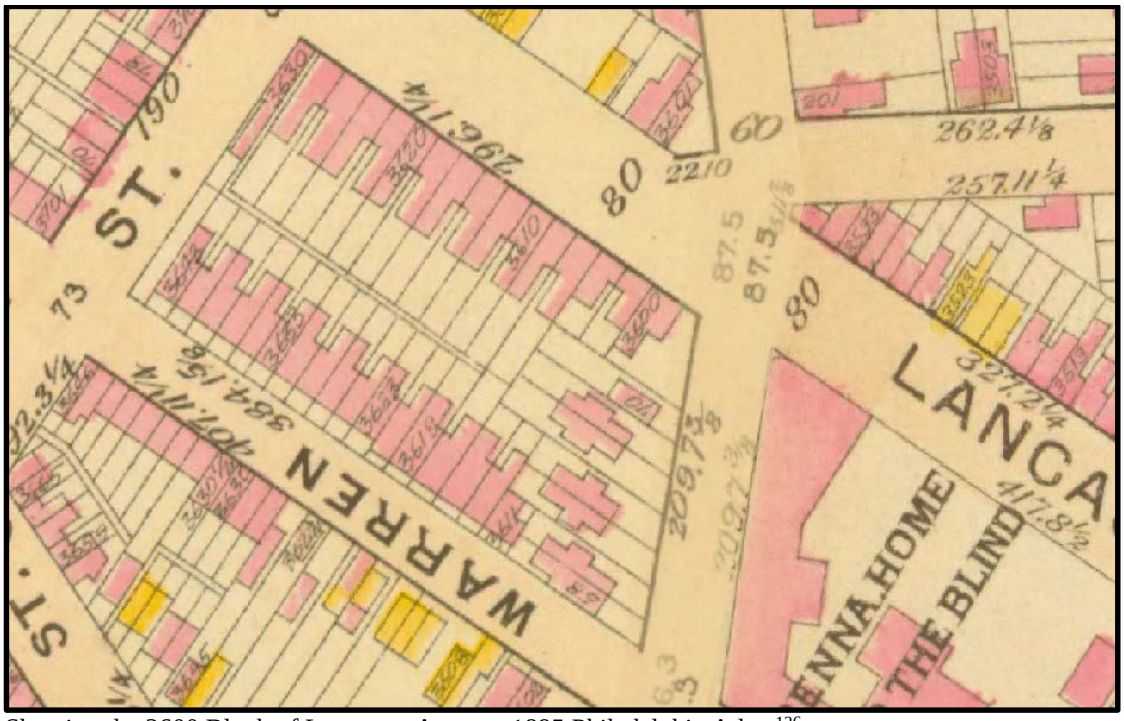
[115] "Two nice rooms," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. 15 June 1902.
[116] "Waiting services for rent." *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 14 February 1904
[117] Philadelphia Board of Trade. *Annual Report*, Volume 68-71.
[118] "Coll, James." *Boyd's Co-partnership and Residence Business Directory of Philadelphia*. Philadelphia: 1904.
[119] "J.D. McClentock, Clairvoyant, Palmist and Healer." *Philadelphia Inquirer*. 5 April 1905.
[120] Advertisement. *Friends' Intelligencer*, Volume 75. Philadelphia: 1918.
[121] Thirteenth Annual Census of the United States, 1910 (NARA microfilm publication T624, 1,178 rolls). Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.
[122] "Gross Morris." *White-Orr's Reference Register*. Philadelphia: 1918.
[123] "J.D. McClentock, Clairvoyant, Palmist and Healer." *Philadelphia Inquirer*. 5 April 1905.

