

**THE MINUTES OF THE 669<sup>TH</sup> STATED MEETING OF THE  
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

**FRIDAY, 11 MAY 2018  
ROOM 18-029, 1515 ARCH STREET  
BOB THOMAS, CHAIR**

**PRESENT**

Robert Thomas, AIA, Chair  
Emily Cooperman, Ph.D.  
Terry Dillon, Department of Licenses & Inspections  
Steven Hartner, Department of Public Property  
John Mattioni, Esq.  
Dan McCoubrey, AIA, LEED AP BD+C  
David Schaaf, Philadelphia City Planning Commission  
H. Ahada Stanford, Commerce Department  
Betty Turner, M.A.

Jonathan E. Farnham, Executive Director  
Randal Baron, Historic Preservation Planner III  
Kim Chantry, Historic Preservation Planner II  
Laura DiPasquale, Historic Preservation Planner II  
Allyson Mehley, Historic Preservation Planner I  
Megan Schmitt, Historic Preservation Planner I  
Leonard Reuter, Esq., City Law Department

**ALSO PRESENT**

Jonathan Stavin, PMC Property Group  
David Fineman, Esq.  
David S. Traub, Save Our Sites  
Antonio Castro  
J.M. Duffin  
Michael Phillips, Obermayer, Rebmann, Maxwell & Hippel, LLP  
Pat Duffy  
Kevin McMahon, Powers & Company  
Ori Feibush, OCF  
Dennis Carlisle, OCF  
Brooke Saylor, OCF  
Liz Scott, OCF  
Nicholas Staller, OCF  
Alexander Groomes, OCF  
Jonathan Makar, OCF  
Elizabeth Melton, OCF  
Fred Ritter, OCF  
Eric Gerchberg, OCF  
Atiya Groomes, OCF  
H. Gunther  
Elliot Carter  
Susan Babbitt

Carolyn Sutton  
Eric Brugger  
David Garonzik  
Tiffany Green, Concerned Citizens of Point Breeze  
Robert Flaynik, RFA Architecture  
Christopher Arnold, WFW  
Donna Rilling  
Melanie Grewal  
Billy Grewal  
Patrick Boyle, Spring Garden Community Development Corporation  
Alan Rubin, Spring Garden Civic Association  
David A. Smith, Spiezle Architects  
Paul Boni, Society Hill Civic Association  
Frank Cianfrani  
Joe Brassell, Cobra Electric  
Tom Grant, Cobra Electric  
Sean Whalen, Esq., Vintage Law  
Lee Deddens, MJRA  
Heather Lutzker, GMI  
Robert Careless, Esq., Cozen O'Connor  
Tim Shaaban  
Sean McManus, John S. McManus, Inc.  
Nicholas Baker, Philadelphia Streets  
Mary McGettigan, WP3P  
Jon Adler  
Marie Filippone  
Fred Baumert, Keast & Hood  
Andrew Palewski, Callowhill Neighborhood Association  
Kenny Pollack, NCL  
Harry Pollack, NCL  
Paul Steinke, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia  
Oscar Beisert  
Christopher Arnold, PE, Wick Fisher White

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Thomas called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m. Commissioners Cooperman, Hartner, McCoubrey, Schaaf, and Turner joined him. Terry Dillon attended as the Department of Licenses & Inspections designee. Ms. Stanford and Mr. Mattioni arrived after the call to order.

**MINUTES OF THE 668<sup>TH</sup> STATED MEETING OF THE PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

**ACTION:** Ms. Turner moved to approve the minutes of the 668<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission, held 13 April 2018. Mr. Dillon seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**CONTINUANCE REQUESTS**

Mr. Thomas observed that the Historical Commission could not consider the continuance requests for 208-10 Rex Avenue and 100 S. Independence West Mall until additional Commissioners arrived at the meeting, owing to a lack of a quorum that would occur with two recusals. He decided to postpone consideration of those requests and to move ahead on the agenda to the next continuance requests.

**ADDRESS: 230-36, 238 VINE ST, 255 BODINE ST**

Name of Resource: The Painted Bride  
Proposed Action: Designation  
Property Owner: Painted Bride Art Center, Inc.  
Nominator: Emily Smith, Philadelphia’s Magic Gardens  
Staff Contact: Allyson Mehley, allyson.mehley@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

**ADDRESS: 1301-25 CHESTNUT ST**

Name of Resource: Grand Court, Wanamaker’s  
Proposed Action: Interior Designation  
Property Owner: Behringer Harvard REIT  
Nominator: Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia  
Staff Contact: Meredith Keller, Meredith.keller@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

**ADDRESS: 6369 GERMANTOWN AVE**

Name of Resource: “Genteel Two-Story Stone Dwelling”  
Proposed Action: Designation  
Property Owner: TVC PA 6365 Germantown Avenue LLC  
Nominator: The Keeping Society of Philadelphia  
Staff Contact: Laura DiPasquale, laura.dipasquale@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

**ADDRESS: 6365-67 GERMANTOWN AVE**

Name of Resource: Richard and Sophia Thewlis Bew Store and Residence  
Proposed Action: Designation  
Property Owner: TVC PA 6365 Germantown Avenue LLC  
Nominator: The Keeping Society of Philadelphia  
Staff Contact: Laura DiPasquale, laura.dipasquale@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

**ADDRESS: 801-15 N 4TH ST AND 319 BROWN ST**

Name of Resource: St. Agnes Roman Catholic Church, Parish House, and School  
Proposed Action: Designation  
Property Owner: St. Agnes-St. John Nepomucene Parish/Archdiocese of Philadelphia  
Nominator: Northern Liberties Neighbors Association/The Keeping Society of Philadelphia  
Staff Contact: Jon Farnham, jon.farnham@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Thomas explained that the Historical Commission has been presented with requests to table the nominations for 230-36 and 238 Vine Street, 255 Bodine Street, 1301-25 Chestnut Street, 6369 Germantown Avenue, and 6365-67 Germantown Avenue and remand them to the June 2018 meeting of the Committee on Historic Designation and to table the nomination for 801-15 N. 4<sup>th</sup> Street And 319 Brown Street and remand it to a future meeting of the Historical Commission. He asked if anyone on the Commission or in the audience had comments on the requests. None were offered.

**ACTION:** Ms. Cooperman moved to table the nominations for 230-36 and 238 Vine Street, 255 Bodine Street, 1301-25 Chestnut Street, 6369 Germantown Avenue, and 6365-67 Germantown Avenue and remand them to the June 2018 meeting of the Committee on Historic Designation, and to table the nomination for 801-15 N. 4<sup>th</sup> Street And 319 Brown Street and remand it to a future meeting of the Historical Commission. Mr. Schaaf seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Ms. Stanford arrived at the meeting and joined the Commission.

### **THE REPORT OF THE ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE, 24 APRIL 2018**

Dan McCoubrey, Chair

#### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Mr. Thomas introduced the Consent Agenda, which included applications for 201 S. 13<sup>th</sup> Street, 250 S. 18<sup>th</sup> Street and 124-26 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. He asked if anyone on the Commission or in the audience had comments on the requests. None were offered.

**ACTION:** Mr. McCoubrey moved to adopt the recommendations of the Architectural Committee for the applications for 201 S. 13<sup>th</sup> Street, 250 S. 18<sup>th</sup> Street, and 124-26 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. Ms. Turner seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

#### **ADDRESS: 208-10 REX AVE**

Name of Resource: William L. Hirst/H. Louis Duhring Residence

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Virginia, William, and Hewson Baltzell

Nominator: Chestnut Hill Conservancy

Staff Contact: Laura DiPasquale, [laura.dipasquale@phila.gov](mailto:laura.dipasquale@phila.gov), 215-686-7660

**DISCUSSION:** With the arrival of Ms. Stanford, Mr. Thomas returned to the 208-10 Rex Avenue agenda item. Ms. Cooperman recused from the review, owing to her relationship with the Chestnut Hill Conservancy, the nominator. Mr. Farnham presented the continuance request to the Historical Commission. He observed that the property owner is requesting that the Commission continue the review of the nomination and remand it to the September 2018 meeting of the Committee on Historic Designation. He noted that such a continuance would not place the property at risk; the property would remain under the Commission's jurisdiction. Mr. Thomas asked if anyone on the Commission or in the audience had comments on the requests. None were offered. No one representing the nominator was in attendance.

**ACTION:** Mr. McCoubrey moved to table the nomination for 208-10 Rex Avenue and remand it to the September 2018 meeting of the Committee on Historic Designation. Mr. Schaaf seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mr. Mattioni arrived and joined the Historical Commission.

## **AGENDA**

### **ADDRESS: 201 S 13TH ST**

Proposal: Install replica fiberglass balcony to replace removed terra cotta balcony

Type of Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Walnut Square Partners

Applicant: Keith Braccia, PMC Property Group

History: 1900, Horace Trumbauer, architect, St. James Hotel

Individual Designation: 8/2/1973

District Designation: None

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

**ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:** The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval of a simplified, fiberglass balcony, provided that no historic material is covered or removed and that the profiles better replicate the original balcony, with the staff to review a shop drawing showing the profiles and attachments, pursuant to Standard 6.

**OVERVIEW:** This application proposes to install a fiberglass replica of a balcony on the north or Walnut facade of the St. James Hotel at 13<sup>th</sup> and Walnut Streets. The original balcony, sometimes called a cornice, was terracotta with a steel frame. It was removed without a building permit or the Historical Commission's approval after it was determined to be structurally unsound and posing a public safety hazard. The property owner attempted to legalize the removal of the balcony with a financial hardship application, which claimed that it would be financially infeasible to replace the balcony in kind. After several iterations, the Historical Commission denied the application in October 2015, asserting that the applicant failed to substantiate the claim of financial hardship. The property owner appealed the denial, which was upheld by the Board of License & Inspection Review. The property owner now seeks to comply the violation with the reconstruction of the missing balcony.

The replacement balcony would be custom cast in fiberglass. The color and surface finish would match the surviving balconies on the building. The patching material that was installed on the facade where the old balcony was located will be retained in place and covered with the new balcony. The proposed balcony will be a simplified, abstracted version of the original balcony. Most of the original volumes of the balcony are represented in the current drawing. However, the console brackets, which support the balcony between the windows, have been completely flattened in the current drawing. The applicant has agreed to give the console brackets some volume and projection so that they appear to support the balcony, but the drawing has not yet been revised. The upper section of the original balcony was highly articulated with decorative reliefs. The applicant has agreed to give the flat panel areas some articulation, but, again, the drawing has not yet been revised. Finally, the applicant has agreed that the proposal is limited to the north, Walnut Street, façade. The applicant is not proposing to remove and replace other, similar balconies on the building.

**ACTION:** See Consent Agenda

**ADDRESS: 250 S 18TH ST**

Proposal: Install aluminum windows

Type of Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: 250 S. 18th Street Condominium Associates

Applicant: Heather Lutzker, GMI Contractors, Inc.

History: 1923, McIlvaine & Roberts, architects, 1800 Rittenhouse

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 approval, pursuant to Standard 6.

**OVERVIEW:** This application proposes to replace historic wood windows with aluminum windows at the second and third floors of this condominium building. The Historical Commission staff has already approved the installation of the proposed windows at floors three and above. The proposed windows closely mirror the shapes and dimensions of the existing windows, within a margin of approximately one inch at the jamb, sill, head, and meeting rail. The current windows are covered by storm windows, which would be eliminated as part of this application.

**ACTION:** See Consent Agenda

**ADDRESS: 1517 GREEN ST**

Proposal: Construct four-story building with roof deck

Type of Review Requested: Review and Comment

Owner: SPD Investments LLC

Applicant: Chris Carickhoff, M Architects LLC

History: Vacant lot

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Spring Garden Historic District, Non-contributing, 10/11/2000

Staff Contact: Allyson Mehley, allyson.mehley@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

**ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:** The Architectural Committee offered the following comments:

- the roof deck should be revised to be less conspicuous, set back from the front façade, and have a simple metal railing;
- the height of the first story should be increased, increasing the building's overall height and allowing the windows and cornice to align with the adjacent building;
- the positioning of the basement window should be revised, so it does not intrude on the floor level above; and
- the material of the cornice and door trim should be identified.

**OVERVIEW:** This application proposes to construct a new four-story building in the Spring Garden Historic District. At the time of the district's designation, 1517 Green Street was a vacant lot. The building will be a multi-family with four residential units, and will have a basement and a roof deck. The proposed setback and height will be appropriately integrated into the existing row. The applicant proposes that the new building's details will match 1515 Green Street.

In response to the comments, the application has been revised since the 24 April meeting to reflect the following:

- A simple metal railing has been added to the roof deck. The set back of the roof deck has not been revised but the architect provided a section drawing illustrating that height of the railing and the setback in relationship to the cornice (page 6 of application). The section shows that the cornice is slightly higher than the railing. It also shows the pilot house set back over 24' from the cornice. Neither the railing or pilot house will be visible from Green Street.
- The height of the building has not been revised. The water table, first floor masonry window sill, and the top of the basement windows have been revised to align with 1519 Green Street (the adjacent building).
- The cornice will be Fypon as identified on the revised elevation drawing (page 6).
- The front door has been revised to include a double front door with transom. Door trim and door material have not been identified.

**DISCUSSION:** Ms. Mehley presented the application to the Historical Commission. No one represented the application.

Mr. McCoubrey commented that the application's revisions since the Architectural Committee meeting on 24 April 2018 did reflect most of the Committee's recommendations. However, all front façade windows remain equally sized and the height of the first floor has not been increased. Mr. McCoubrey noted that historically the first floor on this type of house would have had a greater floor to ceiling height.

Mr. Thomas opened the floor for public comment. Billy and Melanie Grewal, the owners of the adjacent property at 1515 Green Street, introduced themselves. Mr. Thomas asked the staff to confirm that 1517 Green Street was a vacant lot at the time of the historic district designation. Ms. Mehley confirmed that the lot was vacant at the time of designation. Mr. Thomas reminded all present that the Historical Commission only had the capacity to review and comment on the 1517 Green Street application rather than review it with full jurisdiction. Mr. Grewal provided comment on the application. He expressed concern about proposed use, building height, window well at front of façade, and exterior metal stairs at rear of building.

Mr. Thomas noted that no action was required. The Historical Commission had reviewed the application, provided comments, and provided an opportunity for the public to comment.

