

**THE MINUTES OF THE 635TH STATED MEETING OF THE
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

**FRIDAY, 10 JULY 2015
ROOM 18-029, 1515 ARCH STREET
SAM SHERMAN, CHAIR**

PRESENT

Sam Sherman Jr., chair
Anuj Gupta, Esq.
Dominique Hawkins, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP
Rosalie Leonard, Esq., Office of City Council President
Melissa Long, Office of Housing & Community Development
John Mattioni, Esq.
Sara Merriman, Commerce Department
Laura Spina, Philadelphia City Planning Commission
Robert Thomas, AIA
Betty Turner, M.A.

Jonathan E. Farnham, Executive Director
Randal Baron, Historic Preservation Planner III
Kim Broadbent, Historic Preservation Planner I
Laura DiPasquale, Historic Preservation Planner I

ALSO PRESENT

Danny Smith, Loews Hotel
Robert Powers, Powers & Co.
Shahied Dawan, Universal Companies
Matthew Hill, UMASS Amherst
Anthony Boccella
Jose Hernandez, JKR Partners
Dan Sawron
Mary Winn, Holy Name Parish
Marcus Iannozi, South Street West Business Association
Catherine Smeykal, Philadelphia City Planning Commission
Mark Scott, South of South Street Neighborhood Association
Jeff Kurtz, Dranoff Properties
Tom Brubaker, Loews Hotel
Matt Levinson, South Street West Business Association
Regina Parisi
Annette Nixon
Linda Jakubowski
Janet Gilderman
John Masiejczyk
Joseph A. Jankowski
Deacon John G. Boyle, Holy Name Church
Father John Sibel, Holy Name Parish
Bobby Allyn, WHY/NPR
Regina McClerlmy
Ed McClerlmy
Andrew Coulters, Spirit News
Ben Altman, Allied Construction

Chris Deed, Loews Hotel
Dorothy Pilz
Johanna Colfer
Dot Correl
Kate Gabor
Bark Schwarz
Linda Rettershoffer
Celeste Morello
Barbara J. Di Cesare
Kimberly Miller
Kathryn Tiscales
Linda Thompson
Marie Gaul
Frank T. Brzozowski
Vincent J. Lipczpaski
Michael Phillips, Esq., Obermayer, Rebmann, Maxwell & Hipple
Samuel Lieberman
James Zameska
Deborah Gribben-Zameska
Paul Morawski
Richard Thom
Carolyn Devine
Ava Devine
Charles Valentine
A.J. Thomson, Esq.
Emily Cooperman
Katherine Scott, 6ABC
Kevin McMahon, Powers & Co.
Joel Darras, O'Donnell & Naccarato
Justin M. Spivey, Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates
David S. Traub, AIA, Save Our Sites
Lori Salganicoff, Chestnut Hill Historical Society
Michael Greenle
Brendan Flynn, The Flynn Company
Jerry Roller, JKR Partners
Gene Lynam
Maribeth Boyle, Archdiocese of Philadelphia
Brian Wentz, Keast & Hood
Peter Obst, Poles in America Foundation
Meg Sowell, Real Estate Strategies, Inc.
Stephen Kazanjian, Real Estate Strategies, Inc.
Thomas Chapman, Esq., Blank Rome
Philip Chen, Ann Beha Architects
Harvey Levin, Keystone Appraisal Co.
Leon Chudzinski, Allied Construction
Daryl Carrington, JDavis Architects
Deborah Seitz, JDavis Architects
Jeff Pastva, JDavis Architects
Bob Nussean, JDavis Architects
Julie Motl, Julie Motl, Architect
Stephen Mileto, QB3
Patrick Grossi, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia

Gregory Hanson, Style Limited Partnership
Matt McClure, Esq., Ballard Spahr
Cindy Hamilton, Heritage Consulting
David Guest, Esq., Ballard Spahr
Patrick Hoban, Philadelphia Sign Co.
Oscar Beisert
Nick Cinalli, T&M Associates
Peter Angelides, ESI
Ashley Hahn, PlanPhilly
Leonard Reuter, Esq.
Susan Feenan
Deborah M. Majka
Andrew Palewski
Michael Blichasz
Steve Tawa, KYW
Brenna D. Kelly

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Sherman, the chair, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Commissioners Gupta, Hawkins, Leonard, Long, Mattioni, Merriman, Spina, Thomas, and Turner joined him.

MINUTES OF THE 634TH STATED MEETING OF THE PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

ACTION: Ms. Turner moved to adopt the minutes of the 634th Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission, held 12 June 2015. Ms. Leonard seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

THE REPORT OF THE ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE, 23 JUNE 2015

Dominique Hawkins, Chair

CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. Farnham introduced the consent agenda and explained that it included applications for 219 Carpenter Street, 1827 Porter Street, 2416 Pine Street, 2106 Locust Street, and 130 S. Front Street. Mr. Sherman asked if any Commissioners had comments on the Consent Agenda. No one offered comments. Mr. Sherman asked if the audience had comments on the Consent Agenda. No one offered comments.

ACTION: Ms. Merriman moved to adopt the recommendations of the Architectural Committee for the applications for applications 219 Carpenter Street, 1827 Porter Street, 2416 Pine Street, 2106 Locust Street, and 130 S. Front Street. Ms. Turner seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

AGENDA

THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL HARDSHIP, 30 JUNE 2015

Sam Sherman, Chair

ADDRESS: 1524-34 SOUTH ST

Project: Demolish historic building except façade, restore façade, construct four-story building

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Universal Community Homes

Applicant: Thomas Chapman, Blank Rome LLP

History: 1920; Royal Theater; Frank E. Hahn, architect

Individual Designation: 9/7/1978

District Designation: None

Preservation Easement: Yes

Staff Contact: Jon Farnham, jon.farnham@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval of the restoration and construction aspects of the application, pursuant to Standards 6 and 9, provided the Historical Commission finds that the building cannot be used for any purpose for which it is or may be reasonably adapted, pursuant to §14-1005(6)(d).

COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL HARDSHIP RECOMMENDATION: Ms. Hawkins moved that the Committee on Financial Hardship recommend that the Historical Commission find that the building at 1524-34 South Street cannot be used for any purpose for which it is or may be reasonably adapted, pursuant to §14-1005(6)(d) of the Philadelphia Code. The owner has demonstrated that the sale of the property is impracticable, that commercial rental cannot provide a reasonable rate of return, and that other potential uses of the property are foreclosed. Furthermore, pursuant to Section 9.4 of the Historical Commission's Rules & Regulations, the applicant has satisfied the affirmative obligation in good faith to attempt the sale of the property, to seek tenants for it, and to explore potential reuses for it. Mr. Thomas seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to demolish all but the front façade of the Royal Theater at 1524-34 South Street and construct a mixed-use, retail and residential building on the lot behind the façade and on adjacent lots. The application claims that the building cannot be used for any purpose for which it is or may be reasonably adapted. In other words, the application claims that the forced retention of the building would induce a financial hardship on the owner.

The Historical Commission individually designated the Royal Theater in 1978. The theater is not located in a historic district and no interior spaces in the building have been designated as historic. The Historical Commission has jurisdiction over the exterior envelope of the building and its site.

The Royal Theater consists of a lobby on South Street and an auditorium at the rear extending back to Kater Street. The front façade is brick with stone and metal accents. The side and rear facades are unornamented brick. The building is in very poor condition. Water and vegetation have severely damaged the exterior. All interior finishes, fixtures, and features have been lost.

This application proposes to demolish all but the front façade and construct a new building behind and beside it. The historic façade would be restored. Infilled openings would be reopened and new doors and windows matching the historic would be installed. Masonry and metalwork would be restored. The new building would be two stories on South Street to the east and west of the historic façade and four stories behind the historic façade. The new facades along South Street would be primarily glass with brick and stone veneer with the upper, setback

facades clad in cementitious panels. The new building would be four stories along Kater and clad in brick and cementitious panels. The windows in the new construction would be metal.

Section 1005(6)(d) of the historic preservation ordinance prohibits the Historical Commission from approving demolitions unless it finds that the demolition is necessary in the public interest, or that the building cannot be used for any purpose for which it is or may be reasonably adapted. In order to show that building cannot be used for any purpose, the owner must demonstrate that the sale of the property is impracticable, that commercial rental cannot provide a reasonable rate of return, and that other potential uses of the property are foreclosed. Section 9.4 of the Commission's Rules & Regulations elaborates, stating that the applicant has an affirmative obligation in good faith to attempt the sale of the property, to seek tenants for it, and to explore potential reuses for it.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Farnham presented the application to the Historical Commission. Attorney Tom Chapman, property owner's representative Shahied Dawan, developer Jeff Kurtz, engineer Brian Wentz, architect Darryl Carrington, consultant Peter Angelides, appraiser Harvey Levin, contractor Leon Chudzinski, and preservation consultant Robert Powers represented the application.

Mr. Farnham explained that the Historical Commission's financial hardship consultants have analyzed the application and will present their results. On June 23, the Architectural Committee reviewed the application. It deferred to the Committee on Financial Hardship on the hardship aspects of the application, but recommended approval of the restoration and construction aspects of the application, pursuant to Standards 6 and 9, provided the Historical Commission finds that the building cannot be used for any purpose for which it is or may be reasonably adapted, pursuant to §14-1005(6)(d). On June 30, the Committee on Financial Hardship reviewed the application and recommended that the Historical Commission find that the building at 1524-34 South Street cannot be used for any purpose for which it is or may be reasonably adapted, pursuant to §14-1005(6)(d) of the Philadelphia Code.

Mr. Chapman introduced himself and his application team to the Commission. He explained that the Preservation Alliance holds an easement on the building and must also review the project for approval. He noted that the project is also subject to Civic Design Review as well as consideration by the Planning Commission. He stated that a City Council bill authorized the zoning changes necessary for this project to obtain by-right zoning. He stated that his team has worked closely with the civic and business organizations in the area. The plans represent a collaborative effort with surrounding stakeholders. The current proposal may be the last hope to save the historic façade. Many proposals have been developed for the Royal Theater over the last 20 years, but none have come to fruition. The building has deteriorated to a point where the front façade is the only portion of the building that can be saved.

Mr. Carrington, the applicant's architect, stated that his goals are to preserve and celebrate the historic building and to complete and enhance the contexts on South and Kater Streets. He explained that they will restore the front façade using original architectural drawings and evidence at the building including original windows. Mr. Carrington introduced the Committee to the site, which runs from South to Kater Street. He explained that the first floor will be used for retail and the upper floors for residential. The residential space will be set back from South Street. The South Street facades adjacent to the historic façade will be steel and glass, to differentiate them from the historic façade, and will be set back 18 inches from the historic façade. The building above the retail is T-shaped in plan, with the base of the T at the historic façade. The returns at the edges of the historic façade will be brick to give the façade a sense of volume, presence, and stability. The upper floors of the residential space will be set back from

the front façade. The residential space is three stories in height, above the ground-floor retail. He stated that all of the floors will align with the openings in the historic façade. Kater Street is narrow. The Kater Street façade will be in scale and proportion with the surrounding buildings. The Kater façade will be set back six feet and have planters and balconies. The shallow bay windows give the façade the scale of a row house.