Herman occupied one apartment with their two children: Pauline and Alvin. The second apartment was occupied by John J. Schlechter, a marine machinist, and his wife Margret. The third apartment was occupied by Edward Plucker, a polisher, and his wife Anna. The fourth apartment was occupied by Russell Estell, a brick mason, and his wife Agnes.[124]

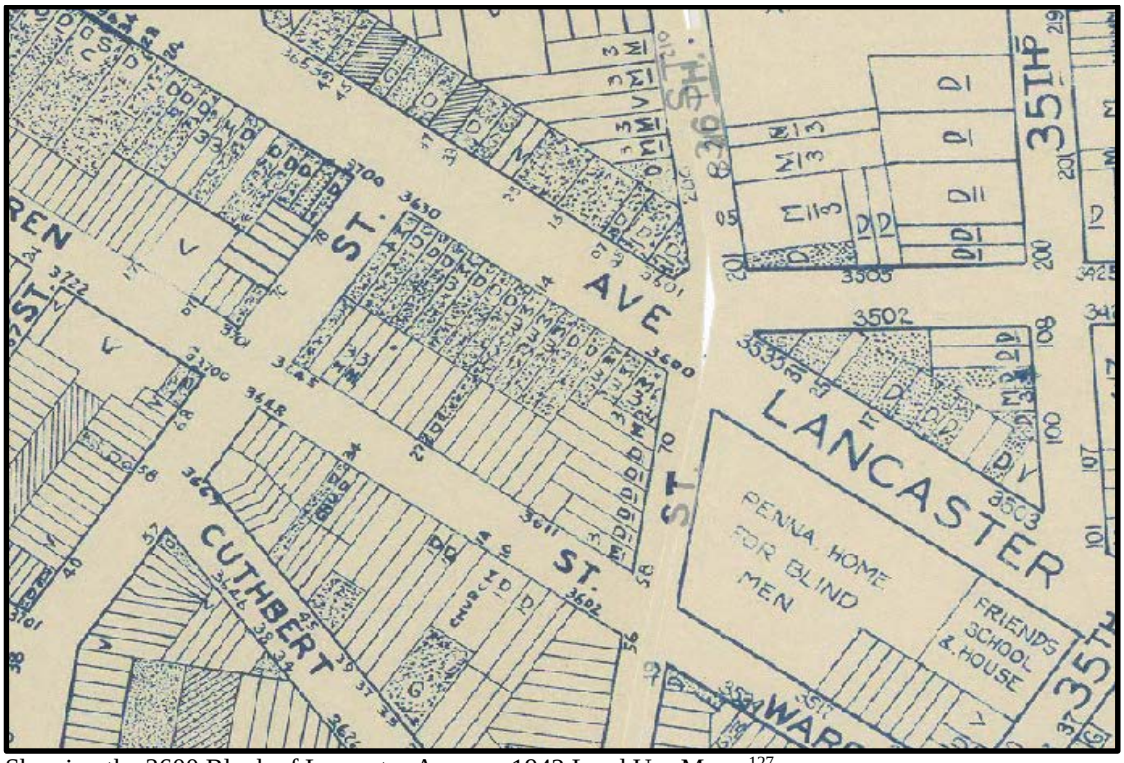


Showing the 3600 Block of Lancaster Avenue, Atlas of the 24th & 27th Wards, West Philadelphia, 1885.[125]

[124] Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920. (NARA microfilm publication T625, 2,076 rolls). Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.
[125] Bromley, George W. and Walter S. Atlas of the City of Philadelphia. Philadelphia: G.W. Bromley and Co., 1885.