**ADDRESS: 318 S 4TH ST**

Proposal: Construct second-floor rear addition

Type of Review Requested: Review In Concept

Owner: Mary Morrisette

Applicant: Mary Morrisette

History: 1970, Stonorov & Haws, architects, Nancy Grace House

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Society Hill Historic District, Contributing, 3/10/1999

Staff Contact: Megan Cross Schmitt, [megan.schmitt@phila.gov](mailto:megan.schmitt@phila.gov), 215-686-7660

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

**OVERVIEW:** This in-concept application proposes to construct a second-story rear addition on this 1970 building at the corner of South 4<sup>th</sup> and Cypress Streets, which is classified as

contributing in the Society Hill Historic District. The addition extends from the rear roof slope and appears to be clad in red brick. No changes are proposed for the front of the building.

Two in-concept applications for this building have been reviewed recently by the Architectural Committee. A June 2017 application proposed a three-and-a-half story colonial-style building at this site. The Committee recommended denial, and encouraged the applicant to submit an application that did not propose demolition of character-defining features. The application was withdrawn prior to review by the Historical Commission. A December 2017 application proposed demolition of portions of the building, and construction of an addition to create a three-and-a-half story modern building with metal panel bays, using some of the existing building as a base. The Commission voted to deny that application, owing to the prohibition against demolition and because it did not satisfy the Standards, and suggested that the applicant propose a plan that did not radically change the building.

The applicant is now presenting plans that have been revised to respond to comments made at the April 24, 2017 Architectural Committee meeting. Most notably, a flat roof is now being proposed at the rear yard addition instead of a gabled roof, and both existing chimneys are now to remain, rather than demolishing one, as was previously proposed.

**DISCUSSION:** Ms. Cross Schmitt presented the application to the Historical Commission. Architect Antonio Castro represented the application on behalf of the property owner.

Mr. Thomas offered a brief explanation of why buildings that were built as late as the 1970s were considered historic within the Society Hill Historic District. He explained that historic districts commemorated a certain period of significance, and the creation of Society Hill and its redevelopment was certainly historic, and had a tremendous impact on the twentieth century history of Philadelphia. Mr. Thomas said that at the time, Philadelphia's executive director of the City Planning Commission was even featured on the cover of Time Magazine. He explained that buildings do not have to be 50 years old to be significant; many of the buildings from the Redevelopment Period are considered historic.

Mr. McCoubrey commented that, as an in-concept approval, the applicant had moved very significantly in the design process towards something that certainly warranted another review by the Architectural Committee. Mr. Thomas asked Mr. McCoubrey if the current review was an in-concept review and if he thought that the applicant had listened to the comments of the Architectural Committee, to which Mr. McCoubrey replied yes. He went on to say that, assuming an addition could be appropriately made to this house, the proposal was likely as minimal an intervention as could be achieved.

Ms. Cooperman said that one of the things she thought was particularly important about this building as the work of a very important Modernist designer, Oskar Stonorov, was the sculptural quality of its massing. She further commented that one of the things that she found particularly interesting was the fact that Stonorov was creating this very sculptural form projecting on to the main street elevation, but then he made very interesting historicist gestures at the back of the building, showing that he was very conscious of the context. She gave two examples of this awareness of context, one being the shed roof mass in the back, another being the prominent chimney. Ms. Cooperman said that any future changes to this building would have to recognize the crucial importance of that massing. Mr. McCoubrey responded that he thought it was the Architectural Committee's belief that the gable and both of the chimneys needed to remain intact, as did the relationship between the site wall and the walkway in the back. He went on to



say that, at this point, it was difficult to understand what the impact of the proposal would actually be on these important features of the site.

Mr. Castro introduced himself as an architect representing the owner of the property. Mr. Thomas said that the Historical Commission had been discussing the fact that many of the recommendations of the Architectural Committee had been incorporated into the revised façade. He reminded Mr. Castro that the Historical Commission was reviewing an in-concept design, and that he had heard from the Architectural Committee that if there were to be an addition approved, this design seems to be the one that would work best. Mr. Thomas asked Mr. Castro if he had any comments that he wanted to make.

Mr. Castro said that, in revising their design, they had taken into consideration all of the suggestions and recommendations made at the Architectural Committee meeting. He described some of the changes they had made, including retaining the roof line and the two chimneys, staying within the original footprint by reducing the previous expansion of the basement, and keeping many of the original features such as the roofline and the courtyard. Mr. Thomas asked Mr. Castro to show the members of the public the cardboard model that he had brought to the table so they could understand what he was referencing, which he did. Mr. Castro pointed out the adjacent property belonging to the Gunthers, explaining that though the design of the addition would perhaps obstruct their view partially, they still had additional windows that would not be impacted.

Mr. Thomas asked if there were any other questions or comments. Paul Boni introduced himself as the Chair of the Zoning and Historic Preservation Committee for the Society Hill Civic Association, and thanked the Historical Commission for the opportunity to speak. Mr. Boni said that his committee had an emergency meeting earlier in the week where this proposal was reviewed, and it was attended by numerous neighbors, as well as the applicant, Mr. Castro. Mr. Boni stated how appreciative he was of the applicant's attendance, and then offered to convey the group's majority vote, and also to provide some additional comments that were made at the meeting. He said that the majority of the committee was not opposed to the idea of increasing the size of the building. However, they were not supportive of this particular concept because of their view that it was incompatible with the existing structure. He went on to say that the committee was of many minds. Mr. Boni said that one of the comments echoed what Ms. Gutterman had stated at the Architectural Committee meeting, which was that there are some buildings are so special they should not be touched or altered, and this was one of them. He said that another comment was that the addition should be lighter. Mr. Boni said that the committee did not agree with an argument that had been made at past Architectural Committee and Historical Commission meetings, which was that the size of the house was too small to be livable, and therefore an expansion was necessary. He said that the committee believed that the subject property was a good size, and that there were even smaller houses in Society Hill that were not only livable, but enjoyable. Mr. Boni explained that some of the architects on his committee were concerned about the state of the documentation involved in the application, and that, if an addition was to happen, there should be clearer documents and drawings so that the project would proceed smoothly and properly. He followed up by saying that he would leave it to the architects on the Historical Commission to determine whether the documents currently under review were sufficiently detailed. Mr. Boni remarked that the project had been getting better and better throughout the process. However, one comment was that it could benefit from additional review, perhaps by going back to the Architectural Committee to look at more of the details. He said that, on the one hand, people were talking about a concept, and, on the other hand, people were talking about details, framing them as separate matters. However, in this

case, because of the sensitivities involved, the size and placement of this building, its visibility, it was almost as though the two blended together. Mr. Boni concluded his remarks by passing out a photograph of 401 Cypress Street, identified in the Society Hill Historic District Inventory as being built ca. 1965 by the architects G. Holmes Perkins and Ronaldo Giurgola. Mr. Boni said that this property and the subject property may have different architects, but they are almost like a match, playing off of one another, not just at the front, but also at the back, where the grade and slope of the rear roof complement one another. Mr. Boni thanked the Historical Commission and the Architectural Committee for the opportunity to speak, and he thanked the architect, Mr. Castro, for his professionalism.

Rob Careless identified himself as an attorney with Cozen O'Connor representing the adjacent property owner, Herbert Gunther. Mr. Careless said that he would not repeat the concerns that were voiced by Mr. Boni, but that he did want to stress one critical point that was raised at the Architectural Committee meeting, which was that some properties should just remain as is. Mr. Careless said that his understanding of the proposal was that it would add 600 square feet to the second floor and 600 square feet to the basement, which would nearly double the size of the building. He went on to say that, as Mr. Castro had stated during his presentation, the second-story addition would impede light and air access at the second-story windows of Mr. Gunther's property, but what was not mentioned was that it would also impede light and air access at an existing skylight. Mr. Careless said that he understood that the Historical Commission considered light to be a zoning issue. However, he asserted that an adverse impact on accessing light at Mr. Gunter's property would be a character defining change to it. Mr. Careless argued that the original sloped roof at 318 S. 4<sup>th</sup> Street was done intentionally so as to not obstruct light and air access at the adjacent property. Mr. Thomas asked where the skylight was located, and Mr. Careless and Mr. Castro demonstrated the location using the model. Mr. Thomas asked whether there were windows at the party wall, to which Mr. Castro responded no. Mr. Careless thanked the members of the Historical Commission for their time.

Mr. Thomas remarked that the plans currently under review were really sketches, and he asked Mr. Castro to confirm whether he was the property owner's architect, to which Mr. Castro responded yes. Mr. Thomas stated that Mr. Castro had not prepared the plans currently under review, because someone else's name was on them, and Mr. Castro confirmed this was correct. Mr. Thomas stated that, whether the proposal ultimately received an approval or not, the applicant would need to return to the Architectural Committee, and at that point, he would need to have plans that were professionally developed.

Mr. Castro added that the new proposed expansion at both the second story and the basement had been reduced in square footage from the 600 that appeared on the plans to approximately 445 square feet because of changes they had made since the Architectural Committee meeting.

Mr. Thomas asked if there was any other discussion, to which there was no response.

Ms. Cooperman asked if an in-concept approval meant that they were approving the proposed envelope of the building, or the materials, and she requested clarification on what an approval would mean. Mr. Thomas responded that an approval would be for the size, massing and materials in general, as a way of giving the applicant guidance for how to approach proceeding with their design in more detail. Mr. McCoubrey stated that the architectural drawings submitted for final approval should be much more representative of the actual existing conditions of the property as well as proposed construction.

**ACTION:** Mr. McCoubrey moved to approve the application in concept. Mr. Mattioni seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**ADDRESS: 1432-36 N 2ND ST**

Proposal: Construct rear addition

Type of Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Trustees of St. Michael's Church

Applicant: Sean P. McManus, John S. McManus, Inc.

History: 1922, John McShain, contractor, St. Michael's Convent

Individual Designation: 6/2/1983

District Designation: None

Staff Contact: Kim Chantry, kim.chantry@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

**ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:** The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval, provided that the applicant considers pulling the stair back on the existing building, aligning the window in the new building with the existing windows, and replacing the existing masonry site wall with fencing, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standards 9 and 10.

**OVERVIEW:** This application proposes to construct a rear addition to serve as a gymnasium and multi-purpose space for LaSalle Academy. The addition will not be visible from the front of the designated building on N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. The addition will be clad in metal panels and include a new elevator to allow for accessibility to all classroom floors. The addition connects to the side of the historic building in such a manner that requires the alteration of only one window opening.

**DISCUSSION:** Ms. Chantry presented the application to the Historical Commission. Contractor Sean McManus and architect David Smith represented the application.

Ms. Chantry explained that the application has been supplemented and revised since the time of the review by the Architectural Committee. Mr. McManus displayed a revised rendering on a board. He stated that the windows have now been aligned with the existing building, which was a recommendation of the Committee. He explained that the existing site wall will remain and is not part of the scope of work.

Mr. Thomas asked for public comment. David Traub, representing Save Our Sites, stated that he has many questions about the project. It was suggested that Mr. Traub review the application materials available online and in the Historical Commission's office prior to the meeting; it is inappropriate for Mr. Traub to occupy the Historical Commission's time with questions that could be answered with a diligent review of the application materials prior to the meeting. Mr. Traub stated that he is confused by the rendering because it does not show St. Michael's Church. He agreed that the church is "distant," but noted that its steeple is partially visible in a photograph. He asked why the steeple does not appear in the rendering. He commented that he needs to orient himself; without the steeple, he is disoriented. It was explained that the rendering does not include the steeple because the proposed construction is not near the church. The construction site is located at the rear of the lot across the street from the church. The church cannot be seen from the construction site.

**ACTION:** Mr. McCoubrey moved to approve the revised application, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standards 9 and 10. Ms. Turner seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**ADDRESS: 100 S INDEPENDENCE W ML**

Name of Resource: Rohm & Haas

Proposed Action: Designation of property, interior, and objects

Property Owner: KPG-IMW Owner, LLC

Nominator: Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia

Staff Contact: Kim Chantry, kim.chantry@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

**DISCUSSION:** With the arrival of Mr. Mattioni, the Historical Commission returned to request to table the review of the nomination of 100 S. Independence West Mall. Mr. Thomas and Ms. Cooperman recused, owing to their firms involvements with the property. Ms. Turner assumed the chair. She asked if anyone on the Commission or in the audience had comments on the request. Paul Steinke, representing the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia, commented that the case has been continued multiple times, without comment from the Alliance. He explained that the Alliance is currently in negotiations with the property owner to place an easement on both the façade and portions of the interior, and those negotiations are continuing. An appraisal of the property is now underway. He concluded that the Alliance does not object to the owner's request for this continuance, owing to these ongoing negotiations.

**ACTION:** Mr. McCoubrey moved to continue the review of the nominations for 100 S. Independence West Mall and to remand the nomination to the June 2018 meeting of the Committee on Historic Designation. Mr. Mattioni seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**ADDRESS: 111 S INDEPENDENCE E MALL**

Proposal: Install first-floor exterior mechanical equipment

Type of Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Bourse Mall Assoc. L.P.

Applicant: Joseph Brassell, Cobra Electric

History: 1893, Hewitt Brothers, architects, Philadelphia Bourse Building

Individual Designation: 1/26/1971

District Designation: Old City Historic District, Significant, 12/12/2003

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

**ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:** The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval, provided the equipment has a matte finish, the pipes are painted to match, the louvers are installed within the existing windows frames, a gas-fired generator is considered, and the fill box is lowered to 3'-2" if possible, with the staff to review details including the anchors for the pipes into the stone, pursuant to Standards 9 and 10.

**OVERVIEW:** This application proposes to install exterior mechanical equipment at the southwest corner of the Bourse Building. The application includes the installation of a two-foot by three-foot fuel fill box, and 12-foot tall by one-foot in diameter generator exhaust pipe. The equipment would be located along Ranstead Street, but would be visible from S. Independence Mall East (aka S. 5th Street). The applicants have explored other alternatives, including running the duct on the interior, which would involve the removal of portions of the historic masonry. The application also proposes to install louvers in place of two basement windows on the front elevation.

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Baron presented the application to the Historical Commission. Engineer Christopher Arnold represented the application.