Mr. Dawan provided a history of the property including Universal's efforts to redevelop and maintain the Royal Theater. Mr. Dawan reported that, in 2000, Universal purchased the Royal from the Preservation Alliance. At that time, the property had been vacant for 30 years; it has now been vacant for 45 years. Mr. Dawan explained that Universal, which is run by Kenny Gamble, attempted on several occasions to redevelop the Royal as an entertainment venue. He stated that they sought to redevelop it as a dinner theater, screening room, movie theater, and other entertainment spaces. He stated that, in every case, they realized that they could not feasibly redevelop it without significant public subsidies. He explained that, during its ownership, Universal has spent about \$500,000 maintaining the building. He noted that that number does not include Universal's staff time, but only cash paid out. They have also invested thousands of staff hours in the maintenance. He reported that Universal first approached the Historical Commission regarding financial hardship about 2012, but was directed that they needed to try to sell the building before a claim of hardship could be considered. Mr. Dawan explained that Universal hired a realtor and placed the building on the market. Universal received some offers on the property, but none of the buyers proceeded to closing because they could not develop a feasible project for the property. In 2013, Universal partnered with Dranoff Properties to seek a new redevelopment project for the site. Universal and Dranoff have put together a project that satisfies the neighbors and works with the neighborhood. Mr. Chapman pointed out that the materials at Tab 6 in the application document Universal's many efforts to redevelop the property. Mr. Sherman asked Mr. Chapman to approximate Universal's total investment in the property to date. Mr. Chapman responded that Universal has spent about \$750,000 to date. Mr. Dawan stated that it was always Universal's intent to redevelop the property, not simply speculate on it. He added that Universal is a non-profit corporation, which has constructed hundreds of units of affordable housing.

Mr. Wentz, a structural engineer, stated that the building has been in deteriorated condition for many years. He reported that he did his first assessment of it in 2013. He assessed it again in 2015. Vegetation has done significant damage to the building. It has deteriorated mortar joints and needs 100% pointing. There are many cracks on the exterior façade. The walls are deteriorated. The roof trusses are delaminated and in bad condition. The extent of the corrosion is unknown. There are concrete steel beams and floors in the front of the building. The steel is corroded, causing the concrete to spall and crack. The reinforcement is exposed. It has deteriorated parapets. The southeast corner of the building has been rebuilt. Water infiltration is leading to more deterioration. The building is in very poor condition. Mr. Chapman noted that the engineer's report is preliminary and a more complete inspection would likely disclose numerous other problems and reveal that the building is in much worse condition. Mr. Wentz agreed. Mr. Wentz stated that the roof trusses are likely in very poor condition. Repairs would likely be extensive.

Mr. Angelides documented the bases and results of his financial hardship analysis with a Powerpoint presentation. He stated that he is a financial consultant and a professor at the University of Pennsylvania. He presented his conclusion first: "There is no use to which the Royal Theater may be reasonably adapted given the cost of renovations and the revenues that can be expected by those uses."

Mr. Angelides explained that he considered seven alternative adaptive reuses for the building and calculated the cost to renovate for the uses with all by-right subsidies and the revenue generated by those projected uses. He considered the following reuse scenarios: retail, single-screen movie theater, two-screen movie theater, live performance venue, residential, mixed-use retail and residential, and mixed-use retail and commercial. He stated that he compared the cost to undertake each of the projects with the value created by undertaking those projects. In every case, he concluded that one would be creating significantly negative value, meaning that the project would not be financially feasible. He stated that the building is a big box in poor condition that is very difficult to reuse.

Mr. Angelides explained his methodology. He first determined what kinds of uses might work, given the space, location, zoning, and other factors. He stated that he considered every conceivable use that makes sense. He conducted interviews with brokers and others knowledgeable about real estate in the area. He also conducted his own independent research. He investigated comparable venues and determined costs, revenues generated, etc. for them. He then developed economic models for the various potential uses. He stated that he used construction cost estimates generated by Allied Construction. He stated that he considered incentives such as federal and state historic rehabilitation tax credits. He did include a tax abatement in his modeling. He stated that he tried to be completely realistic in his assumptions. He stated that he did sensitivity analyses to test his assumptions. He stated that he assumed that the improvements could be financed with a bank loan, but that is probably not a realistic assumption based on the revenues forecast to be generated.

He stated that the reuse scenarios were predicated on the fact that the building is a large box that is located at the middle of a block. The building has five-foot-wide alleys on each side. The property does not include the vacant lots on either side, which are separate parcels.

Mr. Angelides stated that the cost to reuse the Royal Theater ranges from about \$9 to \$13 million. He discussed the retail scenario first. He stated that retail likes to be located on corners with wide street frontages. Retail likes deep properties, but not too deep, like this one. He explained that the current South Street West retailers are primarily smaller shops, about 2,000 sf, not the 9,000 sf of the Royal. They are local stores, with very few national brands. He stated that the foot traffic was not likely to attract a large retailer. It has an undesired interior décor and a sloping floor. It is a larger space than most retailers want and it is a deeper space than most want. It is not on Chestnut or Walnut Street. It is not attractive to national retailers. Mr. Angelides stated that asking rents for retail space in this area are mostly in the \$20s. He stated that, after speaking with brokers in the area, he used \$25 as a reasonable per square foot rental rate. Based on that rate and a triple-net lease, the space would produce about \$250,000 annually. Operating income would be about \$200,000 per year. That income would not support more than \$9 million in redevelopment costs. The net present value would be significantly negative. There would be no return. The net value of the retail project would be significantly negative, about -\$6.6 million.

Mr. Angelides then described the potential movie theater projects, 400 seats for single-screen theater and 175 seats each for a double-screen theater. Single-screen theaters are generally not being constructed these days; it is not a viable for-profit business model. Likewise two- and four-screen theaters are not being built. Movie theaters in Philadelphia have many more screens. He stated that the movie-ticket revenue per screen ranges from about \$160,000 to \$600,000 and the average is about \$400,000. Most of that revenue goes to the movie studios. Most of the money is made on the concessions. Concession revenue is generally about half of ticket sales. The single-screen revenue would be about \$0.75 million; the two-screen would be

about \$0.5 million per screen. Net income from the theaters would be about \$100,000 and \$400,000 respectively. That income is not enough to justify the cost of development.

Mr. Angelides then discussed his analysis of a live performance venue. He stated that the Royal could not accommodate large productions owing to loading difficulties, but could allow for the staging of smaller shows. He stated that he considered various arrangements for the venue including flexible seating with chairs only or round tables. It would accommodate limited types of performances owing to the small size. Also, several local theaters are currently facing or have succumbed to financial difficulties including the Prince Music Theater and Suzanne Roberts Theater. Mr. Angelides displayed the results of his analysis of the Royal as a performance venue and concluded that such a project was not financially feasible.

Next, Mr. Angelides considered a residential development. He stated that one could create three floors of residential units in the existing building. The building would require significant rehabilitation to be used for residential. The building and site are not conducive to residential. The building is oddly shaped for a residential development. One would need to create many windows on the side facades and those windows would face onto party walls because the property only includes five feet of open space on each side of the building. The residential space would not be highly desirable and the building would include some space that would not generate revenue, but would still require investment. The Royal is situated an ideal residential neighborhood. A fully rehabilitated Royal is estimated to attract yearly rents of \$21 per square foot. He stated that such a project would not be financially viable. He stated that he tested the model by adjusting the rent from \$21 to \$28 per square foot at the request of the Historical Commission's consultant and found that the project would still not be financially viable by a significant margin.

Next, Mr. Angelides considered a mixed-use, retail and residential development with one floor of retail and one of residential. He stated that the retail would rent for \$25 per square foot and the residential for \$21. It too is not feasible, as his analysis showed. Mr. Angelides stated that the numbers were very similar for a mixed-use, retail and commercial development with offices on the upper floor. It, too, would not be financially feasible. He stated that, in summary, there is no use to which the Royal Theater may be reasonably adapted given the cost of renovations and the revenues that can be expected by those uses. No scenario comes close to being financially viable.

Mr. Chapman stated that he has other team members in attendance today, but will not call them to testify unless requested by the Commission. Mr. Chapman summarized that the evidence presented demonstrates that there is no feasible reuse for the Royal Theater. He stated that the current development proposal offers the best possible balance, restoration of the historic front façade and the return of the site to productive use. He stated that the project has received unanimous support from the civic association, business association, near neighbors, City Planning Commission, and City Council person. He asked the Commission to approve the project.

Mr. Sherman called on the Commission's consultants to present their findings. Meg Sowell introduced herself and her colleague Stephen Kazanjian. She stated that they were retained by the Historical Commission to review the application and assess its claims. She stated that they analyzed all of the documents submitted in the application, inspected the building inside and out as well as the adjoin lots and the surrounding neighborhood, interviewed the applicants including Peter Angelides and Jeff Kurtz, and they modeled alternate scenarios with Mr. Angelides. She stated that they conducted interviews with representatives of the Preservation Alliance, South of South Street Neighborhood Association, South Street West Business

Association, and Center City Residents Association. She stated that they spoke with other developers. During every conversation, they asked about potential reuses for the building, but no one ever offered a viable reuse. She stated that they explored all of the reuses that had been considered since 1998. She noted that numerous parties had considered numerous reuses since 1998, but none of them had proved viable. People have tried very hard to reuse the building, but to no avail, she observed. She stated that they tested all of the assumptions in Econsult's analyses of the potential reuses for the property. Ms. Sowell concluded that their independent analyses resulted in an independent determination that there is no financially feasible reuse for the building. Redevelopment of the Royal is just not financially feasible without significant public subsidies. Ms. Sowell stated that, in addition to their independent analysis, which produced no feasible reuses, no one they interviewed was able to suggest a feasible reuse. She stated that everything that might work had been tried to no avail. The income that can be produced is not sufficient to cover any rehabilitation and operation. The value of a completed project would be -\$6.6 to -\$12.8 million, depending on reuse scenario.

Ms. Sowell introduced her colleague, Mr. Kazanjian. He stated that they tested all of the numbers used in the Econsult analyses. He explained that they discovered that the Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission had provided a \$50,000 grant for work on the building. Therefore, he directed Econsult to reduce the costs in the analyses by \$50,000. The revision did not change the results. Mr. Kazanjian stated that he analyzed the potential rents in the area and concluded that a rehabilitated Royal might command residential rents higher than the \$21 per square foot number used by Econsult. Therefore, he directed Econsult to increase the rents in the analyses to \$28. Econsult implemented the revision. That revision, too, produced no significant change in the results, which remained negative. Mr. Kazanjian reported that he asked Econsult to model a different retail-residential configuration with a small retail space and three floors of residential. That proposal also produced negative results. Mr. Kazanjian questioned the construction cost estimates, which were prepared by Allied Construction, because no formal report providing a breakdown of the estimates was provided. Mr. Kazanjian asked Econsult to undertake sensitivity testing on the construction costs, decreasing them by 20% across the board. However, even with the reduction, the models indicated that all of the projects would produce negative values. Mr. Kazanjian concluded that any rehabilitation project for the existing building would be financially infeasible.

