

**THE MINUTES OF THE 673<sup>RD</sup> STATED MEETING OF THE  
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

**FRIDAY, 14 SEPTEMBER 2018  
ROOM 18-029, 1515 ARCH STREET  
BOB THOMAS, CHAIR**

**PRESENT**

Robert Thomas, AIA, Chair  
Emily Cooperman, Ph.D.  
Kelly Edwards, MUP  
Michael Fink, Department of Licenses & Inspections  
Steven Hartner, Department of Public Property  
John Mattioni, Esq.  
Dan McCoubrey, AIA, LEED AP BD+C  
R. David Schaaf, Philadelphia City Planning Commission  
H. Ahada Stanford, Ph.D., Commerce Department  
Kimberly Washington, Esq.

Jonathan E. Farnham, Executive Director  
Randal Baron, Historic Preservation Planner III  
Kim Chantry, Historic Preservation Planner II  
Laura DiPasquale, Historic Preservation Planner II  
Meredith Keller, Historic Preservation Planner II  
Allyson Mehley, Historic Preservation Planner I  
Megan Schmitt, Historic Preservation Planner I

**ALSO PRESENT**

Richard Conway Meyer, RCMA  
Leah Reisman, Princeton University  
Patrick Grossi, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia  
Amanda Grady, Philadelphia's Magic Gardens  
Lou Filippoe, Graboyes  
Emily Smith, Philadelphia's Magic Gardens  
Kate McGlinchey, Old City District  
Julia Zagar  
Isaiah Zagar  
Maribeth Rentschler, Stanev Potts Architects  
Kanard Burris, CCP  
Abdulwaned Shah, CCP  
Judith Stein  
Ryan Lohbauer, Stanev Potts Architects  
Olivia Edlund, Philadelphia's Magic Gardens  
Allison Boyle, Philadelphia's Magic Gardens  
Anthony C. Molden, Painted Bride Arts Center  
Ursula Rucker, Painted Bride Arts Center  
Helen A. Heas  
Mike Beck, Painted Bride Arts Center  
Yaara Ben-Dor, Painted Bride Arts Center

Elizabeth Schier, Painted Bride Arts Center  
Alexa Ricrad  
Mark Lord  
Lauren T. Elting, Painted Bride Arts Center  
Brandi Levine, PKNA  
Samuel Weiner  
Tony Bracali, TGG  
H. Gunther  
Calvin Vanny  
Charquita Sullivan  
Mark Wifand, JWA  
Tina LeCoff  
Ian Toner, Toner Architects  
Silke Tudor, Philadelphia's Magic Gardens  
Job Itzkowitz, Old City District  
Francesca Amnon, UPenn  
April Rose, Painted Bride Arts Center  
Kyce Kernozek, BLT Architects  
Julie Morningstar, BLT Architects  
Sharon M. Erwin, Esq.  
Liz Volchok  
Marty Brigham, Painted Bride Arts Center  
Diane Goschler, Painted Bride Arts Center  
Sarah Lerner  
Katherine Brill  
Sung Di  
Jyotsna Naya  
Lillian Candela  
Monica P. Ortiz  
Sue Patterson, Penn Knox Neighborhood Association  
Eric Lorenzo, Penn Knox Neighborhood Association  
Zhen Ni  
Daniela Mita  
Chongbe Wu  
Sarah Knauer  
Laurel Raczka, Painted Bride Arts Center  
Ray Rola  
Lenny Seidman, Painted Bride Arts Center  
Christian Shaw  
Joseph Bacci  
Stacey Holder, Philadelphia's Magic Gardens  
Ross Weiss  
Richard Snyderman, Old City Arts  
Rosella Harvey  
Laura Sollmann  
Chris Burns  
Kenneth Lopez  
Kevin Rasmussen, Rasmussen/Su  
E. Rose  
Stan Witomsky, Painted Bride Arts Center