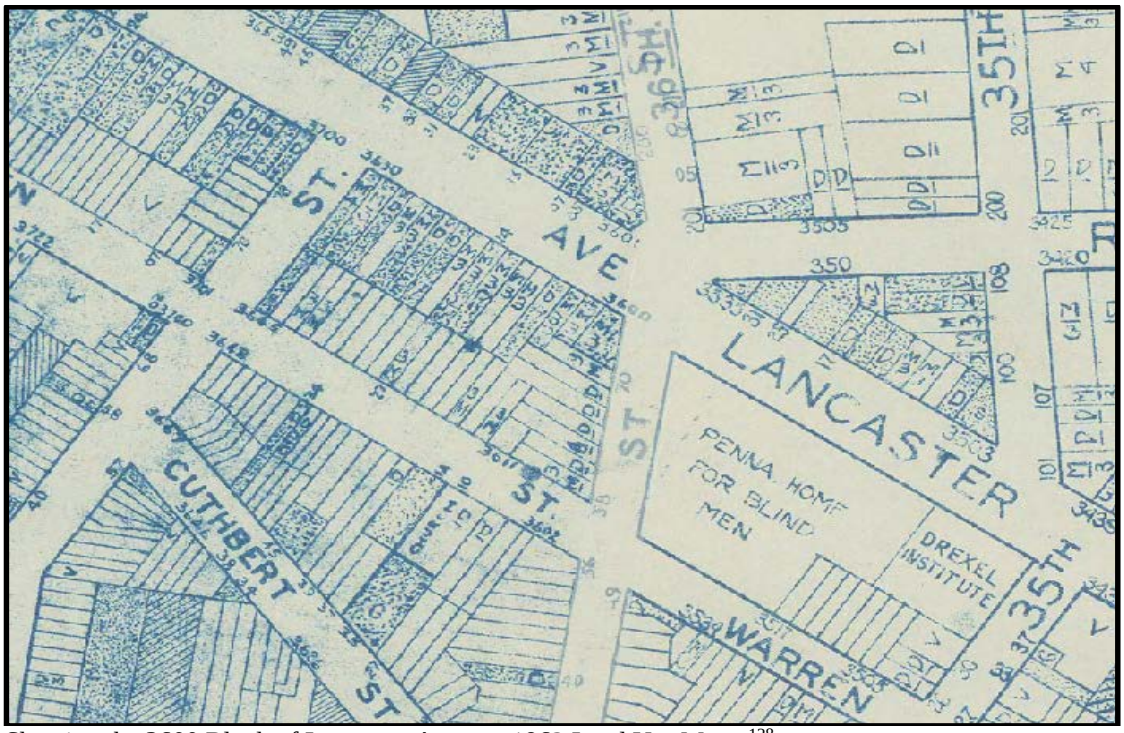


Showing the 3600 Block of Lancaster Avenue, 1895 Philadelphia Atlas.[126]



Showing the 3600 Block of Lancaster Avenue, 1942 Land Use Maps.[127]

[126] Bromley, George W. and Walter S. Atlas of the City of Philadelphia. Philadelphia: G. W. Bromley and Co., 1895.
[127] Federal Works Progress Administration of Pennsylvania. Philadelphia Land Use Map, 1942. Pennsylvania: 1942



Showing the 3600 Block of Lancaster Avenue, 1962 Land Use Maps.[128]

[128] Federal Works Progress Administration of Pennsylvania. Philadelphia Land Use Map, 1962. Pennsylvania: 1962

Conclusion

The applicant maintains that 3612-28 Lancaster Avenue is a significant historic site that merits designation by the Philadelphia Historical Commission and inclusion on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The larger neighborhood is listed in the NRHP as part of the Powelton Village Historic District and 3612-28 Lancaster Avenue is a row of nine attached storefront dwellings that contribute to the district. Furthermore, 3612-28 Lancaster Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation A, H, and J, as enumerated in Section 14-1004 of the Philadelphia Code. 3612-28 Lancaster Avenue:

(a) Has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City of Philadelphia, representing the bonus building system's important influence on real estate development in Philadelphia, emerging after the ground rent estate system had been legislated into obscurity;

(f) Contains elements of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation, representing both a storefront type and a type of development of storefront dwellings that define a building type that emerged after the Civil War as a new normality;

(h) Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community, or City; and, Commonwealth, as a purpose-designed row of nine storefront dwellings that retain shop fenestrations at the ground floor and residential occupancy above; and as an intact row of storefront dwellings in a neighborhood that has lost much of its commercial architecture to institutional and pro-profit development;

(j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community, as a row of nine storefront dwellings designed for shopkeepers to occupy in commercial and residential capacities, but also representing an evolved storefront design and type to meet the changing cultural and social conditions of the late nineteenth century. Furthermore, under Criterion J, 3612-28 Lancaster Avenue also represents the economic conditions and history of the local community, as well as the cultural diversity that had emerged in Philadelphia in the post-Civil War period through the late nineteenth century.

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