Ms. Sowell observed that, when the hard costs were dropped by 20% in their sensitivity analyses, the soft costs also dropped by 20%. However, it did not make a difference. Mr. Kazanjian observed that, even with the reduction, the project is still at least \$4.8 million away from feasibility. He stated that he might be able to find a way to save \$1 million, but not \$4.8 million or more.

Ms. Sowell stated that they determined that attempts to find a viable reuse for the Royal have been ongoing since 1998. A string of different parties have sought to reuse the space, but none has been successful. A string of capable developers, who undertake these sorts of projects, have considered the Royal and have walked away because they could not identify a feasible project. Even a grant from the Commonwealth was not enough to push a project forward. The building has continued to deteriorate, despite Universal's efforts to maintain it. Ms. Sowell stated that the building has greatly deteriorated, especially from water infiltration and vegetation. The renovation of the existing building would not be an easy one. Ms. Sowell stated that the building was offered for sale on the open market. The first potential buyer walked away after many months of due diligence. The second potential buyer also chose not to purchase the property. The market was unable to identify a new use. Ms. Sowell explained that she and her colleague interviewed a staff person at the Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission about that agency's restrictive covenant on the property, which was put in place in 2008 and runs for 15

years. She stated that the agency will have to decide whether to release the owner from the covenant. Also, the Preservation Alliance holds an easement on the front façade of the building. She also noted that the building is on the National Register of Historic Places and may be the subject of a rescission if this plan goes forward. She stated that there are many regulatory steps beyond those of the Historical Commission.

Marcus Iannozzi of the South Street West Business Association voiced his support for the project as stated in his Association's letter. He stated that it offers the right density and an appropriate mix of uses. He observed that the Royal is currently a deterrent to development in the area. A revitalized Royal will provide an excellent retail space for the area. He also praised Universal and Dranoff for involving the community in the design.

Mr. Chapman reported that the South of South Street Neighborhood Association, the registered community organization, issued a letter in support of the project.

Peter Elliot of the Office of Councilman Kenyatta Johnson informed the Commission that the Councilman supports the application and stated that the developers have included the community in the design of the project. He stated that the property has been vacant and blighted for several decades and needs to be redeveloped.

Patrick Grossi of the Preservation Alliance stated that the Alliance holds an easement on the front façade and that this project appears to honor that easement. He stated that he is looking forward to reviewing the final plans for the stabilization of the façade. He also noted that the Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission is a third-party beneficiary to the Alliance's easement.

ACTION: Mr. Thomas moved to adopt the recommendation of the Committee on Financial Hardship and find that the building at 1524-34 South Street cannot be used for any purpose for which it is or may be reasonably adapted, pursuant to §14-1005(6)(d) of the Philadelphia Code. The owner has demonstrated that the sale of the property is impracticable, that commercial rental cannot provide a reasonable rate of return, and that other potential uses of the property are foreclosed. Furthermore, pursuant to Section 9.4 of the Historical Commission's Rules & Regulations, the applicant has satisfied the affirmative obligation in good faith to attempt the sale of the property, to seek tenants for it, and to explore potential reuses for it. Ms. Turner seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

ACTION: Ms. Merriman moved to adopt the recommendation of the Architectural Committee and approve the restoration and construction aspects of the application, pursuant to Standards 6 and 9. Ms. Spina seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

ADDRESS: 219 CARPENTER ST

Project: Construct third-floor rear addition and roof deck on rear ell

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Dan & Casey Sawron

Applicant: Lawrence Weintraub, Lawrence Weintraub AIA

History: 1845

Individual Designation: 5/31/1966

District Designation: None

Staff Contact: Kim Broadbent, kim.broadbent@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval, provided there is no overbuild onto the rear roof structure of the original house, and the new construction is inconspicuous from the public right-of-way, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standard 9.

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to rehabilitate the three-story brick rowhouse at 219 Carpenter Street, which backs up to Hall Street. New windows and doors are proposed for all openings. The existing interior staircase and pilot house will be demolished, and a new code-compliant stair leading to a new third-story rear addition will be constructed. The addition will cover a large portion of the rear slope of the roof. A roof deck is proposed for the top of the existing rear ell.

This applicant came before the Architectural Committee in March 2015 to request demolition of nine feet of the rear ell, a rear gate for parking in the rear yard, a roof deck on the rear ell, and rehabilitation of the front façade. The Committee recommended denial, owing to incompleteness, and the application was withdrawn before review by the Historical Commission. Since that time, the applicant has hired an architect and the scope of work has been revised to the current application. The Committee responded favorably to a deck on top of the rear ell during the review in March.

ACTION: See Consent Agenda

ADDRESS: 1827 PORTER ST

Project: Install parking pad and vehicular entrance at rear yard

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Giacomo Apadula

Applicant: Lawrence Weintraub, Lawrence Weintraub AIA

History: 1907

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Girard Estate Historic District, Contributing, 11/10/1999

Staff Contact: Kim Broadbent, kim.broadbent@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval, pursuant to Standard 9.

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to create a two-car concrete parking pad in the rear yard of this property located within the Girard Estate Historic District. The rear yard of the property faces Roseberry Street. The houses on the north side of Roseberry Street are outside the district and are not designated as historic.

The application proposes to create a curb cut on Roseberry Street and to remove the non-historic cement block wall to create an entrance to the parking pad. Brick piers would be constructed on either side of the new opening. A decorative brick and cast stone wall would

divide the parking pad from the rear yard. A black metal fence would replace the existing cyclone fencing on the east and west sides of the rear yard.

Most of the houses along the north side of the 1700 and 1800-blocks of Porter Street in the Girard Estate Historic District have rear-yard parking pads accessed from Roseberry Street. Since the establishment of the historic district, the Historical Commission has approved three applications for rear parking at these houses. It denied one application proposing parking at the rear, but the parking would have been accessed from 18th Street, not Roseberry Street.

ACTION: See Consent Agenda

ADDRESS: 2416 PINE ST

Project: Construct rear addition with pilot house and roof deck

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: David Borgenicht

Applicant: Julie Motl, Julie Motl, Architect

History: 1840; 1910

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Rittenhouse Fidler Residential Historic District, Contributing, 2/8/1995

Staff Contact: Kim Broadbent, kim.broadbent@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial of the front door as proposed; approval of the application with an appropriate front door, provided the pilot house roof is sloped and a mockup shows the reduced height of the pilot house is inconspicuous from the public right-of-way and the trellis is not visible from the public right-of-way, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standards 6 and 9.

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to construct a rear addition with roof deck and pilot house on this three-story rowhouse located mid-block in the Rittenhouse Fidler Historic District. The rear slope of the main block would be removed. The rear of this property is not visible from a public right-of-way. The staff suggests that the pilot house roof be sloped to minimize potential visibility, and that a mockup be prepared to determine visibility of the pilot house and deck from Pine Street. This application also proposes a new front door, which the staff suggests should be a six-panel door rather than the panel configuration that is shown in the elevation.

ACTION: See Consent Agenda

ADDRESS: 2106 LOCUST ST

Project: Construct rear addition with pilot house and roof deck

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: David & Mary Scheuermann

Applicant: Stephen Mileto, Qb3, LLC

History: 1875

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Rittenhouse Fidler Residential Historic District, Contributing, 2/8/1995

Staff Contact: Randal Baron, randal.baron@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial of the deck as proposed, but approval of the application with a deck railing with vertical metal pickets set back to a point at or behind the chimney, with the staff to review details and a mockup to confirm that the new construction is inconspicuous from the public right-of-way, pursuant to Standard 9 and the Roofs Guideline.

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to construct a rear addition with pilot house and roof deck on this three-story rowhouse located within the Rittenhouse Fitler Historic District. The existing rear of this property is not original and is not visible from the public right-of-way. The pilot house and roof deck are proposed for the main block of the house, and a deck is also proposed for the second-story rear of the property. This rowhouse is taller than the building to its west, resulting in a potential increase of visibility from Locust Street. The applicant has proposed a deck railing built on an angle to minimize visibility.

ACTION: See Consent Agenda

ADDRESS: 130 S FRONT ST

Project: Construct 15 townhomes on site of parking lot

Review Requested: Review and Comment

Owner: Front Street Development

Applicant: Nichole Howell, JKR Partners, LLC

History: vacant lot

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Old City Historic District, Non-contributing, 12/12/2003

Staff Contact: Randal Baron, randal.baron@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee commented that the proposed new construction is compatible with the historic district, satisfying Standard 9.

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to construct 15 townhouses on the site of a parking lot on S. Front Street in the Old City Historic District. The Commission's jurisdiction is limited to Review and Comment because the site is considered undeveloped. Several of the parcels making up this site were individually designated, but the Historical Commission rescinded those designations, most recently in 2005. The property is classified as non-contributing in the Old City Historic District.

While contemporary in style, the proposed townhouses are compatible with the historic district. Parking is accessed from a shared drive, alleviating the need for front-loaded garages. The context surrounding this site is varied. The site is located at the southeast corner of the historic district. All but one of the historic buildings on this block was demolished many years ago. The historic building at 149 S. Hancock Street still stands. The building to the south of this site, at Front and Walnut, is a non-historic mid-rise that is contemporary in style. To its south, across Walnut Street, stands a non-historic hotel, which is outside the historic district. To the north of this site, across Sansom Walk, is a large, non-historic parking garage. To its north, across Ionic Street, is another non-historic mid-rise that is contemporary in style. Across Front Street, to the east, is I-95.

ACTION: See Consent Agenda

ADDRESS: 1200-02 CHESTNUT ST

Project: Cut down window and install ADA entrance, clean and repair masonry and bronze, install mechanical units on roof

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Drexel University, Attn: Kimberly Miller

Applicant: Galen Plona, Bittenbender Construction, LP

History: 1916; Beneficial Savings Fund Society Building; Horace Trumbauer, architect

Individual Designation: 9/9/2006

District Designation: None

Staff Contact: Laura DiPasquale, laura.dipasquale@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial, with the following suggestions: that the proposed door is reevaluated relative to the proportions of the existing window, that mechanical systems are incorporated into the existing penthouse and sized to have less impact on the roof, and that the elevator overrun is clad in buff brick.

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to renovate an existing bank building into an educational facility. Beyond exterior cleaning and repair, which can be reviewed at the staff level, the application proposes to cut a new ADA accessible entrance and to construct new mechanical units and an elevator overrun on the roof.

The proposed ADA entrance would be located in the southernmost window opening along the 12th Street façade. The new entrance would require cutting down the existing granite base and removing the existing window. The existing granite window surround and pediment would be retained. The new entrance would feature a glazed metal door and multi-lite bronze-finished transom.

In addition to the ADA accessible entrance, the application proposes to install two new mechanical units and an elevator overrun on the roof. The proposed mechanical units would be less than 12 feet in height and located at the center of the roof, approximately 11 feet from the east elevation, and 46 feet from the north elevation. The new elevator overrun would be located at the south end of the roof, adjacent to, but behind, an existing chimney. The elevator overrun would be visible from S. 12th Street.

DISCUSSION: Ms. DiPasquale presented the application to the Historical Commission. Historic preservation consultant Bob Powers and architect Philip Chen represented the application.