Mr. Baron pointed out that the applicants had revised their drawings to show the fill tank lowered to 3'-2", and the exhaust pipes painted two shades of brown to match the wall that they are mounted against. He noted that the Commission members have on the table before them a new drawing showing the louvers mounted behind and within the existing window sash in the well. He explained that the applicant is also prepared to discuss the possibility of using natural gas to power the generator which would obviate the need for much of the exterior mechanical installation. Mr. McCoubrey said that the Committee had also asked about installing the fill tank in the well below ground. Mr. Arnold said that this is not possible because the well cannot hold everything and it would impede access to the tank. He went on to explain that they had inquired of the Department of Licenses & Inspections in 2016 whether it would be possible to use natural gas, but was told that it would not be acceptable because the Philadelphia Gas Works will not provide a guarantee of continuous service. The Gas Works states in its tariff that the service can be interrupted at any time. Since this generator provides electricity to the elevators and emergency lighting, an interruption of service would not be acceptable. Mr. Thomas said that he appreciated their explanation.

**ACTION:** Mr. McCoubrey moved to approve the revised application, pursuant to Standards 9 and 10. Mr. Mattioni seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**ADDRESS: 124-26 N 2ND ST**

Proposal: Construct rooftop addition and decks; rehabilitate front façade

Type of Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: 124 N. Second Street Development LLC

Applicant: Tim Shaaban, Urban Space Development LLC

History: 1916, Fred Roberts, engineer, C.B. Porter & Co.

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Old City Historic District, Contributing, 12/12/2003

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

**ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:** The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval of the revised application, provided the six-over-six windows and the storefront are wood, the new balcony windows are metal with thinner frames and a greater setback, and the storefront has paneled doors and a stone base, with the staff to review details and mock-ups to show that the rooftop additions are inconspicuous and the mechanical equipment is invisible from the street, pursuant to Standards 6, 9 and the Roofs Guideline.

**OVERVIEW:** This application proposes to convert this former commercial building for residential use. A single-story addition, roof decks, and pilothouses will be added to the roof. The rooftop modifications will be inconspicuous because large buildings on three sides obstruct views. At the front façade, the open balconies of the fire stair will be infilled with historic-looking windows to match the remainder of the façade. The windows installed in the open balconies should have a simple, non-historic pane configuration and should be recessed deeply in the openings. The storefront will be modified with the insertion of an additional column and a storefront system that is not based on the historic configuration. The storefront should replicate the historic configuration as seen in the historic photographs, with an asymmetrical design with the doors on the left and the large storefront window on the right. Windows on the rear façade will be reopened.

**ACTION:** See Consent Agenda

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION, 18 APRIL 2018**

Emily Cooperman, Chair

**ADDRESS: ETTING ST, N 1200 BLOCK**

Name of Resource: Etting Street, N 1200 block between Flora St and Stiles St

Proposed Action: Rescission of block from Historic Street Paving Thematic District inventory

Property Owner: City of Philadelphia Streets Department

Applicant: Jordan Brody, Etting Street Holdings LLC

Staff Contact: Kim Chantry, kim.chantry@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION:** The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend denial of the removal of the 1200 block of N. Etting Street from the Historic Street Paving Thematic District, pursuant to Section 5.14 of the Historical Commission's Rules & Regulations.

**OVERVIEW:** This application proposes to remove the 1200 block of N. Etting Street from the inventory of the Historic Street Paving Thematic District. The block was added to the District inventory as part of an amendment in 2014.

In 1998, the Historical Commission designated the Historic Street Paving Thematic District, a collection of several hundred blocks of streets in the city that retain their historic street paving materials. In 1999, the Commission amended the district, adding a few streets that had been initially overlooked. The designation covers the cartway itself, but not the curbs or sidewalks. The historic preservation ordinance authorizes the Historical Commission to review building permit applications issued by the Department of Licenses & Inspections, but not streets permits for work within the right-of-way, which are issued by the Streets Department of the City of Philadelphia. Therefore, with regard to historic streets, the Historical Commission acts in an advisory capacity, providing advice to the Streets Department about the appropriateness of alterations to historic cartways. Per an informal agreement, the Streets Department consults with the Historical Commission whenever it undertakes work to historic streets or reviews applications from third parties for work to historic streets. The Streets Department should be commended for its stewardship of historic streets, which it undertakes voluntarily at great expense.

In 2014, the Streets Department commissioned Gilmore & Associates Inc. to study the conditions of streets that retain their historic paving materials and generate a report that would allow the Streets Department to plan strategically for the maintenance of the historic streets. The consultant surveyed every block listed in the inventory of the Historic Street Paving Thematic District as well as several that were not included in the district. The subject block had been overlooked in the late 1990s, when the nomination was prepared. It, along with 24 other blocks which had been initially overlooked, were added to the Historic Street Paving Thematic District as part of the 2014 amendment.

Since that time, multiple developers have constructed several buildings on this block, resulting in the removal of sections of the historic red brick paving. The applicant constructed multiple houses on this block, and as such, the Streets Department is requiring that the applicant restore the entire block to its historic appearance. The applicant claims that the requirement to reconstruct this block is cost-prohibitive and an undue burden, and is requesting that the block be removed from the District inventory so that the Streets Department will allow repaving in asphalt.

**DISCUSSION:** Ms. Chantry presented the rescission request to the Historical Commission. No one represented the rescission request.

Mr. Thomas asked if the existing patches were added after the block was added to the historic district inventory in 2014. Ms. Chantry displayed photographs of the block in 2014, and noted that it was not in pristine condition at that time, but that additional patches have been created since its designation. Mr. Thomas commented that there was enough integrity in 2014 to add the block to the historic district inventory. He asked if the developer could submit a hardship application if their complaint is that restoration is too expensive. Mr. Farnham responded that that would be one option, and the other option is for the developer to work out an arrangement with the Streets Department. He noted that there is the potential for the need for a new water line to be laid, and that perhaps the Water Department could then bear some of the cost to restore the historic paving. He opined that if the block were to remain on the historic district inventory, there would likely be a compromise between the various parties involved to restore the historic paving, perhaps without one developer bearing all of the cost.

Mr. Thomas asked for public comment. Noah Goldman, architect, asked about the age of the existing red brick, and about the shelf life for asphalt paving. Ms. Chantry responded that she did not have the date of the red brick on hand, and that the applicant is requesting to repave in asphalt. Mr. Farnham responded that it is likely that brick is much longer-lasting than asphalt. Mr. Thomas agreed, and noted that other red brick streets have lasted a long time. He noted that the red brick paving at Jeweler's Row is a compromise, in that it is a mix of historic red brick and newer red brick. He stated that a rescission request is before the Commission, which means that, to be granted, the historic resource must no longer meet the requirements to be listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. He noted that the block does not have to be in pristine condition to merit retention on the Register. He suggested that an example of when a rescission is appropriate is if there was a fire and there is no building remaining. He rhetorically asked if the block retains enough historic fabric to remain on the Philadelphia Register. He commented that, if a contractor opens up a historically-paved street, he or she is supposed to save the material and reinstall it to match the historic appearance.

An unidentified individual from the audience spoke. He stated that he is in attendance for a separate matter, but that he was one of the plumbers working on the 1200 block of N. Etting Street, and no one informed him about the historic designation of the street until the work was complete. He explained that he pulled plumbing permits for the block, and no one informed him of the historic value of the brick when those permits were pulled. He asked if there is supposed to be a process in place so that contractors are informed ahead of time. Mr. Thomas responded that the Department of Licenses & Inspections should inform the contractor. He also suggested that a contractor should assume that a street with historic street paving is on the Philadelphia Register, and one can also check online or call the staff and ask. Mr. McCoubrey asked about the procedure for obtaining a plumbing permit on a historically designated street. Mr. Farnham responded that if a contractor is obtaining a permit to open the street from the Streets Department, the Streets Department is aware of all of the blocks that are identified as historic. He noted that the Commission's staff can remind the Streets Department to inform their applicants when they are opening and closing historically paved streets. The unidentified plumber responded that the Water Department issued the permit that he referred to, not the Streets Department. The Streets Department is responsible for it and holds the contractor accountable, but the Water Department issues the permit and does not notify an applicant at the time of the permit application. Mr. Thomas responded that his earlier comment about the Department of Licenses & Inspections was incorrect, and that the staff will look into the process.

The unidentified individual noted that many of the contractors are older and not computer literate, so there needs to be a system in place that will inform them without the use of a computer. He noted that he could pull a permit for this street today, and would receive a call from the Streets Department 30 days later, telling him to restore the street to its original condition.

**ACTION:** Ms. Cooperman moved to deny the request to remove the 1200 block of N. Etting Street from the Historic Street Paving Thematic District, pursuant to Section 5.14 of the Historical Commission's Rules & Regulations. Mr. Schaaf seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**ADDRESS: 4800-14 LANCASTER AVE**

Name of Resource: Our Mother of Sorrows Church

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Archdiocese of Philadelphia

Nominator: Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia

Staff Contact: Allyson Mehley, allyson.mehley@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION:** The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that 4800-14 Lancaster Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation D and E.

**OVERVIEW:** This nomination proposes to designate Our Mother of Sorrows Church at 4800-14 Lancaster Avenue as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. While the larger parcel includes several buildings and an expansive cemetery, the nomination proposes exclusively to designate the church building itself. The nomination contends that the property satisfies Criteria for Designation D and E. Constructed in 1867 on a design by preeminent ecclesiastical architect Edwin F. Durang, the church building is significant as the work of an architect whose work significantly influenced the historical and architectural development of the City of Philadelphia, satisfying Criterion E. The church also embodies distinguishing characteristics of the Romanesque Revival style, satisfying Criterion D.

**DISCUSSION:** Ms. Mehley presented the nomination to the Historical Commission. Attorney Michael Philips represented the property owner, the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Paul Steinke of the Preservation Alliance of Philadelphia represented the nominator.

Mr. Thomas asked if the nomination was for the church building only. Ms. Mehley confirmed that the nomination focused on the church only and did not include the other buildings on the property.

Mr. Steinke, representing the nominator, summarized the Criteria for Designation identified in the nomination and reiterated the Preservation Alliance's support for the church's designation.

Mr. Philips, representing St. Ignatius of Loyola Parish and the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, stated that they do not oppose this nomination, but request that any removal of the stained-glass windows is approved at staff level.

Ms. Cooperman asked the staff, as she had at the 18 April 2018 meeting of the Committee on Historic Designation, whether designation of only the church building would preclude future



nominations of other buildings or components of the property. Mr. Farnham responded that it would not.

Mr. Thomas inquired if Mr. Philips was asking for the stained-glass windows to be excluded from the nomination. Mr. Philips responded that he recognized that, once the church is designated, the replacement of any windows would be an issue for the Historical Commission. He was requesting that all stained-glass windows with ecclesiastical value be allowed to be removed with staff approval rather than full review and approval by the Historical Commission. The Commission members discussed if they were permitted to approve this type of request.

Mr. Reuter, the Historical Commission's attorney, asked Mr. Philips if this request applied to all stained-glass or only those that depict religious iconography. Mr. Philips responded that it would only apply to stained-glass that would be sent to the Ecclesiastical Exchange program because they are representative of Catholic faith. Mr. Reuter asked if these items had been identified. Mr. Philips responded that he did not know if they had been identified. Mr. Reuter noted that the Historical Commission had worked with the Archdiocese in the past but that these requests would need to be handled on a case-by-case basis, taking into account those windows that would qualify for the Ecclesiastical Exchange program versus windows that are decorative, without religious or Catholic imagery, and would likely be required to remain in the building. He noted that without a special amendment to this nomination, the stained-glass windows would have to be included in the designation of the church.

Mr. Steinke stated that the Preservation Alliance does not object to the removal of stained-glass windows that are of a concern to the Archdiocese. Mr. Steinke also stated that the appropriate removal of the stained glass would be important since the future of the building most likely would involve an adaptive reuse project to another purpose.

Mr. Reuter stated that the Historical Commission would willingly work with the Archdiocese and the Preservation Alliance on this matter.

Mr. McCoubrey reminded the Committee that future removal of the stained-glass windows would also involve the review of appropriate replacement windows.

Mr. Reuter stated that the Law Department would not make a blanket rule saying that it would never object to the removal of something that has religious iconography because it may have taken on greater importance to the general public. In a case like this, where there is a disagreement, the Historical Commission will work with the Archdiocese on the issue.

**ACTION:** Ms. Cooperman moved to find that Our Mother of Sorrows Church at 4800-14 Lancaster Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation D and E and to designate it as historic, listing it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, with the understanding that some or all stained-glass may be removed for liturgical reasons in the future. Ms. Turner seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**ADDRESS: 2101 WASHINGTON AVE**

Name of Resource: Howell & Brothers Wallpaper Hangings Manufactory

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: 2101 Washington Real Estate

Nominator: Dennis Carlisle

Staff Contact: Allyson Mehley, allyson.mehley@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION:** The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that 2101 Washington Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation A and J. The Committee recommends that the period of significance end in 2005, when Frankford Chocolate Company relocated and sold the property. The Committee also recommends classifying the main structure, additions, and supporting buildings built between 1865 and 1912 as contributing and the later, makeshift additions, post-1912, as non-contributing to the overall significance of the complex.

**OVERVIEW:** This nomination proposes to designate the property at 2101 Washington as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the property satisfies Criteria for Designation A and J. The nomination argues that 2101 Washington Avenue is significant under Criterion A in the area of development and culture as the site Howell & Brothers Wallpaper Hangings Manufactory, which was first constructed on this property in 1865. As one of the most successful wallpaper manufacturers during the second half of the nineteenth century, the company transformed the methods for manufacturing wallpaper in the United States while simultaneously influencing American interior design. Howell & Brothers Wallpaper was the first American wallpaper manufacturer to utilize machine-made wallpapers, and at one point the largest wallpaper factory in the country. The nomination asserts that 2101 Washington Avenue satisfies Criterion J, owing to its influence on the growth of Washington Avenue as an industrial corridor and its representation of Philadelphia as a domestic and international manufacturing center, first as the Howell & Brothers Wallpaper Hangings Manufactory, and followed by the John Wanamaker Department Store Furniture Warehouse and the Frankford Chocolate Company.

The staff recently approved a complete demolition permit application based on the Department of Licenses & Inspections' finding that the property is Imminently Dangerous. The staff subsequently approved a partial demolition permit application based on the Department of Licenses & Inspections' finding that the property is Imminently Dangerous, but that a portion of the complex could be preserved. The partial demolition plan will retain the 1916 building at the southwest corner of the site including the smokestack and a portion of the original 1860s building directly behind that building. The demolition is underway.

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Farnham disclosed that he has been represented in a private matter, unrelated to the City or the Historical Commission, by an attorney at the firm that is currently representing the owner of the property at 2101 Washington Avenue.