Kimberly LaPorte  
Kate Randeau  
Blake Schmotz  
Michael Phillips, Esq., Obermayer  
Katia McGuirk, tile nut  
Jennifer Pouchot, Painted Bride Arts Center  
Elizabeth Masiuke  
Adam Montalbano, Moto Designshop  
Kimberly Nguyen  
Samy Belbegia  
Harriet Rubenstein, Painted Bride Arts Center  
Joel Spivak  
Leslie Smith  
Charles McMahon, Lantern Theater  
Stacy Dutton, Lantern Theater  
Renata Lisowski  
Gabe Harper  
Adrian Trevisan  
Abbey Dolan  
Sharon Barr, Painted Bride Arts Center  
David Hollenberg, University of Pennsylvania  
Xue Fei Lin  
Michelle Mlacker  
Hector J. Berdecia Hernandez  
Daniel Korona  
Gabriela Raczka, Painted Bride Arts Center  
Michael Cole, MC Architectural LLC  
Bart Bajda, Toner Architects  
Brandon Porter  
Cody Anthony  
Tyler Tantillo  
Stephen Potts, Stanev Potts Architects  
Tyreek Gonzalez  
Carlene Riley  
Noah Kane-Small  
Claire Kane  
Mike Harris, South Street headhouse  
Gerry Givnish, Painted Bride Arts Center  
Paul Steinke, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia  
Jerry Goodman, Esq.  
James Duffin, The Keeping Society  
Stuart Rosenberg, SHRA  
Ross Weiss, Esq., Cozen O'Connor  
Helen Heinz, Temple University  
Stacy Calder  
Kathleen Foster  
Venise Whitaker  
Jonathan Stein  
Faye Anderson, All That Philly Jazz  
Noah Smalls

Terri Fox, Philadelphia Dance Projects  
Clair Kaine  
Dan Mayette  
Jeffrey Escalante  
Rasul Jones  
Gabriel Abekanbi  
Juedy Timothy  
Kevin Torres  
Brandon Jones  
Thao Truong  
Joyce Aquino  
Avonte Barr

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Thomas called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Commissioners Cooperman, Edwards, Fink, Hartner, Mattioni, McCoubrey, Schaaf, Stanford, and Washington joined him.

### **MINUTES OF THE 672<sup>ND</sup> STATED MEETING OF THE PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

**ACTION:** Ms. Cooperman moved to approve the minutes of the 672<sup>nd</sup> Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission, held 10 August 2018. Mr. Mattioni seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

### **CONTINUANCE REQUEST**

#### **ADDRESS: 23 W PENN ST**

Name of Resource: Germantown Boys' Club

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Germantown Boys' Club

Nominator: Oscar Beisert, Penn Knox Neighborhood Association

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

**OVERVIEW:** This nomination proposes to designate the property at 23 W. Penn Street as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Oscar Beisert submitted the nomination on 8 July 2016 on behalf of the Penn-Knox Neighborhood Association. The staff reviewed the nomination and deemed it correct and complete on 1 December 2016. The staff's determination that the nomination was correct and complete indicated that sufficient information had been provided for the nomination to be reviewed, but not that the staff necessarily agreed with the assertions proffered in the nomination. The property owner was notified in writing on 16 December 2016 that the Committee on Historic Designation would review the nomination on 15 February 2017 and the Historical Commission on 10 March 2017. At the request of the property owner, the reviews were continued to the 19 April 2017 meeting of the Committee on Historic Designation and the 12 May 2017 meeting of the Historical Commission.

The nomination argues that Germantown Boys' Club is significant under Criteria for Designation A, D, E, and J. The nomination contends that the building is significant under Criteria A and J for its association with the Boys' Parlors Association, which became the Germantown Boys' Club, and which provided a community center to serve the growing working-class community of

Germantown. The nomination further argues that the building is significant under Criterion D, as an example of the Colonial Revival style as articulated in institutional buildings of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Lastly, the nomination claims that the building satisfies Criterion E, owing to its designer, architect Mantle Fielding Jr.