Ms. Hawkins noted that the proposed door as revised since the Architectural Committee meeting is more in keeping with the existing elevation and proportion of the window above. She further noted that the applicant clad the elevator overrun in buff brick as requested by the Committee. She expressed concern over the large mechanical equipment on the roof and its potential visibility or impact.

Mr. Chen presented several slides showing the proposed mechanical equipment. He noted that the existing mechanical penthouse, which is buff brick, is quite low at a height of only 5.5 feet above the roofline. He noted that they had explored the Architectural Committee's suggestion to incorporate the proposed systems into the existing penthouse, but that, although the equipment would fit, it would not provide for proper clearances around the equipment. He commented that the penthouse would have to be rebuilt entirely in order to accommodate the necessary equipment with the appropriate clearances. He presented a plan of the proposed mechanical units, outside of the penthouse, which would be set back as far as possible from both 12th and Chestnut Streets. He noted that they lowered the mechanical equipment to 8 feet 4 inches from

the roof to minimize the impact. He noted that the generator is about one foot taller, but is set back farther from the street. He presented sightline renderings showing the lack of visibility of the units from the street. He noted that the elevator overrun would be visible from the street, but would be clad in a buff brick similar to the existing brick already present on that elevation.

Ms. Spina asked why the applicant could not rebuild the penthouse to accommodate the equipment. Mr. Chen responded that cost was the primary factor for not rebuilding the penthouse to accommodate the larger equipment. Ms. Hawkins noted that the clearance requirements would also cause the penthouse to grow much larger. Ms. Merriman asked if anything would be located in the penthouse. Mr. Chen responded that they are not planning to use the penthouse, as it is not large enough to house any equipment. He noted that they would be removing the existing mechanical equipment for structural reasons.

Mr. Powers commented that Drexel's proposal for this building is excellent, and asserted that the mechanical units will be almost, if not completely, invisible from the public right-of-way.

Mr. Sherman opened the floor to public comment, of which there was none.

ACTION: Ms. Merriman moved to approve the revised application as presented to the Historical Commission on 10 July 2015, pursuant to Standard 9. Mr. Gupta seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

ADDRESS: 265 S 20TH ST

Project: Legalize HVAC equipment at rear of property

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Johanna & Gregory Hanson

Applicant: Johanna Hanson, Style Limited Partnership

History: 1880

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Rittenhouse Fidler Residential Historic District, Contributing, 2/8/1995

Staff Contact: Laura DiPasquale, laura.dipasquale@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial, pursuant to Standard 9.

OVERVIEW: This application requests the legalization of mechanical equipment that was installed at the rear of this corner property without permits or review by the Historical Commission. A new condenser unit was mounted at the second-floor level of the rear wall. The staff suggests that the new unit be relocated. Options for relocation include the roof, mounting above the projecting bay at the rear on a bracket, or below grade with a grate to cover the opening.

DISCUSSION: Ms. DiPasquale presented the application to the Historical Commission. Property owner Gregory Hanson represented the application.

Mr. Hanson noted that he and his wife have been involved with the building since 1973, first as tenants, and then as owners since 2001. He expressed pride in the building, and noted that he last appeared before the Historical Commission was in 1991 to legalize security grates he had installed on the property because of several break-ins, which the Historical Commission legalized. He noted that he and his wife occupied the building until 2009, at which time the tenant painted the exterior of the building black. When the tenant vacated, they removed an awning and took down the front security grates. He opined that when he received a letter from the Historical Commission, he thought it would be a letter of commendation for returning the

front façade to a more appropriate condition, but instead it was for mounting a condensing unit on the rear façade without a permit. Mr. Hanson noted that they replaced the heat pump system for the first floor, which required a new condenser. The condensers had previously been located on top of the bay window at the second floor, but when they evaluated the locations, the contractor recommended installing it on the wall-mount because of weight concerns. He commented that the condensers are at the rear of his building, and that many rears of the buildings face onto Manning Street. He noted that that condenser is not visible from the front of his building, or from much of the side of the building.

Mr. Hanson noted that it would be impossible to locate the condenser on the ground, as that would eliminate their parking spot, which is precious. He noted that the staff had recommended that it be buried or put on the roof, but that there is no roof access. He urged the Commission to look at where it is positioned now and to take into consideration the fact that they had returned the front façade to its appropriate condition.

Ms. DiPasquale clarified that the Department of Licenses & Inspections had initiated the violation, not the Historical Commission.

Ms. Merriman asked why the applicant did not get a permit. Mr. Hanson responded that, since they were relocating a piece of equipment and it was the rear of the property, they did not think that they needed a permit. He suggested that he should be awarded "Preservation Man of the Year," but instead received a violation. He explained that his installer suggested the location.

Mr. Gupta asked whether the condenser could be put back on top of the bay window. Mr. Hanson responded that it might be able to be returned to its original location, but the bay would need to be reinforced.

Ms. Merriman asked whether the stucco area on the south side of the window was part of their property as well. Mr. Hanson responded that there had been an exterior stack that they removed and made an interior stack, and that that is part of the building.

Mr. Thomas noted the Commission's appreciation of the good work done to the front façade of the building. He observed that Manning Street is not a true service alley. He commented that the Commission reviewed the project for the restaurant across the street, which opened up windows along Manning Street, and that this is a street that pedestrians regularly use. He noted that the rear of the property in question deserves the same kind of respect as the other facades. He suggested that there is bracketing that would not be visible and could be done above the bay if there are structural concerns. Mr. Sherman noted that there is precedent for not approving the installation of mechanical equipment in similar situations in the Spring Garden neighborhood, for example. Mr. Thomas asserted that it is important for the Commission to apply the Secretary of the Interior's Standards consistently to designated properties. He opined that if there was absolutely no other location where the condenser could be installed, they might consider legalizing the current location, but there are several other possibilities of locations, including above the bay and on the roof. He further noted that the Standards take spatial relationships into account, and that the installation of the unit in front of the window destroys the spatial relationships at the rear of the building.

Mr. Hanson reiterated that the Commission could sleep well if they legalized the unit knowing that the front façade had been returned to an appropriate condition. Mr. Mattioni opined that that is not relevant to the situation at hand.

Mr. Thomas noted that, if a permit had been sought, it would have gone before the Commission's staff, who would have helped find an appropriate location before the applicant spent the money to have it installed at an inappropriate location.

ACTION: Mr. Mattioni moved to adopt the recommendation of the Architectural Committee and deny the application, pursuant to Standard 9. Ms. Leonard seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

ADDRESS: 1200 MARKET ST

Project: Repair PSFS signage with LED lighting

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Twelfth Street Hotel Associates, L.P.

Applicant: Cindy Hamilton, Heritage Consulting Group

History: 1932; PSFS Building; George Howe & William Lescaze, architects

Individual Designation: 1/30/1968

District Designation: None

Staff Contact: Randal Baron, randal.baron@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial, pursuant to Standard 6.

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to remove the neon tube lighting from the monumental PSFS sign at the top of the PSFS building on Market Street and replace it with LED lighting. The original stainless steel channel letters would be retained. The applicant claims that the existing sign has deteriorated and is difficult and expensive to maintain and that the new lighting will be indistinguishable from the old from the ground. Since the Architectural Committee meeting, the applicant has redesigned the LED lighting to throw more light into the channels, thereby better replicating the original appearance.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Long recused, owing to her husband's employment with the law firm representing the applicant. Mr. Baron presented the application to the Historical Commission. Attorneys Matt McClure and David Guest, historic preservation consultant Cindy Hamilton, hotel representative Danny Smith, and sign company representative Patrick Hoban represented the application.

Mr. McClure explained that his law firm had been retained after the Architectural Committee meeting to explore improving the design of the proposed PSFS sign, considering the visibility from the public right-of-way, the discretion afforded the Commission by the ordinance, and guidance offered by the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. He stated that they have attempted to make the new lighting indistinguishable from the old from the public right-of-way. He reminded everyone that Loews spent \$150 million in renovations to the hotel, which were completed in 2000. He noted that significant modifications to the sign were considered in 1997, when Loews presented the rehabilitation plan to the Historical Commission. He explained how building identity signs are different from other historic resources and are often changed. He cited the Fidelity sign on Broad Street, which has been changed many times with the Commission's approval. He also noted the sign on Rockefeller Center in New York City; the preservation agency in New York recently approved changing the building identity sign on that building to an LED Comcast sign. It had a neon RCA sign, then a newer RCA sign, then a GE sign, and now a Comcast sign. He observed that the property owner could simply choose to turn off the PSFS sign, but Loews has opted to keep it lit because of its historical significance. Mr.

McClure asserted that the Standards and other preservation guidelines allow light sources in signs to be modernized. He informed the Commission that its designation report of 1968 made no mention of the sign. He explained that the rationale for the conversion to LED is the desire to reduce maintenance. All parties agree that the current light source needs to be replaced; it is 83 years old. Replacement will reduce maintenance and energy costs as well as outages, which are frequent. He reported that the sign currently requires maintenance about once every month. He said that even a new neon sign would require servicing four to five times a year because of damage from wind, ice, and bird strikes. Most neon signs are not located 500 feet above the ground, as this one is. He noted that, once a neon tube is broken, it takes two to three weeks to obtain the replacement materials; during that time, while the sign is not functioning, the hotel brand is injured. A new LED sign would only need diode replacement every 15 years or so. He added that an LED would use 20% less electricity, aligning with the City's new Energy Benchmark Ordinance. He explained that the neon sign must be kept lit in cold weather, day and night, because the rapid heating associated with powering up can break the glass neon tubes. Mr. McClure concluded that the LED sign will be indistinguishable from the neon from the street. He stated that the mock up of the revised design shows that the LED replicates the appearance of the neon.

Mr. Hoban stated that he has 30 years experience in the sign industry and has designed thousands of neon and LED signs. He displayed a series of photographs of the existing sign and the mock up of the proposed sign. He observed that all components of the PSFS neon sign need to be replaced. Currently only one row of neon survives. He explained the plans for the new sign. The old neon tubes will be removed and will be replaced with LEDs in modules, which will fasten directly into the existing channel letters. The LEDs will replicate the size and spacing of the neon. Mr. Hoban displayed a cross section of the LED module and explained the revisions to the design. The module will have four acrylic-faced openings to replicate the appearance of the neon tubes. Matt McClure indicated that the Architectural Committee was "spot-on" in its criticism of the difference between the neon and the first LED design because the first design did not illuminate the channel to the side, but only shined directly out. Since the Architectural Committee meeting, they modified the design, adding two side windows to allow light to flood the channel. Mr. Hoban showed several photographs of the mock up. He contended that the LED module precisely replicates the neon light. Mr. Hoban concluded that the trend in the industry is toward LED installations.