Mr. Farnham stated that the nomination proposes to nominate the property at 2101 Washington Avenue as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. He continued that at the February 2018 meeting of the Committee on Historic Designation, the nominator announced his intention to withdraw the nomination and the property owner at the time, not the current property owner, simultaneously requested that the Committee table the review. Mr. Farnham said the Committee recommended to the Commission to table the review and remanded back at a later date. He stated that at the March meeting, the nomination appeared before the Historical Commission with the Committee's recommendation to table and remand,

and again the nominator expressed the desire to withdraw the nomination. He said the equitable owner at the time, who is now the current owner, requested the Commission table the review and the Commission tabled the review and remanded it back to the Committee on Historic Designation for its April 2018 meeting. Mr. Farnham stated that prior to the meeting on Historic Designation, the Department of Licenses & Inspections determined that the property was imminently dangerous and the property owner submitted an application for complete demolition to the Historical Commission, which the staff approved after conferring with several City agencies. He continued that, soon thereafter, the staff approved a second demolition permit application, in this instance for partial demolition, after the owner agreed to attempt to save a portion of the complex. Mr. Farnham remarked that he believed that the Department of Licenses & Inspections issued that second demolition permit. He described the partial demolition permit plan, which would retain a building at the southwest corner of the site including the smokestack and a small portion of the 1865 building at the western end of the site. He noted that at the April meeting of the Committee on Historic Designation the staff reported to the Committee that the demolition permit had been approved and issued owing to the imminently dangerous classification. He said the staff also reported that the nominator continued to request the withdrawal of the nomination, but the Committee decided to move forward with the review, owing to the fact that the building was still standing. Ultimately, the Committee recommended that 2101 Washington Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation A and J. Mr. Farnham stated that the demolition to abate the imminently dangerous condition has begun and it is currently underway. He concluded that the nominator's withdrawal request and the nomination itself are on the table for the Commission's consideration today.

Mr. Farnham described a photograph, taken 10 May 2018, projected on the screen as representing the current state of the property. He noted that the building visible at the far left with the smokestack and a portion of the taller building to its right are proposed to be retained. He said that the remainder of the structures on the site will be demolished pursuant to the imminently dangerous citation.

Attorney Sean Whalen introduced himself as representing the property owner. He described the property. He stated that the property owner has been working extensively with the Department of Licenses & Inspections and the Historical Commission's staff. He remarked that, given the publicity around this project, a quick chronology is necessary. Mr. Whalen said 2101 Washington Avenue was first designated unsafe by the Department of Licenses & Inspections in April 2017. In July 2017, it was designated imminently dangerous due to falling bricks and a bulging wall on the 21<sup>st</sup> Street side of the "L" 1865 building. He noted that that is the original factory and the primary thrust of historic fabric in this nomination. He noted that July 2017 was long before the present property owner became involved with the property and the violations were issued under the prior property owner. Mr. Whalen said that for decades not a single penny was spent to maintain or preserve the entirety of the site. He noted that in December 2017, this property was added to the National Register of Historic Places, premised almost entirely upon the 1865 "L" building which runs from 21<sup>st</sup> Street to 22<sup>nd</sup> Street. He stated that in March 2018, Commissioner David Perri and Michael Fink both walked through the property and reaffirmed the imminently dangerous designation themselves and they also confirmed in writing that the current property owner was not responsible for the deterioration of the property that took place under prior ownership. He pointed out that this is not a situation of demolition by neglect. He said that between March and April of 2018, more than 50 to 75 people toured the property, including various stakeholders from the Registered Community Organization, the neighborhood, Department of Licenses & Inspections, staff of the Historical Commission, Others, including the Preservation Alliance, were offered tours. Mr. Whalen continued that in

addition to these walkthroughs, the property owner has documentation that approximately 30 different developers walked through this site prior to their ownership presumably with the intention to purchase this property and develop it. He said that developer walk-throughs had been going on since August 2016, when the release waivers date back to, and all the way through 2017.

Mr. Whalen stated that a lot of the publicity related to the owner's proposed project is completely misstating the condition of the property. He said that he had walked through the property and likened it to walking on a frozen pond, where you are not quite sure if it is frozen. He said there were places he was told not to walk. He added that many photographs have been posted online ostensibly describing the current state of the building, which the property owner knows to be untrue and mischaracterizing. Mr. Whalen stated that the property owner had a short video that was taken before the demolition began to show the actual state of the property. Ori Feibush, the property owner, displayed several videos of the interior to illustrate the condition of the property.

Leonard Reuter, from the City Law Department, stated for the record that he, on behalf of the Department of Licenses & Inspections, had 2101 Washington Avenue in court for the better part of 2017. Mr. Reuter said he had inherited the case from a colleague, who began the case in 2015 or 2016. He said the case related to the conditions of the property, and also during those proceedings, the former owner received a variance from the Fire Board that allowed the fire suppression system to be sealed. Mr. Reuter stated that the standpipe system was inoperable and because there was no intention to reuse the building, but instead to demolish it. The Fire Board allowed the system to be sealed. He stated there was signage put up for first responders that the building is not fire protected. Mr. Reuter said first responders cannot enter the building in the case of a fire, but must let the building burn to the ground because there is no fire suppression system.

Sean Whalen introduced Kevin Orndorf, the engineer for the project. Mr. Orndorf's firm, Orndorf & Associates, produced a structural condition report for 2101 Washington Avenue. Mr. Whalen said that, in addition to the fire suppression system, there are no other working systems on the property. He described the section the property that the owner will attempt to retain, which includes a 1912 building at the southwest corner of the site and a small portion, 10% to 15% of the 1865 building at the western end of the site. He stated that the exact percentage of the 1865 building to be retained is not known at this time, but will be determined by the engineer during the demolition.

Mr. Orndorf stated that he is a structural engineer and had been through the building on numerous occasions, for several hours at a time. He said the 1865 building is all heavy timber decking, tongue and groove, including the roof and all the floors, which are supported on heavy timber beams. He said the structure above the second floor is heavy timber columns, below the second floor is cast iron columns, and many sections of the building throughout are in danger of imminent collapse. Mr. Orndorf stated that he was surprised the snows this past winter did not bring some of the areas down. He noted that he and the property owner have discussed potentially saving portions of the building. He said that anything can be saved with enough money. He said that when you remove a roof at an adjacent exterior wall, you need to brace the wall to remove the roof; if there is no safe floor structure, then the repair becomes much more complicated and expensive. He explained that you have to rebuild from the bottom up to shore correctly, so that you can demolish portions of the building; it is a significant endeavor. He concluded that they have not explored completely how much of the building can be saved.

Mr. Whalen stated that all of the buildings are going to be demolished under the current permit except for the noted 1912 and 1865 areas previously discussed. He noted that the structure in between the 1912 and 1865 building will also be demolished. He also pointed out that the Committee on Historic Designation's review and recommendation at the 18 April 2018 meeting occurred before demolition began. He said the National Register listing and this nomination are almost entirely based on the 1865 building and, although a small portion of the 1865 building has been proposed to be saved, it is unknown at this point how much can be saved. Mr. Whalen stated that the entire site remains deemed imminently dangerous and the property owner continues to work with their engineers and with the Department of Licenses & Inspections to what portions of the structures can be safely saved. In closing, Mr. Whalen stated that, given that the entire site is designated imminently dangerous, it will be virtually 90% demolished by the time all is said and done. He concluded that the property will have lost its capacity to convey its historical significance when the demolition is complete.

Mr. Thomas opens the floor to comments.

Tiffany Green, representing Concerned Citizens of Point Breeze North of Washington Avenue Coalition, introduced herself. She stated she is concerned about the preservation of building. She does not believe the entire building needs to be saved but expressed concern about the timeline of the demolition and project. Ms. Green claimed that the City is pushing the imminently dangerous designation. She noted that groups in the neighborhood had met with the previous owner and they were shown a design that did not include the historic building. She stated that, with the previous owner and the new owner, there does not seem to be an interest or goal in preserving the historic building or an attempt to work with the community on what portions of the building can be saved. She stated that Mr. Farnham has a conflict. Ms. Green wanted to know why an independent report was not requested by the Historical Commission from a party that does not have a relationship with Department of Licenses & Inspections or the current owner. She stated that the sequence of events seems suspect to her. She said that as a member of an Registered Community Organization, she is aware that certain developers only want to do new construction. She stated that the group is requesting that some portion of the building be preserved as they believe it is a South Philadelphia landmark that should be preserved as much as it can. Ms. Green concluded and restated that there needs to be an independent report to determine if this building is in fact imminently dangerous.

Mr. Farnham, in response to Ms. Green's concerns, stated that he does not determine what is and is not imminently dangerous. He stated that the Department of Licenses & Inspections is invested with the legal authority to make the City's decisions about building safety. Mr. Farnham said that when he described the building as imminently dangerous, he was reporting a fact based on the Department of Licenses & Inspections' determination, not a personal view of the building's condition.

Mr. Reuter stated that the condition and imminently dangerous violation for this building predated both the nomination and the letter of notice to the owner announcing the potential designation and listing on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, and repeated again it had been listed as unsafe for quite some time. He said that the primary distinction between unsafe and imminently dangerous, is that imminently dangerous under the code is one that poses a life-threatening situation. He said that the determination of imminently dangerous had been made prior to the nomination, particularly the wall abutting the 21<sup>st</sup> Street side of the building and a portion of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Street side, which was in imminent danger of collapse. He continued that other portions of the building are also in poor condition. Mr. Reuter stated that the

questions are: How much risk does the City have to incur? And, how much risk do the citizens have to withstand prolonging what was probably inevitable? He said the imminently dangerous citation came from Department of Licenses & Inspections and it was reviewed by Historical Commission staff. Mr. Reuter remarked that he has worked for the City since 1997, and there been well over a dozen fully designated properties that have come down because they were imminently dangerous and on demolition permits approved by the Historical Commission's staff. He said the City's primary responsibility is to the public and the City's duty is to protect the public from unnecessary risk, and this supersedes anything else in the code. Mr. Reuter concluded that the ultimate decision was not made by the Commissioner of the Department of Licenses & Inspections or the Historical Commission, but it was a decision by the City as a whole to allow this demolition to proceed.

Ms. Green thanked Mr. Reuter for his explanation. She restated her concerns about the sequence of events and process surrounding the nomination and designation of imminently dangerous, and repeated her wish for an independent assessment and report of the building. Mr. Mattioni stated that he viewed the report by the Department of Licenses & Inspections of imminent danger as an independent report. He said that they are paid to make those kinds of inspections and determinations and he would not second guess the Department. Mr. Thomas reminded Ms. Green that the Historical Commission is a City agency so any consultant that is hired by the City would not be independent of the City. He said that, for example, if the Preservation Alliance hired a consultant to prepare a report, then that report would be independent.

Ori Feibush, the property owner, introduced himself and offered to answer any questions. He stated that he wished to clarify that they are no longer pursuing the effort to save the smokestack. He said they have had a company taking drone photography weekly and there was substantial shearing a month ago and the shearing has increased, and there has been movement. Mr. Feibush stated they have petitioned the Department of Licenses & Inspections to begin demolition of just the smokestack portion (not the building it sits on) and are working with the project's engineers and the City to save portions of the building that can reasonably be saved.

Paul Steinke of the Preservation Alliance introduced himself. Mr. Steinke thanked Ms. Green for her comments, stating that she covered many of the concerns and issues that the Preservation Alliance has had through this process. Mr. Steinke pointed out that there were proactive efforts made to save this property including a National Register nomination, a local Register nomination, and a developer who had a plan for 150 apartments and townhouses as recently as five months ago. The Preservation Alliance was prepared to engage an independent engineer, but was denied access by the owner of the property, and within days the demolition permits had been issued. He reiterated that there were efforts to be proactive to save this historic building. Mr. Steinke stated that he was not going to second guess the process or the people involved. He pointed out that sitting in front of each of the Commissioners was a nomination of 2101 Washington Avenue for the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. He remarked that for the last 45 minutes, the Commission and attendees had been having an ex post facto hardship hearing of a nominated building that is about half gone. He stated that he hoped that the Commission could spend five minutes talking about the merits of this building for the Philadelphia Register.

Mr. Steinke requested that the nominator, Dennis Carlisle, to come up and speak about the merits of the nomination. Mr. Steinke also requested that Kevin McMahon of Powers &

Company, who wrote the National Register nomination, to come up to the Commissioner's table to speak as well. He said that Powers & Company was a consultant to the previous owner, along with Cecil Baker, to turn the 1865 building into 150 residential apartments. Mr. Steinke asked Mr. Carlisle to address the Criteria for Designation under which he nominated 2101 Washington Avenue.

Mr. Carlisle introduced himself as the nominator of the property and stated that he works at OCF Realty, Mr. Feibush's real estate company. He explained that he nominated the property because it does meet the two criteria, Criteria for Designation A and J. It was noted that Mr. Carlisle wrote the nomination when the property was fully intact. He was asked if the property still warranted a nomination now that demolition has commenced. Mr. Carlisle stated that it seemed a little silly to nominate a building that is no longer there. He stated that the nomination acknowledges the history of it, and recorded it. Mr. Carlisle continued that, as far as having it designated, it seemed unnecessary. He stated that he understood that by designating, any future construction would have to be cleared through the Historical Commission, and it seemed like a waste of the Commission's time.

Mr. Mattioni asked Mr. Carlisle why it took him until December 2017 to submit the nomination for this property. Mr. Carlisle stated that he had heard that the building was going to be demolished. Mr. Mattioni stated that it was his understanding that the building was historic before Mr. Carlisle submitted the nomination but no one had nominated it. Mr. Carlisle responded that he found out that the plans of the previous developer might not be implemented and therefore nominated it. He stated that at the time of his nomination it had already been declared imminently dangerous but was ignorant to what that really meant. Had he understood the meaning that would have changed the situation and he may not have nominated it. Mr. Mattioni commented that the property has certain attributes that warrant the consideration of this Commission for designation. But if that is true now, it was also true five years ago, two years ago, and one year ago. He noted that there are many buildings in Philadelphia that are worthy of consideration for designation. The Commission should not expend resources on one that is already lost. Mr. Carlisle stated that, as of November 2017, he thought that the previous owner would go through with his plan.