The Committee on Historic Designation met to review the nomination on 19 April 2017. At that meeting, the staff recommended to the Committee on Historic Designation that the nomination fails to demonstrate that the property at 23 W. Penn Street satisfies any of the Criteria for Designation. The Committee on Historic Designation took considerable testimony from the property owner and its consultants, nominator, and public. Disagreeing with the staff recommendation, the Committee on Historic Designation eventually voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 23 W. Penn Street satisfies Criteria for Designation D, E, H, and J.

The Historical Commission reviewed the nomination and accepted extensive testimony at its meeting on 12 May 2017. At the conclusion of the review on 12 May 2017, the Historical Commission tabled the matter to a special meeting, which was scheduled for 24 July 2017, but eventually cancelled at the request of the nominator, to provide an opportunity for the nominator and property owner to meet and discuss their differences. On 11 August 2017, the Historical Commission extended the period to review the nomination set at the May 2017 meeting by 30 days. On 8 September 2017, the Historical Commission continued the matter for another 30 days at the joint request of the property owner and nominator. On 13 October 2017, the Historical Commission continued the matter yet again at the joint request of the property owner and nominator, until such time as one or both parties request that the Historical Commission reconsider the matter. The nominator and property owner discussed the matter for several months, and, on 30 March 2018, the nominator, the Penn Knox Neighborhood Association, requested that the Historical Commission restart the review.

The Historical Commission met to review the nomination on 8 June 2018. The Historical Commission then took additional testimony from the public, both for and against designation. At the end of the discussion, the nominator requested that the Historical Commission continue the matter for 90 days, to the 14 September 2018 meeting, to allow the property owner and community to continue their negotiations.

**DISCUSSION:** Attorney Jerald Goodman represented the property owner. Penn Knox Neighborhood Association Chairwoman Sue Patterson and historian James Duffin represented the nomination. Mr. Thomas asked the parties involved in the continuance request to briefly state the reason for the request. Mr. Goodman asked that the matter be heard at a special meeting, so that his client does not have to wait another month until the Historical Commission's meeting in October. Ms. Patterson agreed to this request. She explained that part of the reason for the requested continuance is that the nominator, Oscar Beisert, works for FEMA and was called away owing to Hurricane Florence. She added that their lawyer had a death in the family and is currently at the funeral. She noted that there is another community meeting scheduled for the following week. Mr. Duffin explained that he is standing in for Mr. Beisert, who agrees with the continuance request as well.

**ACTION:** Mr. Mattioni moved to continue the review of the nomination for 23 W. Penn Street. Mr. McCoubrey seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Following the motion, Mr. Farnham explained that the staff will explore the availability of various conference rooms and then poll the Commissioners as to their availability. He stated that he will try to find a date when a quorum of Commissioners and a room are available prior to the October 12 Commission meeting. Mr. Thomas commented that the public will then be notified of the date and location of the special meeting.

## **THE REPORT OF THE ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE, 21 AUGUST 2018**

Dan McCoubrey, Chair

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Mr. Thomas introduced the Consent Agenda, which included applications for 318 Lawrence Court, 1401-15 Arch Street, 251 S. 18th Street, 2042 Mount Vernon Street, and 334 S. Hicks Street. He asked if anyone on the Historical Commission or in the audience had comments on the requests. None were offered.

**ACTION:** Mr. McCoubrey moved to adopt the recommendation of the Architectural Committee for the applications for 318 Lawrence Court, 1401-15 Arch Street, 251 S. 18th Street, 2042 Mount Vernon Street, and 334 S. Hicks Street. Ms. Cooperman seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

### **AGENDA**

#### **ADDRESS: 1511 LOMBARD ST**

Proposal: Reconstruct façade

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: 1511 Lombard St LLC

Applicant: Samuel Weiner, 1511 Lombard St., LLC

History: 1835

Individual Designation: None

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

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

**ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:** The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial, pursuant to Standard 6 and the Historical Commission's decision of 13 April 2017.