Mr. McClure asked Mr. Hoban to comment on the condition of the existing neon sign. Mr. Hoban stated that the existing neon sign is very old and all components would need to be replaced including the power supplies and housings. The sign originally had two rows of neon in each letter, but now only has one, owing to continual breakage. He explained that replacement of the tubes is very difficult. A technician must visit the site to determine what has failed. Then a supplier has to bend a glass tube to fit. The glass tube, which is eight to 10 feet long and very fragile, is difficult to transport to the site and onto the roof. The repair person must be "tied off" because the sign is so difficult and dangerous to access. Mr. Hoban stated that he is unaware of another neon sign that is 500 feet above the ground. He asserted that the LED sign will be much more reliable and, when a LED fails, it will be undetectable from the ground. When the neon fails, a large portion or the entirety of the letter goes out. When an LED fails, a section the size of a stick of gum goes out. An average LED lasts 50,000 hours or about 20 to 25 years. With 1,200 feet of glass tube, the neon fails regularly in that environment. Neon glass tube gets cold in the winter and, when it lights up, it gets hot very rapidly, which causes cracking. Mr. Hoban concluded that all of his customers with neon signs are retrofitting them for LEDs, because they are cheaper to run and maintain and provide the same appearance.

Ms. Merriman asked if Loews will take advantage of the LED technology and change the color of the sign from its historic color. Mr. McClure said that their plan is to maintain the original red color unless the City requests a change in color. Mr. Hoban explained that the LED can be programmed to emit a broad spectrum of colors. Ms. Hawkins said that she doubted that the Historical Commission's staff would have a mechanism to monitor and regulate the color. She suggested that the Commission should assume that the color will be changed on occasion. Ms. Merriman stated that the same issues were raised when the Boathouse Row lights were proposed to be changed from incandescent to LED. She asserted that, over the intervening 10 years, she has noticed no appreciable difference between the incandescent and LED lights at Boathouse Row. Mr. Mattioni disagreed, stating that the LED lights are not as attractive as the original lights. Ms. Hawkins commented that this is a very different proposal than the Boathouse Row proposal. The PSFS sign was designed for the building. The Boathouse Row signs were added to the historic buildings relatively recently. Ms. Spina observed that the PSFS neon sign was designed as part of this building. It was a radical design at the time and the architect designed the font. The sign and its engineering are a significant part of the building.

Mr. McClure observed that, unlike the lights on Boathouse Row, which hang on a group of low buildings, the PSFS sign is 500 feet above ground. He stated that he would work with the staff to ensure that the LEDs replicated the sign precisely. He stated that his client acknowledges the significance of the sign and the building. He noted that his client has continued to light the sign and is seeking this approval to ensure that the sign can stay lighted. He observed that the LED conversion is completely reversible and neon could be reinstalled in the future.

Ms. Hamilton, a preservation consultant, provided a history of the sign. She said that the sign was developed as a screen for mechanical equipment. The original designer of the sign considered incandescent bulbs as well as neon. She cited guidance from the National Park Service offered by the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Preservation Briefs. She stated that the Standards very general and are intended to be applied in a reasonable manner. She noted that the Standards allow for the use of substitute materials. She observed that Preservation Brief 25 includes a discussion of the difficulties in preserving signs and recognizes that signs change over time and sometimes cannot be preserved in situ, and suggests that a sign might be moved inside a building or donated to a museum. On the subject of the use of substitute materials, Preservation Brief 16 indicates that, if reasonable options to repair an element have been exhausted, then there are four circumstances in which a substitute material may be considered. The first is the unavailability of replacement historic materials. The second is the unavailability of the necessary craftsmen. The third is an inherent flaw in the original material and the fourth is a change necessary for code compliance. If substitute materials are acceptable, then the parameters for evaluating the material are: one, is it compatible in appearance?; two, are its properties similar?; and, three, does it meet performance expectations? She contended that their proposal satisfies these criteria and considerations.

Mr. McClure opined that the Commission's Rules & Regulations allow for the staff to approve the proposed alteration to this sign. Loews has invested \$200 million in this property since 1997. He noted that this sign was dark between 1992 and 2000. Loews has made an accommodation to the city to keep it lit and he asked that the Commission make an accommodation to Loews.

Ms. Hawkins asserted that, using the Standards that the applicant has cited, the Commission should deny this application. She read Standard 6. She said that the neon material exists, at an even lower cost than the LED replacements. Also, the crafts people needed to restore it exist. The argument about maintenance has not typically been accepted by the Commission as a rationale for approval. If that were the standard then the Commission would be approving vinyl windows and siding because they can be maintained more cheaply and easily than historical

materials. The Commission regularly denies those arguments. She stated that it is not clear to her that new neon cannot be installed. Mr. McClure disagreed with Ms. Hawkins and asserted that this proposal does satisfy the requirements of Standard 6 for substitute materials.

Mr. Thomas stated that Boathouse Row is different because the lighting was not intrinsic to the original design. He stated that this sign is part of the skyline rather than the streetscape. The original materials are most important when they can be seen up close. Mr. Thomas stated that this sign is perceived from afar. The use of original materials is not as important in a case like this, where the sign is seen from miles away, not up close. Mr. Thomas stated that the Commission should consider energy efficiency as well, if the appearance can be replicated. Mr. Gupta agreed and said that the ability to keep this sign fully lit enhances its historic appearance. Mr. Gupta stated that Boathouse Row looked like a mouth with missing teeth before the switch to LED. Ms. Merriman stated that the Commission should consider long-term maintenance and energy efficiency. Mr. Mattioni asked if the intensity of the light in the sign can be controlled. Mr. McClure said that it could and that they will work with staff to ensure that the details are carefully considered.

ACTION: Mr. Thomas moved to approve the revised application as presented to the Historical Commission on 10 July 2015, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standard 6. Mr. Gupta seconded the motion, which passed by a vote of 8 to 2. Mses. Hawkins and Spina dissented.

Ms. Hawkins excused herself and left the meeting.

THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION, 9 JUNE 2015
Richardson Dilworth III, Chair

2176-78 E. YORK STREET

Nominator: Laura DiPasquale, Philadelphia Historical Commission

Owner: Mohammed Sabur and Julie Sabur

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the Historical Commission table the review of the nomination and remand it back to the Committee on Historic Designation for review at the next Committee meeting.

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 2176-78 E. York Street as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the property satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, D, E, and H. The nomination argues that the purpose-built home and office, constructed in 1886, is significant as a remarkably well-preserved example of a Frank Furness interpretation of the Queen Anne style, and as a landmark building in the Kensington neighborhood. The nomination further argues that the building is significant for its association with its first owner, John Ruhl, a conveyancer and Councilman turned criminal, as well as its second owner, Dr. Thomas Shriner, one of the most prominent physicians in northeast Philadelphia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Likely commissioned using the ill-gotten gains of Ruhl's embezzling scheme, the elegant and intricately-detailed home and office is visually striking in a neighborhood of primarily working-class homes.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Farnham presented the request to table to the Historical Commission.

ACTION: Ms. Merriman moved to adopt the recommendation of the Committee on Historic Designation, table the nomination for 2176-78 E. York Street, and remand it to the Committee on Historic Designation for review at its next meeting. Ms. Leonard seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

3600-30 LANCASTER AVENUE

Nominator: Staff of the Philadelphia Historical Commission

Owner: Lancaster Mews Partners

3612-28 LANCASTER AVENUE (PART OF 3600-30 LANCASTER AVENUE)

Nominator: Powelton Villiage Civic Association, prepared by Oscar Beisert, Off Boundary Preservation Brigade

Owner: Lancaster Mews Partners

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the Historical Commission table the reviews of the two nominations and remand them back to the Committee on Historic Designation for review at the next Committee meeting.

OVERVIEW: The Historical Commission received two nominations for this property. One proposes to designate the property at 3600-30 Lancaster Avenue as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The first nomination contends that the property satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, H, and J. The second nomination proposes to designate the 3612-28 Lancaster Avenue portion at 3600-30 Lancaster Avenue as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the portion of the property satisfies Criteria for Designation A, F, H, and J. The row was built between about 1870 and 1880 by speculator James A. L. Wilson and others. This row is classified as contributing to the National Register Powelton Village Historic District.

The property owner plans to request that the Historical Commission table the nominations and remand them to the Committee on Historic Designation for review at a later meeting. The property owner has offered to commit in writing not to seek any demolition permits for the property during the tabling period and the property will remain under the Historical Commission's jurisdiction during the tabling period.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Farnham presented the request to table to the Historical Commission.

ACTION: Mr. Mattioni moved to adopt the recommendation of the Committee on Historic Designation, table the nominations for 3600-30 and 3612-28 Lancaster Avenue, and remand them to the Committee on Historic Designation for review at its next meeting. Ms. Leonard seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

145 SUMAC STREET

Nominator: Jeffrey Allegretti

Owner: John Messing

147 SUMAC STREET

Nominator: Jeffrey Allegretti,

Owner: Deborah Gribbin-Zameska and James Zameska

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the parcel that contains the building at 145 Sumac Street, satisfies Criteria for Designation A, D, and H, and should be designated as historic and listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the property at 147 Sumac Street satisfies Criteria for Designation D and H, and should be designated as historic and listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

OVERVIEW: These nominations propose to designate the properties at 145 and 147 Sumac Street as historic and list them on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination for 145 Sumac contends that the property, the James Z. Holt house, satisfies Criteria for Designation A, D, and H. The nomination for 147 Sumac, the Maurice Wilhere House, satisfies Criteria for Designation D and H. These semi-detached houses were constructed in 1884. The property at 145 is associated with Manayunk mill owner James Z. Holt, son of Edward Holt, who was among the first of the Manayunk mill owners. Holt and other second-generation mill owners provided much of the impetus for the development of the Wissahickon neighborhood. These twins are an extraordinary example of Eastlake Victorian styling, with trim ornaments, spindles and door carvings with geometric patterns and incised lines. It is only one of a few remaining examples in Wissahickon, a neighborhood developed when the Queen Anne style was in vogue. They are an established visual feature in the neighborhood and for the community, not only for the architectural character, but also for the fact that the two houses occupy nearly three-quarters of an acre of ground in this otherwise densely developed urban neighborhood.

The nomination for 145 Sumac, but not one for 147, was included on the agenda of the Committee's meeting of 26 March 2015. At that time, the Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the Historical Commission table the nomination for 145 Sumac Street and refer the nomination back to the Committee on Historic Designation for review at a subsequent Committee meeting, at which time the nominations for 145 and 147 Sumac Street can be reviewed together. The Commission subsequently tabled the nomination for 145 and remanded back for this review before the Committee.

Prior to the issuance of the Historical Commission's notice of the nomination review for 145 Sumac, the property owner applied for a demolition permit. As the date of application predates the date of notice and the Historical Commission's jurisdiction, the Commission did not have the authority to review the application and the permit has since been issued.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Farnham presented the request to table to the Historical Commission.

ACTION: Mr. Mattioni moved to table the nominations for 145 and 147 Sumac Street. Ms. Turner seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

101 W. HIGHLAND AVENUE

Nominator: Sharon Reid and Emily Cooperman, Chestnut Hill Historical Society

Owner: City Of Philadelphia, Fire Department

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the property at 101 W. Highland Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation A, D, E, H, and J, and should be designated as historic, and listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 101 W. Highland Avenue as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the property satisfies Criteria for Designation A, D, E, H, and J. Prominent architect John T. Windrim designed the Chestnut Hill Fire Station in the Richardsonian Romanesque style and it was built in 1894. This building is classified as significant to the National Register Chestnut Hill Historic District.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Broadbent presented an overview of the nomination to the Historical Commission. Preservation consultant Emily Cooperman and Chestnut Hill Historical Society Director Lori Salganicoff represented the nomination.