Mr. McMahon, a preservation consultant, introduced himself and stated he wished to correct a statement by Mr. Carlisle. He said that Powers & Company was hired by the previous owner to both write the National Register nomination and to guide the rehabilitation through the historic tax credit certification process. He said that the process had begun long before Mr. Carlisle submitted the nomination. Mr. McMahon said that when the previous owner acquired the building, he was considering demolition but then decided on rehabilitation and hired Powers & Company to complete the historic tax credit application. He continued that at the time that Mr. Carlisle submitted the nomination there was no threat of demolition. He said the tax credit certification process was moving forward until his nomination was submitted.

Mr. Steinke closed his comments, stating that, first, the Committee on Historic Designation believes the nomination merits approval by this Commission; second, in light of Commissioner Perri's efforts to identify the portions of the 1865 structure that are structurally sound and could be rehabilitated, the Commission should not assume that the entire structure will be demolished; and third, because of the current owner's willingness to save a portion of the structure, the Commission should consider a designation. Mr. Steinke stated that he was grateful that Mr. Feibush and OCF Realty do want to preserve a portion of the buildings on the site. The Preservation Alliance believes that it would serve the interests of the neighborhood and the City

to preserve this significant portion that remains of this Civil War era structure. Mr. Steinke asked the Commissioners to vote to approve the nomination and place this property of the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places today.

Mr. McMahon stated that, because of the demolition that has already occurred, the property is no longer eligible for the Federal Historic Tax Credit so the local designation is the only means of protecting what remains at this point.

Mr. Farnham asked Mr. Carlisle if he is still requesting to withdraw the nomination. Mr. Carlisle responded and stated he is still requesting to withdraw his nomination.

Mr. Feibush clarified that the portion that is proposed to be saved was driven by OCF Realty decision-making, not because Commissioner Perri of the Department of Licenses & Inspections deemed it structurally sound. Mr. Feibush stated that his engineers have advised him behind closed doors not to save any of the buildings, owing to their dangerous condition. He continued that the previous owner decided at some point to switch from a plan to preserve 100% of the property to demolish 100% of the property. Mr. Feibush noted that Cecil Baker, the architect of record for the earlier project, completed exhaustive drawings dated November 2017, titled complete demolition plan. He claimed that Mr. Baker's efforts reflect the deteriorated condition of the building. He stated that his company is eager to save a portion of the building, but no owner before him spent money trying to protect the neighborhood from the deterioration. Mr. Feibush pointed out that the previous owner did not have a zoning approval to complete the plan. He also noted that the previous owner did not do anything during its three-year ownership to provide life and safety protections to the neighborhood. He said that he met with a previous developer, Palace Developers, who had tried to plan for rehabilitation, but could not determine an economically feasible plan to make it work.

Mr. Feibush stated that he is being asked to save a deteriorated building when he is not responsible for the deterioration. He stated that his company has received a great deal of bad press, but none of it was based in the reality. He stated that no previous owner, including the most recent owner who is being lauded for his plan to adaptively reuse the building, chose to invest one dollar in the building to save it. He noted that the previous owner elected not to follow through with the rehabilitation. He stated that he is trying to save a portion of the complex and is being asked to accept a designation that will do nothing. He stated he is a sincere player trying to save a portion of the complex. Mr. Feibush expanded on his other recent preservation efforts in the city. He then restated the safety risks posed by 2101 Washington Avenue to pedestrians and neighbors. He outlined again previous statements about his intentions with the property and the activity surrounding it.

Mr. Traub of Save Our Sites, stated that, until recently, the neighborhood around this complex was "not desirable." Now that it is being gentrified, it is more "desirable." Several in the audience objected to Mr. Traub's loaded assertion.

Mr. Feibush noted that there were many other demolition permits filed during the last 60 days in the city, but everyone is focused on this specific property.

Ms. Green again stated her concerns about aggressive development of the area and her organization's efforts to engage with developers. She repeated her desire to see preservation at this property.



Mr. Steinke contended that the negative response to the demolition and redevelopment of this property is in no way motivated by animosity toward Mr. Feibush or his company. He stated that Mr. Feibush has a reputable company that builds homes for people. He stated that he admires his work as a builder and his work is needed in Philadelphia. He said that the difference was that this property was nominated to the National Register of Historic Places, it was nominated to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, and it was the subject of a publicly disclosed redevelopment plan that would have preserved it as recently as December 2017. Mr. Steinke said that those facts set it apart from other buildings we are losing in the city.

Mr. Thomas stated that, if a portion of this building is saved and the remainder of the property is interpreted, that would be positive. He said that, if a portion of the 1865 building and a portion of the other building are rehabilitated by Mr. Feibush, the remaining portions could be considered by the Historical Commission for designation. He continued that the other portion of the property that would be redeveloped with new construction would not be included within the designation boundary. Mr. Thomas said that this may give Mr. Feibush what he is looking for and the community what they are looking for.

Ms. Cooperman pointed out that a proposed designation is on the table. She also recognized the active demolition permits and that the property has been deemed imminently dangerous for some time. She continued that no one knows how much of this building will be around in a week or a month and no one knows how much of this building will remain standing after the demolition permit has run its course. She said the Commission is in a situation where they do not have enough information to decide because the Commission does not know what will survive. Ms. Cooperman said that, speaking as the chair of the Committee on Historical Designation, at the time the Committee reviewed the nomination, the property met Criteria A and J. She concluded that the Commission still does not have enough information.

Mr. Thomas suggested designating the parts that remain standing. Ms. Cooperman responded no one knows what will remain standing. She noted that the property may end up being an empty lot. Mr. McCoubrey inquired if any stabilization of the portions proposed to be saved had taken place. Mr. Feibush responded that hand demolition is occurring on the portions proposed for retention and rehabilitation.

Kevin Orndorf stated that there are significant portions of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Street side of the building that will need to be braced, but those designs have not yet been undertaken. Once the deteriorated framing is removed, the remaining building will need to be braced. There is significantly more danger to the contractors working on site than to the general public, although there is still some danger to the general public. The logistics of trying to save the building are not going to be easy.

Ms. Cooperman suggested the option of tabling the nomination. Mr. Steinke suggested that the Historical Commission should designate the portion of the property that has been proposed for preservation and rehabilitation by Mr. Feibush. Mr. Thomas stated he believes that a portion should be designated. How much of the building will remain is unknown, but a designation boundary can be redrawn if it changes. Mr. Mattioni stated that he does not know how they can define a boundary right now, with the demolition underway and its ultimate extent unknown. Designating now would place too much of a burden on the Historical Commission and its staff. It would also place too much of a burden on the owner. Tabling the nomination is a rational alternative, he suggested. Mr. Reuter, Mr. Whalen, and the Commission members discussed the logistics and legality of designating a portion of the building.

Mr. Mattioni stated that he was prepared to make a motion. Ms. Stanford requested an explanation of the ramifications of tabling the nomination. Ms. Cooperman responded that the Commission would table the nomination because it does not have enough information to make a decision at this time. The Commissioners noted they do not know what will be left on site after demolition is complete. The Commissioners noted that they will still retain jurisdiction over the property while the nomination is tabled. Once demolition is complete, it will then be clear what remains and is stabilized. Ms. Cooperman reminded all Commissioners that the demolition permit is valid and the owner can proceed as he wishes. She noted that tabling the nomination is indefinite.

Ms. Turner inquired if the Commission was going to address the request to withdraw. Mr. Reuter noted they can consider the request to withdraw, since it is not automatically granted at staff level as it previously was.

Mr. Farnham stated that the Commission should identify a trigger that would end the tabling and place the nomination on an agenda for consideration. The Commission will know when the demolition is complete when the Department of Licenses & Inspections has closed out the demolition permit out.

Ms. Green stated her concerns again and expressed a concern about safety near the building.

Eric Brugger, a resident of 2000 block Kimball Street, stated that he appreciates the measures that the current owner recently undertook to protect the safety of those near the building. He observed that public safety has been lost in the conversation and asserted that it should be the primary consideration.

Mr. Whalen stated the owner would be penalized if the Commission tabled the nomination. The Commissioners responded that, because the complex has been deemed imminently dangerous, the owner can demolish all the buildings, even those that have been proposed for retention. Tabling is not motivated by a desire to punish Mr. Feibush; it is motivated by a desire of the Commission to do the best they can in a difficult situation. Mr. Thomas stated that the Commission is not concluding now that it is going to designate the entire property. He stated that he trusts that the efforts to protect the portion of the 1865 building and other building are being done in good faith.

**ACTION:** Mr. Mattioni moved to table the review of the nomination until the demolition currently underway is completed and the Department of Licenses & Inspections closes out the demolition permit (#868420). Ms. Cooperman seconded the motion, which passed by a vote of 7 to 2. Ms. Stanford and Mr. Dillon dissented.

**ACTION:** Ms. Cooperman moved to deny the nominator's request to withdraw the nomination. Ms. Turner seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**ADDRESS: 1416-32 W GIRARD AVE**

Name of District: 1416-32 West Girard Avenue Historic District

Proposed Action: Designation

Nominator: Donna J. Rilling

Staff Contact: Laura DiPasquale [laura.dipasquale@phila.gov](mailto:laura.dipasquale@phila.gov), 215-686-7660

Number of properties: 9

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION:** The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the district at 1416-32 W. Girard Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation A, D, E, and J.

**OVERVIEW:** This nomination proposes to designate a nine-property historic district at 1416-32 W Girard Avenue and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the row, developed in 1882, is significant under Criteria for Designation A, D, E, and J. Under Criterion A, the nomination argues that the district is significant for its association with William Weightman, one of Philadelphia's wealthiest men and one of the nation's largest landholders. Attributed to Willis G. Hale, the architect of some of Philadelphia's most exuberant and unusual buildings, the row reflects the popularity of the Victorian Eclectic, with the architect's liberal borrowing from a variety of popular ornamental features to create a composition uniquely his own, satisfying Criteria D and E. Under Criterion J, the nomination contends that, as some of the grandest remaining examples of speculative housing in Gilded Age North Philadelphia, the buildings represent the brief heyday of this section of North Philadelphia.

**DISCUSSION:** Ms. DiPasquale presented the nomination to the Historical Commission. Donna Rilling represented the nominator. No one represented the property owners.

Mr. Thomas noted that these properties occupy a prominent location on W. Girard Avenue. Ms. Cooperman explained that, at the Committee on Historic Designation meeting, she had made a minor technical point that it was not clear to her from the nomination that this row is particularly important for its association with William Weightman. She noted that it obviously has enormous architectural merit, but is not sure that simply because Weightman developed the row that it necessarily represents his life's work. She stated that this does not impact her overall belief that the district is worthy of designation.

Mr. Thomas opened the floor to public comment. David Traub of Save Our Sites commented that his organization heartily endorses the district nomination. Paul Steinke of the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia commented that Alliance is in support of this nomination, as well as each of the subsequent nominations to be reviewed during the meeting.

**ACTION:** Mr. Schaaf moved to find that the nomination demonstrates that the district at 1416-32 W Girard Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation A, D, E, and J, and to designate it as historic, listing it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Mr. McCoubrey seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**ADDRESS: 4200-06 RIDGE AVE**

Name of Resource: Odd Fellows' Hall/Palestine Hall

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Mark E. Sherman

Nominator: Staff of the Philadelphia Historical Commission

Staff Contact: Laura DiPasquale, [laura.dipasquale@phila.gov](mailto:laura.dipasquale@phila.gov), 215-686-7660

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION:** The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 4200-06 Ridge Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation H, I, and J.

**OVERVIEW:** This nomination proposes to designate the property at 4200-06 Ridge Avenue as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the property satisfies Criteria for Designation H, I, and J. Constructed in 1868 for the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, and owned and used by several different fraternal organizations, community groups, and commercial tenants, the building at 4200-06 Ridge Avenue exemplifies the social, economic and historical heritage of the East Falls community, satisfying Criterion J. Under Criterion H, nomination argues that the large building stands out in the context of primarily two and three-story rowhouses and is situated prominently at the intersection of Ridge and Midvale Avenues—the heart of the East Falls community. Under Criterion I, the nomination contends that the property may be likely to yield archaeological information owing to its position at the historic confluence of the Ridge Avenue (a Native American trail and early road), a creek (now Midvale Avenue), and the Schuylkill River.

**DISCUSSION:** Ms. DiPasquale presented the nomination to the Historical Commission. No one represented the property owner.

Ms. DiPasquale noted that the Historical Commission had received a letter of support from the East Falls Historical Society, signed by several of its members.

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

**ACTION:** Ms. Cooperman moved to find that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 4200-06 Ridge Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation H, I, and J, and to designate it as historic, listing it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Mr. McCoubrey seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**ADDRESS: 3910 CHESTNUT ST**

Name of Resource: Sarah Price Rose-James A. Connelly House

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: University City Associate

Nominator: Staff of the Philadelphia Historical Commission

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

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION:** The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 3910 Chestnut Street satisfies Criteria for Designation D, E, and J.

**OVERVIEW:** This nomination contends that the property at 3910 Chestnut Street is historically significant and warrants designation and individual listing on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination argues that the property satisfies Criteria for Designation D, E, and J, as defined in Section 14-1004(1) of the Philadelphia Code. The main building standing on the property, a four-story rowhouse, embodies distinguishing characteristics of the Chateausque Style, satisfying Criterion D and was reconstructed in 1896 by Horace Trumbauer (1868-1938), an architect whose work significantly influenced the architectural development of the City, Commonwealth and Nation, satisfying Criterion E. The property exemplifies the heritage of the Hamilton Village and University City community, satisfying Criterion J. The nomination proposes a Period of Significance that runs from 1806, when William Hamilton first sold the property, to 1987, when the University of Pennsylvania purchased the property. A two-story structure projects from the rear of the historic building and faces Sansom Street; it is considered non-historic or non-contributing for the purposes of this nomination.

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Farnham presented the nomination to the Historical Commission. No one represented the property owner. Mr. Farnham noted that he has discussed the nomination with David Hollenberg, the architect for the University of Pennsylvania, the owner of the property.

Mr. Thomas noted that what excites him about this nomination is that there are a handful of buildings on that same block that embody the scale and grandeur of the block's history. He opined that, even though the other half of the formerly semi-detached building is no longer there, this building, along with the Ronald McDonald house across the street, represent the history of the block. He also noted that the historic photograph answers the question about whether trolley tracks along Chestnut Street were one-way or two. The photograph shows that the trolley tracks were two-way.