**OVERVIEW:** This application proposes to demolish the historic front façade of the row house at 1511 Lombard Street and reconstruct it. The Historical Commission denied a very similar application for the property in April 2017. Unlike the earlier application, the current application includes a letter from an engineer recommending that the façade be rebuilt. The letter does not indicate that the façade cannot be repaired. The letter mainly offers aesthetic concerns regarding the patched look of a repaired façade. The letter cites the replacement of windows and doors as well as infilling air conditioner holes in support of the rebuilding of the brick façade. In fact, the windows do not need to be replaced. A door replacement is unrelated to the structural stability of the facade and the infilling of air conditioner openings is a relatively minor repair. A new cornice would hide the mismatched brickwork at the parapet.

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Baron presented the application to the Historical Commission. Developer Samuel Weiner represented the application.

Mr. Weiner explained that he has renovated many historical properties and respects the process. After the Historical Commission denied his application to reconstruct the front façade of this building in April 2018, he attempted to restore the façade. He removed the plaster from the front inside wall and discovered that the wall is not in good condition. The wall is patched and spalled in some areas. Mr. Weiner explained that he could install star bolts to secure the façade, but they would be unsightly. He asserted that the wall is beyond repair and that he is concerned that it threatens public safety. Because the building to the east is lower, he claimed that his building is more exposed and more difficult to repair.

Mr. Thomas asked Mr. Weiner about his intentions for the property if the Commission does allow him to rebuild the façade. Mr. Weiner replied that he will reconstruct the façade to match its current condition. Mr. Thomas commented that Mr. Weiner should not rebuild the non-historic openings for the air-conditioning equipment. Mr. Thomas asked about the cornice. Mr. Weiner said that he intends to restore the cornice and work with the staff on the details of any reconstruction. Mr. McCoubrey reported that the Committee found the documentation claiming that the façade needs to be rebuilt lacking. The engineer's report lacked photographs detailing the problems. Mr. Thomas suggested that, perhaps, if the Commission approved the demolition and reconstruction, the staff could also review a revised engineer's report. Ms. Cooperman noted that the Commission does not have what it needs to complete its due diligence. Mr. Weiner asked what is needed. Ms. Cooperman said that they need some photographs documenting that the wall is out of plumb, or the bricks are displaced, or that the wall has failed. Mr. McCoubrey said that the staff could visit the site and review the conditions as well. Mr. Baron responded that he has been to the site and did not see evidence of bowing and that the engineer's report did not seem to document problems that are unable to be repaired. He pointed out that Rudy D'Alessandro of the Architecture Committee, who is a contractor, is noted in the meeting minutes claiming that the problem could be repaired with Syntec anchors and Gunite on the inside of the interior wall. Mr. Weiner said that he has had many masons inspect the wall. Mr. Thomas said that the applicant is welcome to return to the Historical Commission with his engineer with documentation and photographs that demonstrate that the existing wall must be rebuilt.

**ACTION:** Mr. McCoubrey moved to deny the application, pursuant to Standard 6 and the Historical Commission's decision of 13 April 2017. Ms. Cooperman seconded the motion, which passed by a vote of 9 to 0. Mr. Mattioni abstained.

**ADDRESS: 643-45 N 15TH ST**

Proposal: Alter first-floor façade

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: 643-645 N 15th St, LP

Applicant: Michael Cole, MC Architectural, LLC

History: 1875

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Spring Garden Historic District, Contributing, 10/11/2000

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

**ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:** The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial, pursuant to Standards 6 and 9.

**OVERVIEW:** This application proposes to alter the ground-floor front façade of this building. The area of the façade to be altered currently has a non-historic storefront.

The application proposes to remove the storefront and partially recreate the two lost window openings as door openings. The new openings would extend down to grade. Flush metal doors would be installed in the openings, providing access to a trash room. The remainder of the openings above the doors would be infilled with double transoms. While removing the storefront and restoring the ground-floor window openings would satisfy the standards, the creation of openings that span the basement and first floor levels and the installation of the non-historic doors and transoms do not. Another solution for trash storage and removal should be sought. It should be noted that second-floor vinyl windows and capping as well as glass block in basement windows have been installed since designation without the Historical Commission's approval.

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Baron presented the application to the Historical Commission. Architect Michael Cole represented the application.