Ms. Cooperman, primary preparer of the nomination, stated that the nomination is the product of the Chestnut Hill Historical Society and is part of a community effort. She stated that Society has worked long and hard on the nomination as well as to seek the support of the City and the Fire Department.

Ms. Salganicoff stated that representatives from the Fire Department had been at the meeting earlier but had to leave; however, they had expressed their support of the nomination, and wanted to make note of the fact that the current openings for the fire engines are not large enough for the size of modern fire engines. The Department of Public Property and the Fire Department have been in communication about how to accommodate new fire engines, and they are looking at the possibility of building a second fire station on the site instead of altering the existing openings. There is open space next to the building, which is the site of the former police station that was demolished in the 1950s. The new building would connect to the historic building where there is already a door. Should the new fire station be constructed, the Fire Department would continue to maintain and utilize the historic fire station for its use.

ACTION: Ms. Merriman moved to adopt the recommendation of the Committee on Historic Designation and find that the property at 101 W. Highland Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation A, D, E, H, and J, to designate as historic, and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Mr. Gupta seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

246-60 N. 04TH STREET, MURALS

Nominator: Celeste A. Morello

Owner: St. Augustine's Roman Catholic Church

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the Nicola Monachesi frescoes at St. Augustine's Church at 246-60 N. 4th Street satisfy Criteria for Designation A, E, F, and J, and should be designated as historic, and listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the fresco program undertaken in 1848 at St. Augustine's Church at 246-60 N. 4th Street as an historic object and list it on the Philadelphia

Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the frescoes satisfy Criteria for Designation A, E, F, and J. Prolific artist Nicola Monachesi executed the frescoes in the Neoclassical Style.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Broadbent presented an overview of the nomination to the Historical Commission. Nominator Celeste Morello represented the nomination.

Ms. Morello noted that this nomination proposes the designation of several frescoes. She stated that some church artwork is based on Roman Catholic canon law, and the church's law, in effect, holds that the interior of a church is the same as the body of Jesus Christ, and its artworks are blessed. She continued that the church protects works of art inside of churches, where the services are held. Therefore, the interiors of Catholic churches are more important than the exteriors. She stated that these frescoes are most likely the oldest existing in this hemisphere, but they mean so much more to Roman Catholics because they are an articulation of church doctrine. Mr. Sherman asked about the designation status of the building. Ms. Morello confirmed that St. Augustine's Church is already listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

ACTION: Ms. Spina moved to adopt the recommendation of the Committee on Historic Designation and find that the Nicola Monachesi frescoes at St. Augustine's Church at 246-60 N. 4th Street satisfy Criteria for Designation A, E, F, and J, designate them as historic objects, and list them on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Ms. Leonard seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

1523-25 N. FRONT STREET

Nominator: Oscar Beisert, Off Boundary Preservation Brigade
Owner: Thomas D. Scollon, Jr. and Antoinette M. Scollon

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation recommended that the property at 1523-25 N. Front Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, D, and J, but not Criterion H.

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 1523-25 N. Front Street as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the property satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, D, H, and J. The Second Associate Presbyterian Church building was built circa 1850 and is the oldest, purpose-built Associate Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, the oldest extant United Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, and likely the oldest Presbyterian church in the Kensington section of Philadelphia, a hotbed of Presbyterianism in nineteenth-century Philadelphia. The property has significant interest or value as part of the development and religious cultural history of the Kensington section of Philadelphia and for its association with Reverend Joseph T. Cooper, D.D., an important clergyman of the Associate/United Presbyterian Church. The Greek Revival edifice is distinctive of houses of worship in pre-Civil War Philadelphia, and its recessed position within a court-like setting was common for institutional buildings of the eighteenth and nineteenth-century in Philadelphia.

DISCUSSION: Ms. DiPasquale presented the nomination to the Historical Commission. Nominator Oscar Beisert represented the nomination.

Mr. Beisert noted that he nominated the building because he had discovered that it was one of the oldest Presbyterian churches in the city. He noted that Kensington was a hotbed of Presbyterianism in the nineteenth century, and that the immigrants who lived and worked there

in the textile industry started many congregations. This building, he opined, is the last extant Associate/United Presbyterian church in the area. He reiterated that Joseph T. Cooper was the minister behind the erection of the building and the minister of the church for many years, but it was also important in the establishment of the United Presbyterian Church. Furthermore, he continued, the building is important for its architectural style, and more importantly, for the fact that it is recessed within a court. As soon as construction was finished, he noted, the church carved out two front corner lots to subsidize their ground rent, and creating a court. Mr. Beisert noted that the Committee on Historic Designation had found the church's position within a court to be the most compelling aspect of the nomination, seeing it as a piece of urban design unique to Philadelphia.

Ms. Spina asked whether the church court was part of the nomination. Ms. DiPasquale responded that the whole church parcel, which includes the court, is included in the nomination.

Mr. Sherman asked whether the property owners were present. Mr. Beisert responded that they were present at the Committee meeting, and had no objections to the building's designation. In fact, they hope that the building will be preserved.

Mr. Sherman opened the floor to public comment, of which there was none.

ACTION: Ms. Turner moved to adopt the recommendation of the Committee on Historic Designation and find that the property at 1523-25 N. Front Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, D, and J, but not Criterion H, designate it as historic, and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Mr. Gupta seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

1527 N. FRONT STREET

Nominator: Oscar Beisert, Off Boundary Preservation Brigade

Owner: Thomas D. Scollon, Jr. and Antoinette M. Scollon

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation recommended that the Commission table the nomination to allow for it to be rewritten and remanded back to the Committee on Historic Designation.

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 1527 N. Front Street as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the property satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, and H. The semi-detached rowhouse at 1527 N. Front Street was built between 1852 and 1854 through a ground-rent agreement with the Second Associate Presbyterian Church at 1523-27 N. Front Street. The nomination argues that the property is significant for its relationship to the church, in that it forms the north wall of the entrance to the church court, a common form in eighteenth and nineteenth-century Philadelphia. The nomination further contends that the property is significant as part of the residential development of N. Front Street in the Kensington Section of Philadelphia, specifically because it was constructed as part of the ground-rent estate, which the nomination argues was important for its role in making Philadelphia the "City of Homes." The Greek Revival-inspired building is furthermore reflective of pre-Civil War homes in Philadelphia, and is one of few surviving pre-Civil War dwellings on this block of the city.

DISCUSSION: Ms. DiPasquale presented the nomination to the Commission. She explained that the Committee on Historic Designation recommended that the Commission table the nomination to allow for it to be rewritten and the revised nomination remanded back to the Committee on Historic Designation for review.

ACTION: Mr. Mattioni moved to adopt the recommendation of the Committee on Historic Designation and table the nomination for 1527 N. Front Street to allow the nominator to revise it and remand the revised nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation for review. Ms. Spina seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

1600-06 AND 1608-10 E. BERKS STREET

Nominator: Oscar Beisert, Off Boundary Preservation Brigade and Friends of St. Laurentius

Owner: Archdiocese of Philadelphia

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the property at 1600-06 and 1608-10 E. Berks Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, E, H, and J, and should be designated as historic and listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the exterior of the church building at 1600-06 and 1608-10 E. Berks Street as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the property satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, E, H, and J. St. Laurentius Church was designed by prominent ecclesiastical architect Edwin Forrest Durang and built between 1885 and 1890 for the Polish Catholic community. The building is located in the National Register Eligible Fishtown Historic District.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Farnham presented an overview of the nomination to the Historical Commission. He explained that, since the Committee on Historic Designation, the property owner submitted a lengthy document objecting to the historic designation of the building, owing to its physical condition and costs to maintain and renovate it. He noted that the document was made available on the Commission's website.

A. J. Thompson, an attorney and parishioner, introduced himself as a representative of the Friends of St. Laurentius. He stated that several people wished to address the Commission on behalf of the nomination. Mr. Thompson asked the Commission if it would consider the claims made in the document submitted by the owner, which is essentially a hardship application. He stated that, if the Commission considered the merits of the hardship application, he would like to present evidence and testimony countering the claims. Mr. Sherman replied that the Commission would be considering whether the property merits historic designation, but would not be reviewing a financial hardship application. He advised the property owner that the Commission has a process in place to review financial hardship applications. He stated that it would be premature to review a financial hardship application before the property is designated. Mr. Thompson responded that the property owner does not claim that the church is without historic merit. Mr. Sherman stated that the Historical Commission will hear from everyone before it makes any conclusions.

Mr. Thompson introduced Oscar Beisert, one of the people who worked on the nomination. Mr. Beisert provided an overview of the nomination and listed the Criteria for Designation cited in the nomination. He stated that the church represents the first organization of the Polish community in Philadelphia. He noted that it is a prominent feature in Fishtown and represents the social and cultural heritage of the Polish community in Philadelphia. He stated that the building is a familiar visual feature of the neighborhood; it has a strong presence. He reported that Edwin Forest Durang, who is arguably one of the most important ecclesiastical architects of his day, designed the building. It is featured in Durang's portfolio of masterworks. The building has a distinctive architectural style.

Mr. Thompson stated that several people would speak about the significance of the church. He introduced Emily Cooperman, a historian. Ms. Cooperman stated that she is an architectural and landscape historian with more than 25 years of experience in evaluating and nominating historic buildings. She stated that she supports the nomination and contends that the church has great significance in two respects. It is significant architecturally, but is also significant for its monumentality and presence on the street. She stated that she worked on a program several years ago in which she evaluated churches throughout the city. She stated that churches like St. Laurentius are landmarks that anchor the fabric of the city. She stated that this church is important as a symbol of its community, especially because it is a prominent Catholic church in what had been a Nativist area. St. Laurentius represents the Polish Catholic ethnic community.

Deborah Majka, Honorary Consul of the Republic of Poland for Southeastern Pennsylvania, stated that at the time of the establishment St. Laurentius parish, known as the mother church for Roman Catholics of Polish descent in Philadelphia, Poland had been partitioned and ceased to exist on the map of Europe. She noted that it did reside in the hearts and minds of the Polish immigrants, such as those who had the foresight, the dedication, and the will to found St. Laurentius, where they could practice their faith in their own language, and preserve and foster their rich Polish and Christian heritage. She stated that the church stands as the oldest and most prominent symbol of the immigration and settlement of Polish Catholics in Philadelphia. It is a masterwork of a master architect, Edwin Forest Durang. She noted that the church spires are a readily recognizable landmark in Fishtown. She noted that over the years of Polish immigration to the United States, the Polish government has continued to rely on the Polish diaspora to maintain, preserve, and share that rich Polish cultural heritage outside of Poland and is most grateful to St. Laurentius's dedication to the traditions, family values, and strong faith that it has exemplified. She asked the Commission to allow that beacon to continue to shine on the Fishtown neighborhood.