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

**ACTION:** Mr. Schaaf moved to find that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 3910 Chestnut Street satisfies Criteria for Designation D, E, and J, and to designate it as historic, listing it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Ms. Cooperman seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**ADDRESS: 3549 GERMANTOWN AVE**

Name of Resource: Western Saving Fund Society

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: 3549 Germantown LLC

Nominator: The Keeping Society of Philadelphia

Staff Contact: Megan Schmitt, [megan.schmitt@phila.gov](mailto:megan.schmitt@phila.gov), 215-686-7660

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION:** The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 3549 Germantown Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F and J.

**OVERVIEW:** This nomination proposes to designate the property at 3549 Germantown Avenue and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination argues that the building, constructed about 1925, satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F and J. Under Criteria C, D and F the nomination contends that the subject property is reflective of the transition that was occurring in local bank architecture at the time, a trend towards the use of Stripped Architecture. The nomination argues that the building is an excellent and early example of the Art Deco style. Under Criterion E, the nomination contends that the architectural firm that designed the building, Willing, Sims & Talbutt, was one of the most important in Philadelphia, finding success first mostly in residential design, and later on in institutional design. The nomination argues that the building also satisfies Criterion E, owing to the impressive ironwork that was done by the highly regarded Philadelphia ironworker, Samuel Yellin. Under Criterion J, the nomination argues that the Western Saving Fund Society was a significant Philadelphia institution that was in the service of the “common laborer.” Founded in 1847, the Western continued to open branches in the neighborhoods of their working and middle-class patrons up until 1982.

**DISCUSSION:** Ms. Schmitt presented the nomination to the Historical Commission. Oscar Beisert represented the nomination. No one represented the property owner.

The Commissions discussed the nomination and the property and concluded that the nomination demonstrates that the property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F and J. Mr. Thomas asked if there were any public comments, and there were none.

**ACTION:** Ms. Turner moved to find that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 3549 Germantown Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F and J, and to designate it as historic, listing it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Mr. McCoubrey seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**ADDRESS: 1632 POPLAR ST**

Name of Resource: Green Hill Market

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Church of the Living God, The Pillar + Ground Truth

Nominator: The Keeping Society of Philadelphia

Staff Contact: Megan Schmitt, [megan.schmitt@phila.gov](mailto:megan.schmitt@phila.gov), 215-686-7660

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION:** The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 1632 Poplar Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, D and J.

**OVERVIEW:** This nomination proposes to designate the property at 1632 Poplar Street and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination argues that the building, constructed about 1859-61, satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, D and J. Under Criterion A, the nomination contends that the property is significant as an example of the evolution of public markets in the 1850s, transitioning from municipal government ownership to ownership by private market house companies. Under Criterion J, the nomination argues that markets such as the subject property were crucial to supporting daily life in Philadelphia's densely populated neighborhoods outside of Center City. The nomination further argues that these neighborhood markets not only provided access to fresh food, but they also served as venues where neighbors convened at political, social, and religious events. The nomination further contends that the Green Hill Market House satisfies Criteria C and D, as an example of the Rundbogenstil or Romanesque Revival Style of architecture.

**DISCUSSION:** Ms. Schmitt presented the nomination to the Historical Commission. Oscar Beisert represented the nomination. No one represented the property owner.

Mr. Beisert commented that he thought it was really amazing that there were so many market houses like the subject property constructed in and after 1859, but so few of them remained, and yet this one still stood almost completely intact. He acknowledged that, though it could be improved upon to better represent its historic appearance, that it was still a fairly impressive building for a neighborhood market and multi-purpose hall.

David Traub of Save Our Sites said that he wanted to add that the subject property was located in the fairly little known Francisville neighborhood, which was currently undergoing tremendous change, much of it not for the better. He said for this reason, Save Our Sites would welcome the designation of this historic building within the context of this rapidly changing neighborhood.

**ACTION:** Ms. Cooperman moved to find that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 1632 Poplar Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, D and J, and to designate it as historic, listing it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Ms. Turner seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**ADDRESS: 622 N 16<sup>TH</sup> ST**

Name of Resource: 622 N 16<sup>th</sup> Street

Proposed Action: Reclassification from contributing to non-contributing in Spring Garden Historic District Inventory

Property Owner: Spring Garden Community Development Corporation

Applicant: Robert Powers, Powers & Company

Staff Contact: Kim Chantry, kim.chantry@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION:** The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend denial of the reclassification of 622 N 16<sup>th</sup> Street as non-contributing, pursuant to Section 5.14 of the Historical Commission's Rules & Regulations.

**OVERVIEW:** This application proposes to reclassify the property at 622 N 16<sup>th</sup> Street as non-contributing in the Spring Garden Historic District. The building is described as follows in the entry from the inventory of the Spring Garden Historic District:

**622** (a.k.a. 1600-08 North Street) 3-story, 2-bay, brick vernacular house. Bluestone and brick steps with replacement railing; squared entrance opening; single-leaf door; 2-light basement windows; 1<sup>st</sup> story windows boarded-up, 1/1 vinyl sash on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> stories; brick sills; corbelled brick cornice; flat roof.

South elevation: stucco with mural.

North elevation: 3-story, stucco; 1<sup>st</sup> story boarded-up; 1/1 aluminum window on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> stories.

West elevation: stucco.

Built c. 1859. Alterations: new brick façade, window openings reduced in size, c. 1985. Contributing.

The application asserts that the vacant building, constructed in 1855 or 1856, has undergone extreme alterations that have significantly impacted the building's integrity. These alterations include façade replacement, installation of smaller window openings with vinyl windows, replacement of marble stoop with poured concrete, removal of all other marble features including water table, door surround, and window sills and lintels, removal of cornice, stuccoing over the brick North Street elevation, removal of a two-story side window bay, and removal of small rear additions.

The application notes that the historic district nomination, prepared by Powers & Company, classified the subject building as a non-contributing resource when the final draft version of the nomination was submitted to the Historical Commission in 2000. The status was subsequently changed to contributing based on a recommendation of the Committee on Historic Designation at its 26 July 2000 meeting that suggested that all properties with "questionable classification" be classified as contributing if they have at least two of three characteristics of the historic buildings in the district, including scale and massing, materials, and rhythm of the façade. The Committee recommended that a building should be revised from non-contributing to contributing in the inventory if it conforms to the character of the district with regard to at least two of the three measures. The reclassification application also notes that the subject building is listed as an intrusion (non-contributing) in the Spring Garden National Register Historic District, which was listed in 1977.



**DISCUSSION:** Ms. Chantry presented the reclassification request to the Historical Commission. Preservation consultant Kevin McMahon, Patrick Boyle of the Spring Garden Community Development Corporation, and Alan Rubin of the Spring Garden Civic Association represented the application.

Ms. Chantry noted that the staff recommendation was not unanimous, and that the staff understands the arguments on both sides and does not necessarily feel strongly about the request one way or the other.

Mr. McMahon noted that there was much discussion by the Committee regarding which of the three essential characteristics are met by this building. Everyone was in agreement that the massing and scale are retained. It was also agreed to by the Committee that the 1970s brick on the primary elevation is a highly textured brick, is unlike the historic brick found throughout the district, and therefore the building does not meet the requirement for materials. However, there was disagreement about rhythm of the façade. He asserted that the building does not satisfy the “rhythm of the façade” requirement because the window openings have been significantly altered in size, such that if this building were in the context of a row of similar houses where the window openings had not been altered, it would be a clear visual discontinuation of rhythm. He concluded that the building only meets one of the three characteristics and therefore it should be reclassified as non-contributing to the historic district. He noted that there is also the issue of integrity, and there is almost nothing of historic value remaining on the front façade, and very little to none remaining on the north elevation. He questioned why the Commission would consider this a historic building if there is almost nothing of historic value remaining on the exterior. Mr. Rubin explained that the building has been vacant for 27 years, during which time it was owned by the Philadelphia Housing Authority. The Spring Garden Community Development Corporation has purchased vacant lots and abandoned buildings in the neighborhood and the historic district has been positively affected by the Community Development Corporation and its developments of numerous houses and other amenities. He continued that the Community Development Corporation owns the two adjacent vacant lots, and this building is critical for the possibility of developing those lots. He asserted that as long as this building sits in its current condition, it is blocking one of the last important sites for development at the eastern end of the neighborhood. He stated that there is the opportunity for three nice houses on the entire site. Mr. Boyle stated that Council President Clarke supports the reclassification request.

Mr. Thomas asked for public comment. Paul Steinke, representing the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia, commented that he did not comment on this application during the review by the Committee because Bob Powers, the principal of Powers & Company, is a member of the Preservation Alliance board and Mr. Steinke was concerned about a conflict. Since the time of that review, Mr. Steinke decided to speak during this review. He explained that his opinion is not owing to Mr. Powers being on the board, but rather because Mr. McMahon is correct in his argument. He commented that it is arguable that this structure really only meets one of the three criteria, and that the argument for rhythm of the façade suffers because it stands alone at the corner of a large empty lot. He commented that the building is an intrusion in the historic district, and that there is an opportunity to create well-designed new construction. He opined that the integrity has been lost. He agreed that a buyer could surface who would restore the façade, and that would be an argument for keeping it contributing to the district. But there is an opportunity to development something of quality for the neighborhood. He commented that the pragmatic choice is to reclassify the building as non-contributing to the district. David Traub, representing Save Our Sites, disagreed with Mr. Steinke. He commented that Save Our Sites is leery of downgrading building classifications in historic districts, which he referred to as “selective

pruning.” He commented that the building retains its massing and volume, and could easily be renovated. He commented that the building provides context to future developers, and it is a bad precedent to downgrade the classification of the building.

Mr. McMahon asked the staff to explain what role the Commission would have in reviewing new construction on this site and the adjacent vacant lots, which were vacant at the time of the district designation, even if this property is reclassified as non-contributing. Mr. Farnham responded that the Commission would have review and comment jurisdiction over the two vacant parcels. If this building is reclassified as non-contributing and demolished, and new construction is proposed for this site, the Commission will have full plenary jurisdiction to review the new construction. If a single building is proposed for the larger site, owing to the fact that there was a building on the parcel at the time of designation, the Commission will have plenary jurisdiction over the entire redevelopment. Mr. McMahon hoped that this information would comfort Mr. Traub.

Ms. Cooperman commented that the Committee reviewed this application from a technical standpoint. She stated that she continues to disagree with the rhythm argument, because the window openings are where the openings were historically, which constitutes rhythm. Mr. McMahon agreed about the window opening locations, but noted that their size is dramatically different. Ms. Cooperman continued that to the degree to which those openings have been distorted is a mitigating factor, because clearly the façade has been extensively changed. She expressed caution that a motion would need to be worded carefully because this would be an exception. She opined that a case for reclassification is plausible. She commented that despite the rules dictating that it should be contributing, if one believes the rhythm is still present, she is willing to accept the request because the building is sufficiently different.

Mr. Schaaf stated that it is a hard question. He referenced a view to the northwest that shows a three-story building that is much more high style, and asserted that these two buildings have held this corner since the mid-1850s. He opined that the tension between the two buildings is compelling, and there is enough of this building remaining to keep it as a contributing building in the historic district. Mr. Mattioni agreed that it is a tough question, but that he supports the reclassification request. Ms. Cooperman commented that the Commission should recognize the exceptional circumstances of this request. Mr. Mattioni responded that the Commission’s comments during this review provide a record of that. Mr. Thomas suggested that the building does not contribute to the district, but rather, is hurting the district as it currently stands. He commented that the Commission will have input on the new construction which will strengthen the historic district.

**ACTION:** Mr. Mattioni moved to approve the reclassification of 622 N. 16<sup>th</sup> Street as non-contributing, pursuant to Section 5.14 of the Historical Commission’s Rules & Regulations, and with the recognition of the unique circumstances as discussed during the review. Ms. Stanford seconded the motion, which passed by a vote of 8 to 1. Mr. Schaaf dissented.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **ADDRESS: 401-29 N 10TH ST**

Name of Resource: Esslinger's Brewery

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: NCL Realty LP

Nominator: The Keeping Society of Philadelphia

Staff Contact: Kim Chantry, kim.chantry@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION:** The Committee on Historic Designation voted 5 to 1 to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 401-29 N. 10<sup>th</sup> Street satisfies Criteria for Designation I and J, but not Criterion A, while noting that the text of the nomination may not be accurate with respect to the remains on the exterior of the Dallett Chandlery building. Mr. Laverty dissented.

**OVERVIEW:** This nomination proposes to designate the property at 401-29 N. 10<sup>th</sup> Street as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the property satisfies Criteria for Designation A and J; an appendix argues that the property satisfies Criterion E. The nomination states that the former George Esslinger & Son's Brewery complex represents the development and heritage of Philadelphia as a brewing center between 1879 and 1967, and is an important representative firm within the larger context of breweries, representing the cultural, economic, social, and historical heritage of the community. Additionally, the nomination assigns greater significance to the altered building at the corner of N. 10<sup>th</sup> and Callowhill Streets, which is said to have been constructed circa 1826 for Elijah Dallett's Residence, Soap Manufactory, and Stable.

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Farnham presented the nomination to the Historical Commission. Attorney William Martin and property owners Harry and Kenny Pollack represented the property owners. Oscar Beisert represented the nomination.

Mr. Farnham stated that he prepared and previously distributed a staff overview, for which he would present an abbreviated version. He stated he and Ms. Chantry visited the property at 401-29 N. 10<sup>th</sup> Street on Tuesday afternoon, 24 April 2018, with Harry and Kenny Pollack, the property owners. The group toured the buildings inside and out, spending two hours walking around and through the site. Building 8A is office space, and Building 8C is production space. Building 8C is a two-floor building with a large basement. The majority of the buildings and structures on the site contain large tanks for liquids. Mr. Farnham explained that National Chemical Laboratories brings in liquid chemicals, processes them, and creates products for the sanitary maintenance industry. The vast majority of what takes place on the site is the storage of huge amounts of liquid. The taller structures are not really buildings at all, as they do not have floor levels or windows, but rather they are steel structures with tanks for liquids. With the exception of Building 1, the oldest on the site, they do not really have floors; rather, they have walkways and stairways that run between the tanks. This would make them extremely difficult to adaptively reuse. The walls and floor systems are barely tied together. There are tanks throughout the site, and a web of pipes connecting the tanks. There are many loading docks on the site. Mr. Farnham continued that Building 8A is an office building, and there was a claim in the nomination that there may be a remnant of the Dallett Chandlery building, but there was no evidence of anything earlier than perhaps the 1930s at the building. Building 8C is large production space with two floors and a large basement, with lots of pipes and machinery and tanks on the second floor. He summarized that after reviewing the buildings on site and understanding them better, and looking back at the nomination, the staff recommends that the

Commission limit is designations to Buildings 8A and 8C, and make those recommendations in light of several factors. These factors include that these two buildings are used for office and production space, not for loading or tanks, so they are more traditional spaces and perhaps more likely to be adaptively reused. They front on the public right-of-way on Callowhill Street, Ridge Avenue, and N. 10<sup>th</sup> Street. They contain graphic reminders of the former use of the building, the Esslinger's Brewery. There are signs built into the buildings that remind us that this was a brewery complex. They have floors and windows and doors unlike the tank structures that are really just boxes for holding tanks. They have been altered, but they seem to be easily restored, and the alterations could be reversed. Because of the graphic nature of the signs and their proximity to the public right-of-way, they are really the best at conveying the historical significance of the site.