Mr. Cole explained that a previous owner had converted the building to a place of worship; he had inserted a storefront into the first-floor front facade. The new owner would like to convert the building back to apartments. Currently, the tenants must store the trash in their own apartments, which raises health concerns. He explained that he is proposing to restore part of the façade but also to create two doors to a trash room. Mr. Thomas asked the architect if there is another route to take garbage from a rear yard to a street. Mr. Cole said that there is an alleyway at the back that leads to Wallace Street but that it has been blocked by a fence. Mr. Thomas recommended that the front of the building would be much better served with real windows that would give light to otherwise windowless but occupied rooms. He said that the ground floor could be restored giving more value to the building, while also finding a solution to the trash problem. He encouraged the applicant to speak to the owner about reopening the alley to take garbage to the street. Mr. Cole pointed out that only two units would have access to this rear court. The other people would have to walk their trash outside to get to the storage area. It was pointed out that they already have to take their trash outside. Mr. Thomas suggested that, in cases where there is really no access, some have created a subterranean well. Mr. Cole said that he would discuss the options with the owner.

Mr. Thomas asked for public comment. Michelle Mlacker introduced herself as a law student and asked about the basis of the Commission's review. The Commissioners responded that such questions would be better posed to the staff outside the auspices of a public meeting.

**ACTION:** Mr. McCoubrey moved to deny the application, pursuant to Standards 6 and 9. Ms. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.



**ADDRESS: 318 LAWRENCE CT**

Proposal: Construct front addition

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Hannah Kim and James P. Dunn

Applicant: Raymond Rola, Raymond F. Rola Architect

History: 1970; Lawrence Court Townhouses; Bower & Fradley, architects

Individual Designation: None

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

Staff Contact: Meredith Keller, meredith.keller@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

**ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:** The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial of the design as submitted, but approval a fourth-story addition with the fenestration redesigned to be symmetrical.

**OVERVIEW:** This application proposes to construct a fourth-story addition at the front of 318 Lawrence Court. The building, classified as contributing in the Society Hill Historic District, is one of seven identical townhouses constructed around 1970. These buildings were designed with a set back fourth story and front deck. Many of the neighboring Lawrence Court townhouses have enclosed the deck to create additional living space. This application proposes to construct a similar enclosure system with a series of casement windows, an offset brick pier, and metal panels.

**ACTION:** See Consent Agenda.

**ADDRESS: 1401-15 ARCH ST**

Proposal: Install marquee; replace roof signage

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: 1401 Arch, LP

Applicant: Kyle Kernozek, BLT Architects

History: 1898; United Gas Improvement Building; Wilson Brothers & Company, architects;

Western addition, first-floor & roof alterations, 1926; Perry, Shaw & Hepburn, architects; Samuel Yellin, gates

Individual Designation: 6/24/1987

District Designation: None

Staff Contact: Meredith Keller, meredith.keller@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

**ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:** The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval, provided that a minimum of 12 to 18-inches of the Yellin gates remain visible, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standard 9.

**OVERVIEW:** This application proposes to install a marquee at the first story and new lettering and lighting at the penthouse of the former UGI building. New metal letters at the penthouse will be installed on an existing metal sign. Spot lighting at the base of the sign will illuminate the lettering. The marquee is proposed at the first story of the Arch Street entrance and will be anchored with a tie rod to masonry above the storefront and at the jambs of the storefront, where the existing entrance includes a pocket and sliding gates designed by Samuel Yellin. The proposed marquee would be constructed of a steel structure with an oval-shaped skylight. LED lighting is proposed to backlight recessed panels within the marquee and to illuminate the sidewalk.

**ACTION:** See Consent Agenda.

**ADDRESS: 251 S 18TH ST**

Proposal: Construct glass addition; cut new entrances

Review Requested: Review In Concept

Owner: University of the Arts

Applicant: James Wyper, III, Jacobs/Wyper Architects

History: 1906; Philadelphia Art Alliance; Wetherill Residence; Frank Miles Day & Bro., architects

Individual Designation: 4/28/1970

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

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

**ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:** The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval in-concept, pursuant to Standards 9 and 10.