Michael Bichasz, the president of Polish American Congress Eastern Pennsylvania District, the head of the Polish American Cultural Center Museum, and a radio program host, stated that he was a parishioner at St. Laurentius. He noted that the Polish National Alliance was founded on 3rd Street in 1880, and that by 1881 the Polish immigrants were gathering to find a church they could call their own. They petitioned the archbishop, who established the church for the parishioners of St. Laurentius in trust. He contended that that trust persists today; it has not been altered or extinguished. He noted that many people want to save it and want it to survive. The community is ready to save the church. He stated that visitors are astounded at the beauty and condition of the church. He stated that the architect, Durang, designed the St. Laurentius based upon many of the churches in Poland. He stated that the trust has been violated. Those for whom the church was held in trust were not given a voice in the decisions about the church. The decision was made by a few, who do not represent the parishioners. He stated that the church is a very valuable part of the Polish community. He noted that the church not only served the Polish community, but also welcomed people of all nationalities. He stated that the church should be returned to the people who attend the church. The money used to pay consultants to claim that the church cannot be saved should have been spent on the church. He concluded that the community is ready to save the church.

Justin Spivey, a senior structural engineer with Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, distributed a letter to the Commissioners and explained that he had earlier distributed it to the Committee on Historic Designation. Michael Phillips, attorney for Holy Name of Jesus Parish, objected, contending that he had not had previous access to the letter. Ms. Merriman noted that it had been made available to everyone at the time of the Committee on Historic Designation meeting. Mr. Spivey stated that the Friends of St. Laurentius asked him to review documents regarding the condition of the church. He noted that he reviewed the new document package submitted by

the property owner and found no need to revise his letter because his opinion has not changed. He claimed that the condition of the building is not relevant to its eligibility for the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. He stated that his firm is capable of assessing the conditions of the building and would do so if retained to assess it and given access to the building. He again claimed that the building's condition is not relevant to its historical significance. He asked the Commission to tell him whether the conditions assessments and cost estimates to repair the building submitted by the property owner were relevant to the Commission's deliberations today. He stated that he was giving the Commission an opportunity to answer his question about their relevance. He insisted that the Commission answer his question. Mr. Sherman noted that he is chairing the meeting and then asked Mr. Farnham to respond to Mr. Spivey's question. Mr. Farnham responded, stating that the Commission can and will hear all testimony and evidence presented to it. Simply because it hears testimony and accepts evidence does not mean that it is inherently relevant to the decision making. Mr. Farnham highlighted the fact that the Commission's authority to designate is discretionary. Before the Commission can designate, it must find that a property satisfies one or more of the Criteria for Designation. However, once it has made such a finding, the Commission may designate or not for any reason. Therefore, it may consider any evidence because there are no limits on its discretionary authority to designate once it has found that a property satisfies one or more of the Criteria. One could argue that anything and everything is relevant.

Mr. Sherman indicated that the property owner would now be provided with an opportunity to speak. Mr. Thompson objected, stating that he still intended to present several people to testify on behalf of the nomination. Mr. Sherman assured him that they would be afforded an opportunity to speak, but suggested that the property owner should have an opportunity at this juncture, to allow for a balanced conversation. Mr. Thompson noted for the record that he and his group dispute the ownership claim made by Holy Name of Jesus Parish and asserted that, according to the deed, the church is held in trust by the Archdiocese for the parishioners. He contended that Holy Name of Jesus Parish does not have standing to object to the nomination. Mr. Phillips stated that he represents Holy Name of Jesus Parish and, with regard to disputes about ownership, would also represent the Archdiocese. He asserted that Holy Name of Jesus Parish is the owner and is responsible for the upkeep of the building.

Mr. Phillips stated that St. Laurentius and Holy Name of Jesus are located "21 doors apart." Demographics have changed and the parishes were merged as Holy Name of Jesus Parish. St. Laurentius has been deconsecrated and relegated to profane but not sordid use. It cannot be used as a Catholic church. Mr. Phillips stated that their objections are two. First, the building presents a significant public safety risk. Second, the financial realities of property make rehabilitation infeasible. The parish cannot make the \$4.75 million in repairs that are necessary to restore this property. Mr. Phillips reminded the Commission of the Church of the Assumption and asked it not to travel down the same path, designating a property only to review a hardship application soon thereafter. The same safety and feasibility concerns were raised in that case. He contended that that designation did not further the purposes enumerated in the ordinance. The Church of the Assumption does not strengthen the economy of the city. It does not foster civic pride. It is a blighted building. The Church of the Assumption has broken windows and holes in the roof. He suggested that the Commission should not put St. Laurentius in the same position as the Church of the Assumption. Mr. Phillips stated that he understands the passion and fervor of the advocates for St. Laurentius, but he asserted that passion and fervor should not trump logic and reason, which show that there is not sufficient money to make this building safe and reusable. He stated that he will introduce testimony about the unsafe condition of the building. He claimed that "chunks" of the building are falling off. He observed that the engineer commissioned by the Friends of St. Laurentius came to the same conclusion as his engineer: without significant invention, the building is at risk for a catastrophic collapse.

Mr. Phillips introduced Nick Cinalli and Joel Darras of O'Donnell & Naccarato, an engineering firm. Mr. Sherman observed that the property owners' consultants should address the nomination and potential designation and not attempt to offer a financial hardship application, for which there is a separate process. Mr. Sherman asked Mr. Farnham to elaborate. Mr. Farnham reminded the audience that he had earlier stated that the Commission has broad discretion when designating. Therefore, one could argue that any testimony and evidence is germane. Mr. Farnham stated that, in his personal opinion, the Commission should consider whether the condition of the building is such that it is no longer able to represent its historical significance to the public. If the condition is so deteriorated that the building is no longer capable of representing its historical significance to the public, then the Commission might want to decline to designate. Mr. Farnham stated that a property owner is free to make a claim that a building cannot be feasibly reused during the review of a nomination, and such a claim may be persuasive to the Commissioners, who have full discretion. He noted, however, that his personal opinion is that such claims should be vetted within the confines of the financial hardship process, not informally during a nomination review. Mr. Farnham informed the property owner and the audience that there is also a process for addressing claims that a building poses a public safety hazard. Such a claim can be discussed at Historical Commission meeting, but the property owner has an obligation to inform the Department of Licenses & Inspections of potential public safety hazards. If the Department determines that the building poses an imminent danger, it can act without the Historical Commission's consent and order that the danger be abated. Mr. Phillips claimed that the condition is such that the building cannot represent its history. It may collapse, he contended. Pieces of the building are falling off and the building is surrounded by scaffolding and netting, he asserted. Mr. Phillips stated that the engineers had provided the owner with options: demolish the building, demolish the towers, or put a 20-year Band-Aid on it, with netting and wrapping on the towers. The options will not allow the building to adequately represent its history.

Engineer Nick Cinalli stated that his firm was hired in June 2013 to conduct façade assessments of many churches. He explained that his firm was charged with assessing the facades for compliance with the City's façade ordinance. He stated that they inspected the St. Laurentius facades and had concerns. They were hired to conduct additional assessment and made exploratory holes to see the conditions within the walls. They found that the conditions were unsafe. He stated that they informed the Department of Licenses & Inspections of the conditions. The sidewalk protection was then installed. He stated that they then conducted additional inspections of the towers and issued a report. That report outlined four possible actions: repair the facades for roughly \$2.5 to \$3.5 million, demolish the towers for roughly \$1.9 million, stabilize the building for later repair for \$1.2 to \$1.7 million, and demolish the building for \$1 million. Mr. Cinalli reported that, after the Committee on Historic Designation meeting, the engineers assessed the building again to determine whether the stone façade was adequately attached to the back-up masonry. They incorporated the information gained into a revised report and also had two contractors prepare estimates to repair based on that information.

Engineer Joel Darras, who did the inspections, addressed the Commission. He stated that his engineering group restores buildings; it does not seek to demolish them. He reported that his latest work at St. Laurentius was conducted on 17, 19, 22, 23, and 24 June 2015. His team assessed seven locations at the church. They removed stone and inspected the conditions. At the rear of the church, they found that the conditions were "serviceable." There were no unsafe conditions. On the Memphis Street side, they found "serviceable" conditions toward the rear of the side, but found evidence of deterioration, cracking, separation, and delamination. Nearest the tower on the side, the conditions were worse. On the towers themselves, they found cracks, displacement, delamination, and other deterioration. He stated that his firm has done much

more exploration and assessment of the conditions at the church than any other engineer. He noted that they donned haz-mat suits and climbed the towers, which are filled with bird feces and carcasses. He referenced the other engineers' reports and noted that the Ortega report stated that the sidewalk protection was justified. The Ortega report also identifies the unsafe conditions and notes the possibility of a catastrophic collapse. Mr. Darras recommended that sidewalk protection should be installed at all but the rear façade. Mr. Phillips noted that pieces of masonry the size of an iPhone have fallen off the building onto the scaffolding. He asked Mr. Darras to describe the measures that would need to be taken to stabilize the building for 20 years. Mr. Darras stated that it would include the sidewalk scaffolding as well as structural elements on the towers and front of the building such as aluminum channels, chain-link fencing, and wire rope. Architecturally, with the stabilization, it would not look like St. Laurentius Church. Mr. Cinalli stated that, at best, the stabilization would be accomplished with steel strapping on the towers, bands of steel wrapped around the towers at various locations. At worst, a chain-link fence or fiberglass mesh would be wrapped around the towers. Mr. Phillips stated that the two estimates for the masonry repair option are for about \$4.75 million. He asked the engineers when the repairs or stabilization should be undertaken. Both engineers said that they should be done immediately.

Mr. Sherman asked when the church closed. Father John Sibel, pastor of Holy Name of Jesus Parish, stated that it closed in 2013. Mr. Sherman noted that the unsafe conditions existed when the church was in use. Mr. Phillips responded that one would assume that that was the case. Father Sibel stated that both St. Laurentius and Holy Name of Jesus closed and a new parish was created named Holy Name of Jesus. He stated that he became pastor of the church on 1 July 2014. He stated that, when he became pastor, he reviewed all of the documents related to St. Laurentius. He stated that the documents reveal that maintenance had been deferred as far back as the early 1960s. The towers should have been, but were not repaired in the early 1960s because of a lack of funding. He stated that it currently costs \$42,000 annually to maintain St. Laurentius as an empty building. He stated that Holy Name operated at a deficit of \$78,264 over the last year. He explained that parish money is spent on Girl Scout sponsorship, food for the poor, Alcoholics Anonymous, and other services to the public. Mr. Sherman asked Mr. Phillips to concentrate on the merits of the nomination. Mr. Phillips responded that, if the building is designated, it will consume funds that would otherwise be spent on various services. Also, the building continues to deteriorate and cannot satisfy the goals of a historic designation. Mr. Phillips stated that he would not call architect Jerry Roller to testify, but Mr. Roller would have stated that it would cost an additional \$1.5 to \$2.0 million above the repair cost to adapt the building for another use. Mr. Phillips stated that he wanted to call one additional witness, who would discuss the impact of a designation on the church's ability to convey the property to a new owner. If the church cannot fix the property and cannot sell the property, it will just sit there and continue to deteriorate. It will be another Church of the Assumption. Mr. Phillips reminded the Commission of the St. Laurentius School. Father Sibel stated that 20% to 25% of the collection goes to supporting the school.