Mr. Martin stated that while he and his client appreciate the acknowledgment by the staff recommendation of the historic significance of the complex, nonetheless they would ask that the Commission reject the staff's recommendation and instead go with an alternative approach. He stated that what the owner would be willing to accept, without challenging the Commission's decision subsequently, is the designation of the façade of the office building referred to as 8A, and the N. 10<sup>th</sup> Street façade of building referred to as 8C, and such portions of the related structures as would be necessary to support those facades. He stated that they are making a distinction between the entire façade of Building 8C and the N. 10<sup>th</sup> Street façade of Building 8C.

Kenny Pollack presented several photographs on boards to the Commission that showed the complex with Buildings 8A and 8C, and a view looking down N. 10<sup>th</sup> Street with the Esslinger's sign and the industrial windows and doorways. He explained that the second floor of Building 8C is all tanks, and they are beyond capacity right now as far as tanks and packaging equipment. The only way to increase production would be to expand where Building 8E is currently located so that additional tanks and production equipment could be installed. Mr. Martin asked if there is a portion of Building 8C's façade that faces south. Kenny Pollack responded that the façade along N. 10<sup>th</sup> Street is what they would like to keep. There is a little section of the façade which faces north, and a little section of the façade which faces east, and also a little section of the façade which faces south. Those sections are not intended to be included in what is considered the N. 10<sup>th</sup> Street façade. He explained that they are very busy, plan to stay at this location, and have no plans to make any major changes to the building other than possibly trying to increase the production space.

Mr. Martin commented that this review is different than the one earlier in the meeting for 2101 Washington Avenue, in that the accepted premise with 2101 Washington Avenue was that the building was appropriately designated as historic and the Commission was then working through a complication posed by recent events. He stressed that he wanted to make clear that he and his clients reject the premise that any of this complex should be historically designated, and they are suggesting an approach that they believe is a reasonable compromise. He reminded the Commission that he submitted very extensive reports back in April 2018, prepared by Civic Visions regarding deficiencies of the nomination and the fact that the complex is not worthy of designation, and an engineering report by Keast & Hood. He stated that this is an appropriate compromise suggested by the property owner, but it is not in order to seek the right to deal with other properties that are appropriately designated. He reiterated that they do not believe that any of this complex would be appropriately designated. He read from Mr. Farnham's staff overview: "All structures have been altered and continue to be altered in numerous ways to facilitate changing industrial needs. Alterations and repairs have been

undertaken in the most direct and inexpensive ways. Window, door, and loading dock openings have been cut, infilled, enlarged, moved, and otherwise altered in myriad ways. The brick exteriors of all structures are patchworks of infill, alteration, and repair. Brick parapets have been replaced in CMU. The complex of structures is treated as a tool, not an architectural artifact, and has been modified over and over to accommodate evolving industrial needs.” He referred to it as an accurate description. Regarding Criterion J, Mr. Martin referenced comments from five months prior from a discussion between Judge Anders of Common Pleas Court and Commission attorney Leonard Reuter regarding the Criteria for Designation. Judge Anders observed that the Criteria are worded with superlatives, indicating that the Commission is authorized to designate properties that are important and significant, but not those that merely have limited significance. He asked that the Commission keep this in mind, and argued that this complex does not exemplify any significant aspect of the historical fabric of the community that is worthy of protection.

Mr. Martin stated that the suggestion by the property owners regarding designation of the façades would address most of the items that were raised by Mr. Farnham. The Esslinger’s Brewery signs, which are graphic reminders of the past, would be protected by designating only the facades. He stated that designation of only the facades would avoid unduly burdening the business owners, and would not unduly burden the property in the future. He asked that the Commission consider designation of the façade of Building 8A and the N. 10<sup>th</sup> Street façade of Building 8C, and such necessary portions of the structures required to support that façade, as an appropriate step in light of everything that has been presented regarding these properties.

Mr. Beisert stated that he is not trying to hamper the business’s future operations, and he would amend the preservation ordinance to allow solely for protection against demolition and major alterations if he could. He asked if the Commission could legally protect only the façade, and if so, if the Commission could go back to his original recommendation in the nomination of protecting just the volumes of the buildings until a time that they might be reused. Ms. Cooperman commented that the Commission only designates the exterior. Mr. Beisert responded that the discussion is about a specific façade. Mr. Farnham commented that the Commission can designate a façade or a façade and sufficient structure to support that façade. He reminded the Commission that it did so in the case of the Blue Horizon on N. Broad Street. He stated that the Commission can specify to designate an entire tax parcel or any portion of it.

Mr. Thomas asked for public comment. Paul Steinke, representing the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia, commented that he was also given a tour of the complex by Harry and Kenny Pollack. He commented that the compromise offered by the Pollacks is a good one. He opined that the nomination has merit and the complex deserves historic designation, but that he is also persuaded that the full designation of all 15 buildings and structures would probably pose an undue burden on the property owners and their manufacturing processes. He commented that the Alliance supports the staff recommendation to designate Buildings 8A and 8C, and that hopefully the details of what that means could be worked out legally to satisfy both the Commission and the property owners. He commented that he would be open to continued discussions with the Pollacks on ways to ensure the long-term preservation of the rest of the complex. He commented that he is pleased that they intend to continue to operate their business at this site for many years to come, and observed that their 300 tanks on the site are a real barrier to ever moving. He commented that National Chemical Laboratories is keeping alive a small sliver of the Workshop of the World heritage that Philadelphians are proud of. He concluded that the Alliance supports the staff recommendation and hopes a compromise can be reached.

Ms. Stanford read from Mr. Farnham's overview: "The Historical Commission requested that the staff visit the site, catalogue the business activities taking place in the various buildings and structures at the complex, and determine where the Commission's regulation might adversely impact those business activities." She stated that the last clause is important, and too often the Commission does not have the opportunity to do so. She stated that she was impressed at the prior meeting with the 87 employees and the five that spoke, and the description of the business which the Commission should not adversely impact.

Ms. Cooperman suggested designation of part of the parcel, and to say it is without prejudice to future potential designation of other parts of the parcel, should ownership change. She suggested that a proposal to designate just the facades could be considered a facadectomy. She suggested that the staff recommendation was more appropriate for that reason. Mr. Thomas agreed. He noted that most of the parts of the buildings are buried inside and therefore would not be reviewed by the Commission. Mr. Mattioni commented that there have been issues in the past regarding alterations or demolitions of walls that were not part of the façade, and the property owners should not have to come back to the Commission for that scope of work. He stated that limiting the designation to just the facades eliminates the need for the owners to return to the Commission for that type of work. Mr. McCoubrey commented that the possibility of creating a facadectomy is not a good precedent to set, and the entire buildings should be designated, not just the facades. He stated that the importance is the façade and its relationship in space, and all three-dimensions. Ms. Cooperman agreed, and noted that the designation should address what is visible from the public right-of-way. Mr. McCoubrey noted that most of the parts of the buildings are not visible from the public right-of-way, and the Commission would not have to approve the work to those areas, but the staff would have to approve a building permit for any work that requires one. Mr. Thomas commented that because most of the structure is buried inside, it makes no difference if the Commission were to designate back one bay. If the owners need to expand, they may need to move things around and they should not have to come to the Commission every time they are adjusting machinery or tanks. Mr. Mattioni agreed. Ms. Cooperman stated that, if looking at the exterior walls, the north wall of Building 8C is partially buried and partially exposed above, and is very visible from the public right-of-way. She stated that it is the same with the south wall of Building 8C, which is partially visible from N. 10<sup>th</sup> Street. Mr. Reuter commented that from the Law Department's perspective, as a practical matter, there would not be any major distinctions between the designation of Buildings 8A and 8C, or the facades of Buildings 8A and 8C, with the exception of the southerly facing wall of Building 8C and the northerly facing wall of Building 8C, because those are ones that the owners may seek to alter in the future. If the Commission designates just the façade, and the structural members required to support the façade, then the Commission retains jurisdiction over alterations or demolitions of that façade. If the Commission designates the whole buildings of 8A and 8C, the distinction would be that the Commission would retain jurisdiction if the owners wanted to build up. He noted that the owners have not expressed an intention to do so, but a subsequent purchaser of the building may. He suggested that one option that may satisfy every party would be to specify in the nomination that the roofs of Buildings 8A and 8C are not character-defining features, the south wall of Building 8C is not a character-defining feature, and the north wall of Building 8C is whatever the Commission decides. He explained that his point is that the Commission can define in the designation what the character-defining features are. He reiterated that the staff would approve any building permits for work to the interior or replacement of flat roofs. He stated that the main issue will be the exposed second-floor walls of Building 8C, and whether the Commission wishes to consider

them to be historic fabric. He suggested that the Commission define what is and is not character-defining, or what is and is not historic fabric.

Kenny Pollack pointed to the loading dock of Building 8E on his poster board. He explained that if they were to take that down and expand the second and first floor of Building 8C, that north-facing façade would come down. He explained that below that, if they were to remove the loading dock, it is open to the factory, with no original exterior wall below the second floor of the north-facing wall.

Public comment resumed. David Traub, representing Save Our Sites, expressed appreciation to the property owners for their willingness to save the facades. He asked about their reason for not wanting to preserve the volume of the buildings. Harry Pollack responded that they do not wish to be encumbered, because they are operating a living, breathing business and need to be able to change when necessary. He stated that it is unprecedented to designate buildings that are operating in the first place. He reiterated that they are willing to compromise on Building 8A. Regarding Building 8C, he noted that the public only experiences it from N. 10<sup>th</sup> Street, and maybe there is something attractive about the façade. For that reason, he and his brother agreed to preserve that. The rest of the complex is not really visible from the public right-of-way, and when they need to expand, they do not want to be encumbered by review by the Commission. Mr. Traub continued to have a private conversation with Harry Pollack. Mr. Mattioni alerted Mr. Traub to the fact that his private conversation was not helpful. Jim Duffin of the Keeping Society commented that the easiest way to handle this is to state what is character-defining rather than stating what is not character-defining. Mr. Thomas agreed. He stated that the facades on Callowhill Street, Ridge Avenue, and N. 10<sup>th</sup> Street of Buildings 8A and 8C are character-defining and should not interfere with business operations. He suggested that the Commission does not need to specify including one structural bay, because a permit would not be issued that would leave a wall standing that could fall over.

Mr. McCoubrey stated that the Commission needs to protect itself, because it does not know who will own the building in the future and it does not want someone to be able to build vertically and change the spatial relationship of the façade. Mr. Beisert noted that a proposal such as that would have at least a review by the Commission. Ms. Cooperman agreed. Mr. Mattioni disagreed with Mr. McCoubrey's comment. He stated that the Commission does not have to protect itself. It protects itself by doing its job the best it can do it now with what is in front of it now. Mr. McCoubrey responded that the Commission has to maintain control over those things. Ms. Cooperman agreed, claiming it would otherwise be a facadectomy waiting to happen. Mr. Schaaf claimed it is analogous to what is happening to the National building on N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, where six floors are being constructed on top of it. Ms. Cooperman agreed. She stated that, speaking as an architectural historian, Building 8E is a character-defining feature of Building 8C, and is all part of the same building. She clarified that she is not suggesting that the Commission designate Building 8E now, but it is technically a character-defining feature of Building 8C. Mr. Martin suggested that even hypothesizing that Building 8E is appropriate for designation challenges the premise of what the Commission is doing. Ms. Cooperman disagreed. Mr. Thomas commented that this is a special situation, and if the building were vacant, it may be treated differently. He referenced other low-scale buildings such as the new Target at 19<sup>th</sup> and Chestnut Streets, which was a successful preservation project that included additions and connections.

Mr. Beisert asked if the Commission would review an overbuild if only the façade is designated. Mr. Farnham responded that it depends on how the Commission designates it. If it limits the

designation to the facades and nothing else, then it would not require a Commission review, unless they have to connect the façade to the overbuild. If it designates Buildings 8A and 8C, then an overbuild would fall within the Commission's jurisdiction to review. Mr. Reuter commented that the Commission can define the character-defining features, and it can include spatial relationships as one of those character-defining features. If the issue is whether the Commission wants to retain jurisdiction over new construction at the site, then it can do it that way. If the Commission designates only the façades, then it would really only have jurisdiction over alterations to those façades.

**ACTION:** Mr. Mattioni moved to find that the nomination demonstrates that property at 401-29 N. 10<sup>th</sup> Street satisfies Criterion for Designation J and to designate the Callowhill Street, Ridge Avenue, and N. 10<sup>th</sup> Street facades and associated supporting structures of Buildings 8A and 8C, including the spatial characteristics of those facades at their rooflines, listing them on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Mr. Hartner seconded the motion, which passed by a vote of 6 to 3. Commissioners Cooperman, McCoubrey, and Schaaf dissented.

**ADDRESS: 909-31 NOBLE ST**

Name of Resource: Armour & Company Stock Depot

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: NCL Realty LP

Nominator: The Keeping Society of Philadelphia

Staff Contact: Kim Chantry, kim.chantry@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION:** The Committee on Historic Designation unanimously voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 909-31 Noble Street satisfies Criteria for Designation D, I and J, but not Criteria A and C.

**OVERVIEW:** This nomination proposes to designate the property 909-31 Noble Street as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination argues that the former meatpacking plant of Armour & Company, constructed in 1906, satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, D, and J. Under Criteria A and J, the nomination argues that Armour & Company, based in Chicago, was one of the most significant meatpacking firms in the United States at the turn of the twentieth century, and that the building represents the history of the meatpacking and cold storage industries. The nomination contends that the building was constructed as part of a larger national movement to develop purpose-built stock depots in cities across the country. Under Criterion D, the nomination argues that the building embodies distinctive characteristics of the Italian Renaissance Revival style. Under Criterion C, the nomination asserts that the building is a local representative of a distinctive type and style used by Armour & Company in their stock depots across the United States.