**OVERVIEW:** This in-concept application proposes to construct a two-story glass enclosure in an existing rear garden area, and to replace an inoperable elevator and create an accessible at-grade entrance and new rear stair from Manning Street at the side of the building. No major alterations are proposed for the front façade. The existing ADA ramp along Rittenhouse Square Street would be removed as part of the construction of the glass addition, but the fence would remain. Two concepts are proposed for interior access to the new enclosure, which is set back slightly from Rittenhouse Square Street.

**ACTION:** See Consent Agenda.

**ADDRESS: 2042 MOUNT VERNON ST**

Proposal: Construct decks, pilot house, and side addition

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Sue Lee and Roan O'Sullivan

Applicant: Kevin Rasmussen, Rasmussen/Su

History: 1865

Individual Designation: 11/6/1975

District Designation: Spring Garden Historic District, Contributing, 10/11/2000

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

**ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:** The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval, provided the pilot house and mechanical enclosure are reduced in size and a mockup demonstrates that those elements are inconspicuous from the public right-of-way, and a structural engineering report is provided to the staff that documents that the proposed alterations to the rear ell will not necessitate its complete demolition, pursuant to Standards 9, 10, and the Roofs Guideline.

**OVERVIEW:** This application proposes to construct a two-story addition at the side of the rear ell, a roof deck on the three-story rear ell, a pilot house and mechanical enclosure on the main block, reconstruct a rear deck on an existing one-story rear addition, and modify several window openings on the side and rear of the rear ell. The rowhouse is located three buildings in from the corner of N. 21<sup>st</sup> and Mount Vernon Streets, and as such, portions of the side and rear of the building are somewhat visible from N. 21<sup>st</sup> Street. The proposed two-story side addition will be clad in painted composite siding. Posts are proposed to support the upper roof deck above the slightly pitched roof of the rear ell. Railings for both decks are proposed to be horizontal black metal. No work is proposed for the front façade as part of this application.

**ACTION:** See Consent Agenda.

**ADDRESS: 262 S 16TH ST**

Proposal: Demolish non-contributing building; construct 7-story building

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Briarpatch Holdings LLC

Applicant: Adam Montalbano, Moto DesignShop, Inc.

History: 1980

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Rittenhouse Fidler Residential Historic District, Non-contributing, 2/8/1995

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

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

**OVERVIEW:** This application proposes to demolish a non-contributing building in the Rittenhouse Fidler Historic District and to construct a new masonry building in its place. The application originally called for a seven-story building with pilot house and decks. The Historical Commission has full jurisdiction over the proposed construction. The Architectural Committee recommended denial of the proposed new construction, noting that the property is located mid-block along a consistent three-and-a-half story row, and opining that the proposed construction was not compatible with the scale, size, or massing of its surrounding environment. While there are nearby high-rise apartment buildings, they are located on corners, not mid-block. The Architectural Committee recommended that the building be limited to three stories, and that the floors align with the neighboring buildings. They commented that additional floors set back so they are not visible from the street might be acceptable.

Following the Architectural Committee meeting, the applicants revised the application to better align the floor levels of the lower floors with the adjacent buildings, to reduce the height by one floor from seven to six stories, and to set back the top two floors by ten feet instead of five feet.

**DISCUSSION:** Ms. DiPasquale presented the application to the Historical Commission. Architect Adam Montalbano and attorney Michael Phillips represented the application.

Ms. DiPasquale explained that the applicants had distributed additional sets of photographs of neighboring buildings and projects throughout Philadelphia, one of which was approved as a result of a financial hardship application, and another as necessary in the public interest.

Mr. Phillips opined that the review of the non-contributing building should be done under a separate set of standards, with particular emphasis on the compatibility of the project with the materials, features, size, scale, proportion, and massing within the historic district. He agreed with Ms. DiPasquale that some of their examples are not exactly on point with the current proposal. He reiterated that the building in question is non-contributing. He walked the Commission members through the supplemental photographs. He explained that some of the buildings across the street and on neighboring blocks are fairly tall, like the proposed building. He noted that they originally proposed an eight-story building that met the zoning requirements for the CMX-3 property.