Brendan Flynn, a commercial realtor, stated that he was retained by the parish to market the property for sale. It listed on the commercial MLS. An email blast was sent to more than 375 local brokers about the availability of the property. It was offered publicly. He stated that he spoke with numerous local developers. The general consensus was that no one would have interest in the property if it was designated. He reported that there were five inspections of the property by potential buyers who would retain, not demolish, the building. He stated that they all indicated that they would not be interested if it were designated because they would not be able to afford to restore it to the applicable standards. They also indicated that the price would have to be \$0 for them to be able to feasibly retain the building. They were not willing to pay for it. Mr. Sherman confirmed that he was claiming that potential developers would only want the building

if it were given to them for free and not designated as historic. Mr. Flynn confirmed that that was his claim.

Mr. Gupta asked Mr. Phillips if they contested any of the claims about the architectural or historical significance of the building made in the nomination. Mr. Phillips responded that they do not contest that this building had importance as a church and still has importance in the hearts of the community. He stated that they are not contesting its importance, but are asking the Commission to use its discretion and decline to designate this church. He stated that, if they gave this building away for free, they would be giving someone a \$4.75 million liability.

Hal Schirmer introduced himself as an attorney for the Friends of St. Laurentius and asked the chair to permit him to question the realtor, Mr. Flynn. Mr. Sherman allowed it. Mr. Schirmer asked if documentation related to the five inspections were submitted to the Historical Commission. Mr. Flynn stated that he turned the paperwork over to his client, but did not know whether the client gave it to the Historical Commission. Mr. Thompson asked Mr. Flynn how long the property was marketed. Mr. Flynn responded "about a month." He stated that that was sufficient time to gauge the market. Mr. Thompson asked if all five potential buyers were interested. Mr. Flynn replied that they would be interested if the property is not designated as historic. Mr. Thompson observed that, if the parish sold it for \$1, then it would save the \$1 million in demolition costs. Mr. Phillips stated that no buyer will take the property if it is designated. If designated, it will continue to deteriorate.

Mr. Mattioni asked for a clarification regarding the property owner. Mr. Phillips stated that there are two answers to that question. Under canon law, it is owned by Holy Name of Jesus Parish. Under civil law, it is held in trust by the Archdiocese for Holy Name of Jesus Parish. Several in the audience objected. Mr. Mattioni stated that he was asking for the opinion of Mr. Phillips on the matter. Mr. Phillips added that the Archdiocese had a \$3.1 million deficit last year. Mr. Sherman stated that he concludes that the owner is opposed to the designation. Mr. Phillips agreed.

Mr. Thomas stated that he read the nomination and feels that the Criteria for Designation that are cited have been met. He stated that he is aware of many buildings in poor condition that have been designated as historic. He stated that buildings that are imminently dangerous may still be good candidates for designation. He stated that a building may be designated one day and ordered demolished by the Department of Licenses & Inspections the next, but the Historical Commission cannot base its designation decision on what might happen at a later date. It must determine whether the building satisfies one or more of the Criteria for Designation. He stated that he is working with a developer now who is considering rehabilitating a church with historic tax credits. He noted that Temple University almost demolished the Baptist Temple. He asked the Commission not to try to predict the future, but look at the nomination and Criteria. Mr. Phillips interjected that the Commission must take into account the purposes laid out for it when considering designations. He stated that the Commission is charged with enhancing the public realm, strengthening the economy, and fostering a sense of civic pride. If the building collapses or is an aesthetic blight, it does not satisfy those criteria. Ms. Spina countered that the Commission is charged with protecting sites that are architecturally and culturally important to the city. The City Hall statue of William Penn was covered with scaffolding for years, but it was still important and worthy of protection. Mr. Phillips asked the Commission to use its discretion and take the financial and public safety realities into account. Ms. Merriman thanked Mr. Phillips for his comments.

Mr. Thompson noted several letters supporting the designation. He noted the support of Councilmen Clarke and Squilla as well as State Senator Farnese. The Fishtown Neighbors Association supports the designation.

Susan Feenan, an architect who lives near the church, addressed the Commission and showed a Powerpoint presentation. She stated that she cares deeply about the fabric of her neighborhood. She pointed to several important buildings that have been lost. She asserted that St. Laurentius, a magnificent church standing on the corner among small and tight rowhouses, is important. She stated that something like this will never be built again. She stated that it will likely not return to its use as a Catholic church, but it should be preserved. She concluded that a life without old buildings is like a life without grandparents.

Joseph Jenkowsky, a director of the Polish Beneficial Association of Philadelphia, reminded the Commission that the Committee on Historic Designation unanimously recommended the designation of St. Laurentius. He opined that the church is an architectural masterpiece and should be refurbished as a worship site.

Patrick Grossi of the Preservation Alliance stated that his organization strongly supports the nomination. He stated that the outpouring of support for the nomination shows that the building is very important.

Mr. Gupta asked if anyone in the audience has any testimony to refute the nomination's claims regarding significance. Mr. Sherman responded that it appears that no one is refuting the claims. Mr. Mattioni noted that the property owner has acknowledged the church's historical and architectural significance.

Frank T. Brzozowski stated that his family worshiped at St. Laurentius for four generations, since the 1800s. He objected to the comparison with the Church of the Assumption, which is deteriorated and has no active congregation. He questioned the conclusions of the engineers and asked if they had repaired the damage they had done to the building with their invasive tests. He stated that he has been locked out of his church. He asserted that the parishioners should have been given an opportunity to buy the church, but they were not. He stated that the parishioners should be given an opportunity to obtain bids on the work to repair the church to challenge the Archdiocese's numbers. He noted that the Commission designated murals in a Catholic church earlier in the meeting. He reported that the interior of St. Laurentius holds much significant art.

Brenna D. Kelly stated that she recently moved to the block and, although she did not attend the church, would like to see it preserved. She stated that the value of her home depends on the outcome in this case. She stated that the church spires provide joy. She stated that her neighbors are also in favor of the church's preservation.

David A. Traub of Save Our Sites stated that the organization supports the designation of St. Laurentius Church. He stated that the church is a big mother hen. It hovers over Fishtown.

John Wisniewski stated that he heads the Friends of St. Laurentius group. He disputed the engineers' claims that stone fragments are falling from the building. He noted that Friends has appealed the closure of the church to the Vatican. He stated that his group has retained an engineer to evaluate the building. He reported that most Polish churches in the city have been lost. This church represents the Polish community throughout the region.

Oscar Beisert stated that the Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission has preliminarily determined that the building is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. He stated that the property owner did not consider the opinions of the community when it decided to demolish the building. He remarked that this church has a community backing it.

Mr. Schirmer distributed a document regarding the ownership of the property. He stated that it is not entirely clear who owns the church. He stated that the deceased cardinal holds it in trust and the parishioners are the beneficiary of the trust.

Mr. Thompson stated that an active school is associated with the church. He asked the Commission to designate the church. He acknowledged that the Archdiocese may submit a financial hardship application in the future, but that should not prevent the Commission from designating it today.

Chuck Valentine, the chairperson of the parish council and a neighborhood resident, introduced himself. He observed that the chair of the Commission has stated that this discussion should be about historical significance, not economics, but he asserted that the Commission's decision will have economic repercussions. Mr. Valentine stated that he led the fight to oppose the closing of the church. He reported that the Department of Licenses & Inspections has issued violations against the church. He commented that they will need to account for the violations. He stated that the parish council obtained its own engineer and that engineer agreed with O'Donnell & Naccarato, the Archdiocese's engineer. Mr. Valentine asked how the parish will address the violations if the building is designated as historic. He asserted that the parish does not have the money to make the repairs. Designation will take away the economically viable option of demolition. Designation will force the parish to repair the building, which it cannot afford. Presenting a hardship application will be costly for the parish. He stated that the Commission's decision will have a significant economic impact on the parish; therefore, it should take economics into account when making its designation decision. He stated that the parish already executed a contract for the demolition at a cost of more than \$900,000. Mr. Valentine stated that he was the chair of the parish council under the former pastor and is the chair under the current pastor. He begged the Commission to consider the economic realities of the situation. He stated that the reality is that, if the designation and demolition matter is protracted, the school will be forced to close. He stated that this is a serious matter and will have serious impacts on the community. He reported that the parish is facing a \$250,000 repair bill for the tower at the other church. He stated that Holy Name is as historic as St. Laurentius. He stated that they do not have the funds to save one church, much less two.

Mary Winn, a member of the parish council, addressed the Commission. She stated that the history of St. Laurentius is her history as well and is now the history of two parishes. She stated that the mission of her parish and of her parish council is to provide an opportunity for local people to receive the sacraments and to send their children to parochial school. She stated that the parish cannot afford to preserve the building. The parish must pursue its primary mission, its religious mission, and not divert its limited resources to a building it cannot afford to use. She observed that St. Laurentius or Lawrence was a deacon in the third century and served Pope Sixtus, who was martyred. She reported that St. Lawrence was also martyred. Before he was martyred, he decided to give all church property including the sacred vessels to the poor. He chose the ministry over the material. She stated that the parish has made the same decision; the practice of the religion must take precedence over the preservation of a building. She stated that the parish council will choose the ministry over the material every time.

Gene Lynam stated that he is a parishioner at Holy Name and his wife had been a parishioner at St. Laurentius. He noted that he was married in St. Laurentius. He stated that the building

does not represent the cultural heritage of the community. He claimed that a designation of the church will have a significant negative impact on the parish.

ACTION: Mr. Thomas moved to adopt the recommendation of the Committee on Historic Designation and find that the property at 1600-06 and 1608-10 E. Berks Street, St. Laurentius Church, satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, E, H, and J, designate it as historic, and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Mr. Gupta seconded the motion, which passed by a vote of 8 to 1. Mr. Mattioni dissented.

Mr. Phillips asked the Commission to confirm that it was designating only the church building, which does extend across the parcel boundary, and not the other building on the 1608-10 E. Berks Street parcel. Mr. Sherman stated that the Commission designated the church building as defined in the nomination.

Mr. Mattioni explained that he has severe reservations about designating a property when the owner objects to the designation. He stated that, despite his reservations based on property owners' rights, he agrees that the overwhelming historical significance of the church was clearly established.

ADJOURNMENT

ACTION: At 1:30 p.m., Ms. Merriman moved to adjourn. Ms. Turner seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES CITED IN THE MINUTES

Standard 6: Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.

Standard 9: New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new works shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

Roofs Guideline: Recommended: Designing additions to roofs such as residential, office, or storage spaces; elevator housing; decks and terraces; or dormers or skylights when required by the new use so that they are inconspicuous from the public right-of-way and do not damage or obscure character-defining features.

§14-1005(6)(d) Restrictions on Demolition.

No building permit shall be issued for the demolition of a historic building, structure, site, or object, or of a building, structure, site, or object located within a historic district that contributes, in the Historical Commission's opinion, to the character of the district, unless the Historical Commission finds that issuance of the building permit is necessary in the public interest, or unless the Historical Commission finds that the building, structure, site, or object cannot be used for any purpose for which it is or may be reasonably adapted. In order to show that building, structure, site, or object cannot be used for any purpose for which it is or may be reasonably adapted, the owner must demonstrate that the sale of the property is impracticable, that

commercial rental cannot provide a reasonable rate of return, and that other potential uses of the property are foreclosed.

DRAFT