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Farnham presented the nomination to the Historical Commission. Attorney William Martin and property owners Harry and Kenny Pollack represented the property owners. Oscar Beisert represented the nomination.

Mr. Farnham stated that at the previous Commission meeting, Fred Baumert, an engineer at Keast & Hood, presented a fairly grim assessment of the building, claiming "There appears to be no viable way to maintain or reuse the building for any purpose – so many of the primary structural elements are in such a deteriorated condition that even extensive shoring would not



provide assurance against instability and collapse. It is therefore necessary to conclude that the building should be vacated and demolished.” Mr. Farnham continued that the Commission had questions at its last meeting regarding whether or not the Department of Licenses & Inspections was aware of the engineering report and whether the Department of Licenses & Inspections had issued violations as a result of the report. He stated that the Department of Licenses & Inspections cited the building as Unsafe on 18 April 2018. Unsafe is one step below Imminently Dangerous. It means that the building is in very poor condition. The difference between Unsafe and Imminently Dangerous is that Unsafe means that the building does not necessarily pose the same level of risk to the public that an Imminently Dangerous building does, but it means that the building is in very poor condition.

Mr. Farnham explained that, as directed by the Commission, he and Ms. Chantry visited the property at 909-31 Noble Street on Tuesday afternoon, 24 April 2018, with Harry and Kenny Pollack, the property owners. The group toured the building inside and out, spending more than one hour inspecting all four floors and the basement as well as all exterior facades. Mr. Farnham summarized his staff report. He stated that the building was constructed in an extremely idiosyncratic manner, with brick exterior and interior load-bearing walls, steel, cast iron, and wood framing, and wood and concrete floors. Structural members meet one another in unorthodox ways and materials are combined in unusual ways. For example, wood joists support concrete floors in some places, which is highly unusual. The interior spaces are not large and open, as one might expect in an industrial building, but are designed for specific meat processing and storage needs. The building is partitioned with interior brick walls, some clad in terra cotta and tile, some insulated with cork, to create spaces for various meat processing tasks. The tall, westernmost bay in the front façade allowed railroad cars to roll directly into the building along the west façade for loading and unloading. Enormous ice machines occupy a multi-floor space at the northwest corner of the building. Meat cutting rooms have pitched, concrete floors with gutters around the exteriors for easy cleaning. Floors are sagging and cracking in unusual ways. Seven smoke houses rise up four floors through the building, each like a large elevator shaft with an exhaust at the roof. Mr. Farnham noted that he is not a structural engineer, but he saw nothing that convinced him that Mr. Baumert’s report was not accurate. He commented that, during the tour, he was even nervous at points because of the condition of the building. He stated that, owing to its condition and configuration, the staff recommends that the Historical Commission decline to designate this property because the building is in very poor condition as reflected by the Unsafe violation and will likely need to be demolished in the near future.

Mr. Thomas commented that Mr. Farnham’s observations corroborate a lot of what the Commission was told at the previous meeting. Mr. Reuter clarified that there is no distinct line between Unsafe and Imminently Dangerous. The City’s Property Maintenance Code was updated several years ago, and certain sections regarding Unsafe and Imminently Dangerous were amended and new sections were added. The primary distinction is whether the condition poses a threat to life. A building or structure may be declared Unsafe if it meets certain criteria, but with Imminently Dangerous, there is no specific criteria, other than it being in poor condition and posing a threat to life. Mr. Reuter continued that one of the reasons this building was not declared Imminently Dangerous is because the Department of Licenses & Inspections decided this is a low-traffic area; if the building were to collapse, the Department of Licenses & Inspections determined that there would not be an immediate threat to life. He stated that the idea that the building is on the verge of collapse is not disputed, but that it is believed that the building would collapse in on itself.

Mr. Mattioni asked if there is a high probability that the building would not last, even if the Commission were to designate it as historic. Mr. Beisert commented that it feels like the Commission has just gone through hardship hearings. He stated that there is a process, and the Commission is circumventing the process with every other nomination. He asserted that Arts & Crafts Holdings, a local developer, has offered to purchase this building and save it, and that is why there is a hardship process, so that it can be determined if someone is willing to pay market rate and save the building. He reiterated that the Commission is circumventing that process. He conceded that maybe most of the building has to be demolished, and maybe all that can be saved is the façade. He asserted that the Commission is not giving the building that chance, because everything is an immediate hardship process that does not include the entire hardship process but rather just the part that leads to demolition. Mr. Martin responded that the hardship process applies to designated buildings, and this building does not warrant historic designation. He stated that it was poorly designed by a third-rate architect for an industry of insignificance to the City of Philadelphia, and the Commission lacks evidence that the building is worthy of designation.

Mr. Baumert summarized the findings of his structural engineering report. He reminded the Commission that there are steel girders that are so corroded that they are buckling. The overall design of the building was so inept that it cannot survive. There is extensive decay of wood framing which supports the masonry. He commented that if he were brought in as part of the due diligence process for anyone who would propose to purchase the building, he would tell them that there is no way to justify the expenditure that would be required to save this building.

Mr. Mattioni read from Mr. Farnham's report: "After touring the building and reviewing the engineer's report and L&I violation, the staff recommends that the Historical Commission decline to designate this property because the building is in very poor condition as reflected by the Unsafe violation and will likely need to be demolished in the near future. The staff suggests that, given the limited historical and architectural significance of the building, the Historical Commission's scant resources are better expended on more viable, more significant buildings." Mr. Mattioni stated that he respects the recommendation of the staff.

Mr. Thomas asked for public comment. David Traub, representing Save Our Sites, commented that even if there was no architect for this building, it is still handsome. Mr. Beisert asked that a photograph of the façade be displayed on the projection screen. Mr. Mattioni noted that the coversheet of the nomination shows a photograph of the façade. Mr. Beisert responded that just because Mr. Mattioni does not care about it, it does not mean that no one else does. Mr. Traub described in detail the front façade. He again referred to it as handsome. He commented that he does not doubt the dire condition of the building and that it is dangerous, but claimed that it is a question of will, and the owners do not want to restore it. He claimed that he restored buildings in comparable or worse condition during his 43 years as an architect. He asserted that it can be restored if the owners want to do so. He commented that it is sad that the building, which he once again referred to as handsome, will likely be demolished. He concluded that it sets a terrible precedent. Paul Steinke, representing the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia, commented that the nomination was correctly recommended for approval. He commented that if the Commission wishes to take into account other factors, like the damning reports from both the engineer and the staff, it may be because the Commission may take into account any and all factors it wishes when making a decision. He commented that he shares Mr. Beisert's concern that the hardship process is increasingly being short-circuited. He stated that the Alliance believes the building meets the Criteria as a vestige of an important part of Philadelphia's industrial history, and is one of the few remaining meat packing plants. Jim Duffin commented

on the nomination itself and the significance of the building. He commented that the site is much like the Esslinger's Brewery site. He commented that the Commission should look at what buildings are extant which exemplify a particular industry, which is meat packing in this case. He explained that he looked at state industrial directories, and this building is the only building that exists from 1940 and 1950 reports of the largest meat packing plants in Philadelphia. He commented that it has significance as the only survivor from the large-scale meat packing industry in Philadelphia in the 1940s and 1950s. He noted that it is clear that there are very serious issues with the structure of the building, and perhaps Mr. Baumert is correct that the cost of fixing the building is beyond the means that anyone would want to undertake. He suggested that an actual dollar figure is provided, so that it is not abstract.

Mr. Martin stated that obtaining a financial estimate would prove to be a significant challenge because so much of the building is not able to be accessed because of its condition. He stated that the facts put into evidence by Mr. Duffin regarding the incremental investigation of the role of Armour in the meat packing industry should have been included in the nomination. That is why there is a process for property owners to see a nomination, respond to it, and there is also a process for sending the nomination back to a nominator to clarify and provide additional information if necessary. He concluded that the property owner should not be faced with new and incremental arguments like Mr. Duffin's at this point in the process.

Mr. Farnham stated that there have been claims made regarding the hardship process. He explained that the hardship process exists for the Commission to determine whether or not designated buildings can be reused. This building is not yet designated, and the Commission is under no obligation to designate it. The Commission is not short-circuiting the hardship process. It is not obligated by law or rule to apply the hardship process in this case. If this building was designated and the property owner applied to demolish it, then the Commission would apply the hardship process. He continued that the notion that there has been some sort of shift in the way that the Commission is looking at buildings, really is more indicative of the types of buildings that are being nominated for designation these days. Buildings are being nominated that are literally on their last legs, and that was not typically the case five or ten years ago. He reiterated that it is not a change in the way that the Commission is reviewing nominations, but rather a change in the type of nominations the Commission is receiving and is forced to confront. Mr. Mattioni concurred with Mr. Farnham's observation.

Ms. Cooperman commented that it was the expert opinion of the archaeologist on the Committee on Historic Designation that this property qualifies under Criterion I, which is the potential for significant archaeological deposits. Mr. Martin argued that Criterion I was not included in the nomination, and as such, he and his clients have had no chance to prepare for that argument. He stated that Doug Mooney, the archaeologist on the Committee, did not provide his professional opinion. Ms. Cooperman disagreed. Mr. Martin asked if Mr. Mooney had prepared and submitted a report or a study. Ms. Cooperman responded that Mr. Mooney gave an expert opinion regarding archaeological potential, which is the primary reason that he is on the Committee on Historic Designation. Mr. Martin asserted that, if the Commission is seeking to rely upon Criterion I, it needs some reasoned basis other than Mr. Mooney saying that it is an old street and therefore there is probably some old stuff underneath it. Ms. Cooperman responded that that is not what Mr. Mooney said. Mr. Martin disagreed. Ms. Cooperman begged to differ. Mr. Martin stated that there is no legal basis for the Commission to designate based upon Criterion I. He commented that the Commission's Rules and Regulations state that the property owner must be provided with advance notice of the grounds for designation, and there was no advance notice of Criterion I in the nomination. Mr. Mattioni

commented that generally speaking, an expert opinion off the top of your head, without having gone through all the hoops of establishing a basis for an opinion, and having the qualifications to issue that opinion, precedes the opinion itself. He noted that he was not present at the Committee meeting, and does not know exactly how the opinion was expressed, but if it was one that was spur of the moment, it is about as valuable as you get when you have a spur of the moment opinion.

Mr. Thomas opined that while the argument was made that the building satisfies at least one of the Criteria, as do thousands of buildings in Philadelphia, the point has been made that this building is near the end of its life. He suggested that timing is everything, and that the Commission could determine that the building satisfies the Criteria, but could choose to not designate. He stated that this would be a recognition of all of the time that would be spent, if the building were designated, on the hardship process, and that the Commission needs to decide what is the best use of its resources. He agreed that the façade is attractive, and that if the building were in good condition, there would likely be a developer present who would want to list the building on the National Register of Historic Places in order to obtain tax credits for rehabilitation. As it stands, however, he concluded that it would be a big waste of staff time, Commission time, and public time. He noted that the nomination and research would remain in the Commission's files. He suggested that one could offer a motion that would state that the building satisfies the Criteria but that the Commission chooses to not designate it as historic. Mr. Mattioni agreed that it is a handsome building, and commented that he would have liked to have seen a nomination for it 20 years ago.

**ACTION:** Mr. Mattioni moved to find that the property at 909-31 Noble Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, D, and J, but to decline to designate it as historic. Mr. Dillon seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

### **NATIONAL REGISTER COMMENT**

#### **ADDRESS: 2826 SALMON ST**

Name of Resource: Charles Carrol Public School

Proposed Action: National Register Comment

Property Owner: 2826 Salmon Street Investment Partners

Staff Contact: Megan Schmitt, [megan.schmitt@phila.gov](mailto:megan.schmitt@phila.gov), 215-686-7660

**OVERVIEW:** According to the nomination, the Charles Carroll Public School, located in Philadelphia's Kensington neighborhood, was designed by architect Irwin T. Catharine and constructed in 1922-23 in the Classical Revival style. An addition was constructed in 1970 to the design of Philadelphia-based firm Zimmerman, Wade, Langberg and Suggs. The nomination contends that the building is significant under National Register Criterion A, in the area of Education, as an example of an institutional building that helps to convey the history and evolution of educational theory and practice during the early and mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. The nomination states that the period of significance, 1965-70, in part, reflects a moment when schools were increasingly being seen as places of refuge for communities vulnerable to violence, drugs and crime. Finally, the nomination states, "The importance of the Charles Carroll Public School lies in its ability to convey both the trends and theories found within what the Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF), 'Public Schools in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1938-1980' terms the Long Progressive Era from 1867 to 1930 and the adaptation of the school in the Urban Crisis Era from c. 1965 to 1980."

**DISCUSSION:** Ms. Schmitt presented the nomination to the Historical Commission.

Mr. Thomas stated that, in his opinion, the building seemed to be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places by satisfying Criterion A, in the Area of Education. Mr. Mattioni remarked that this building was even better looking than the last one they had discussed. Mr. Thomas concluded the discussion by saying the Philadelphia Historical Commission's comment would be that the building at 2826 Salmon Street was worthy of listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

At 2:30 p.m., Mr. Mattioni moved to adjourn. Ms. Cooperman 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.

Standard 10: New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

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.

### **CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION**

§ 14-1004(1) Criteria for Designation.

A building, complex of buildings, structure, site, object, or district may be designated for preservation if it:

- (a) Has significant character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth, or nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past;
- (b) Is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation;
- (c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style;
- (d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen;

- (e) Is the work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or designer, or professional engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth, or nation;
- (f) Contains elements of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship that represent a significant innovation;
- (g) Is part of or related to a square, park, or other distinctive area that should be preserved according to a historic, cultural, or architectural motif;
- (h) Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community, or City;
- (i) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in pre-history or history; or
- (j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social, or historical heritage of the community.

#### **PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION RULES & REGULATIONS**

##### **5.14 Amendment and Rescission of Designations**

Section 14-2007(6)(f) of the Philadelphia Code permits the Commission to amend or rescind the designation of a building, complex of buildings, structure, site, object, public interior portion of a building or structure, or district as historic in the same manner as specified for designation.