Mr. Phillips offered the Curtis Institute dormitory and rehearsal hall as an example of “overbuild” construction. He noted that the Curtis Institute had a set-back eight story addition, which is bookended by significant buildings. He also presented 2106-10 Walnut Street, a project

approved by the Historical Commission, in which the owners maintained a common cornice line but then set back an addition off the street level. He noted that the project included both a vacant lot and a contributing building, upon which an addition was also constructed. Mr. Phillips presented other examples of high-rise buildings that had been constructed near lower-scale contributing buildings, including several in the Old City Historic District. Mr. Phillips conceded that the original eight-story building that his client proposed to the Historical Commission staff was not compatible with the district, so they included a setback.

Mr. Montalbano explained the changes made to the application following the Architectural Committee meeting. He noted that the height has been reduced from seven to six stories, and that they increased the setback for floors five and six. He noted that the reason for the flat first four stories with the setback at the fifth floor as well as the initial concepts were based on conversations with the staff. He noted that they have also reduced the height of the first four floors to better align with the neighboring properties. He explained that the heads and sills of the windows now align well with the adjacent buildings. He noted that, in the previous submission, they had included stucco detailing at the ground floor and cornice, but have since replaced those materials with cast stone which is more compatible and durable.

Mr. Farnham commented that 108 Arch Street, one of the projects Mr. Phillips included as precedent in the Old City Historic District, was permitted before the Historical Commission had jurisdiction over the district and so was built without the Historical Commission's review or approval.

Mr. McCoubrey responded to Mr. Phillips's example of the Curtis Institute of Music, explaining that he was the architect for the project. He explained that it was a project for an institutional client and was deemed to be in the public interest. He also noted that the setbacks on that project are greater than 40 feet, which greatly reduces the impression of the additional massing, as opposed to the currently proposed 10-foot setback. He opined that the additional floors on the current proposal would be highly visible from and impactful to the street. Mr. Phillips responded that he did not intend each of the projects he presented as a clean precedent for this construction, but more as examples of height. Mr. McCoubrey responded that height itself is immaterial, and that the issue of height is its visibility and impact on the streetscape. Mr. Phillips responded that 2106-10 Walnut Street is probably the most comparable in terms of maintaining a common cornice line but still having additional height. Mr. McCoubrey replied that the additional floors for that project are set back significantly further, almost to the extent that it reads as a separate building. Mr. Thomas agreed, and noted that the materiality of the Walnut Street project also makes it more successful. He explained that the base of the building is masonry with punched openings and fits in with its neighbors, while the upper floors are light and airy. Mr. Thomas opined that maintaining the brick and stone lower floors of the current proposal, with light and airy upper floors with greater setbacks from the street would be preferable. He suggested that the upper floors should not look like part of the row. Mr. Montalbano replied that they got very little feedback from the Architectural Committee about the aesthetic or materials of the upper floors as opposed to the base. He noted that the Committee discussion focused more on height. He offered that, if the change in material between the lower and upper floors is something that the Historical Commission would like to see, that is certainly something that they could discuss with the owner. He also offered to look at additional or stepped setbacks.

Ms. Edwards agreed that changing the materials of the upper floors and increasing the depth of the setbacks might help reduce abrasiveness of the height on that block. Mr. McCoubrey agreed with the need for a materials change, and also stated that the setbacks should be significantly

increased, so that the upper floors are minimally visible from the street. Mr. Schaaf asked Mr. Montalbano to explain the fact that the height of the windows seems to be greater on floors five and six than on the lower floors. He noted that this street and this block is somewhat amazing in that both sides of the street maintain their mid-nineteenth century characteristics and consistent height, which does not happen a lot in Center City. He noted that the two additional stories starts changing the scale dramatically at floors five and six with much taller windows, which is somewhat disruptive. He explained that in traditional buildings, windows decrease in size as the building rises. Mr. Montalbano responded that they could look into the scale of the windows.

Mr. Thomas opened the floor to public comment. Paul Steinke of the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia opined that what they are trying to avoid is the “sore thumb syndrome.” He agreed with Mr. Schaaf that the block is remarkably intact and maintains its look and feel of the nineteenth century. He applauded the Commission and Architectural Committee for carefully examining the proposal, and the developer for being willing to compromise. He suggested that the four stories at the front still violates the “sore thumb” rule; it is too much of a sheer rise at the property line and will stand out forever. He suggested that perhaps the applicants could look into replicating the mansard or gabled roofs of the adjacent properties. At the same time, he opined that infill construction should be contemporary and not be able to be mistaken for old fabric. Mr. McCoubrey responded that the Architectural Committee also felt that the building should respect the three-story cornice height, with setbacks from that height. Ms. Cooperman read the Secretary of the Interior’s Standard 9: “The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.”

Mr. Phillips asked the Commission to defer its decision until his clients had time to revise the drawings. Mr. Thomas responded that the Commission could vote to deny the application, but that the applicants would still be free to revise and resubmit at any time. Mr. Farnham clarified that the Commission and the applicant have three options. One, the applicants could withdraw the application and submit a new application that would be reviewed by the Architectural Committee and then the Historical Commission. Two, the Commission could act on the application before them, either approving or denying. Three, the Commission could continue the matter, without a review by the Architectural Committee. He noted that it sounds like a revised application would benefit from a review by the Architectural Committee. Mr. Farnham noted that, if the applicant is hoping to avoid a denial, the best course of action may be to withdraw, which the applicant is welcome to do until the Commission takes a vote. Mr. Thomas noted that there are projects where the Commission will condition an approval because they do not feel it warrants an additional review by the Architectural Committee. However, in this case, he opined that the revisions would likely constitute a significant change from the current design and would benefit from a review by the Architectural Committee. Mr. Phillips responded that he was hoping to avoid that extra step. Mr. Thomas replied that, if it were a matter of some cornice or storefront details, that would be one thing, but this is an important development project. Mr. Phillips noted that he does not have authorization to withdraw the application.

**ACTION:** Mr. McCoubrey moved to deny the application, pursuant to Standard 9. Mr. Schaaf seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**ADDRESS: 334 S HICKS ST**

Proposal: Reconstruct façade; construct rear addition and roof deck

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Christopher Burns

Applicant: Ian Toner, Toner Architects

History: 1850; Refaced c. 1950

Individual Designation: None

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

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 approval, with the staff to review details, in particular of the headroom issue at the proposed new addition, and the elimination of the skylights at the east elevation, pursuant to Standards 6 and 9.

**OVERVIEW:** This application proposes to reconstruct the front façade with new brick, replace doors and windows throughout the house, construct a new one-story addition and add a third story to an existing two-story addition at the rear of the property. The additions are to be finished in smooth stucco to match the existing. A roof deck is also proposed that would be located on top of the remainder of the existing two-story addition. Four new skylights are proposed to be installed on the roof of the main house, and an additional skylight is proposed at the rear roof of the new third-story addition. A new stoop is proposed in order to accommodate the new height of the front door.

The staff suggests reducing the height of the proposed third story addition so that it remains lower than the existing cornice of the main block.

**ACTION:** See Consent Agenda.

**ADDRESS: 318 S 4TH ST**

Proposal: Construct addition

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Mary Morrisette

Applicant: Mary Morrisette

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

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 approval, provided that the wood panels and window frames are painted a mid-warm grey color; a slightly lighter grey paint color is used at the aluminum coping; and that no changes are made to the existing site walls, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standards 9 and 10.

**OVERVIEW:** This 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.

Three 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. In May 2018, the Historical Commission reviewed and approved a third in-concept application. The proposal was thought to have responded well to comments that had been made regarding the massing, shape and compatibility of the addition.

The current proposal is for a second-story addition with a flat roof at the rear. Notes on the plans indicate that the addition will have a grid-patterned applied wood panel system with windows punched throughout. The existing chimney is to remain but will be raised in order to meet code. The existing fascia and roof shingles of the contributing structure are to be replaced. A previous plan to excavate the crawl space to create additional living space has been removed from the proposal.

**DISCUSSION:** Ms. Schmitt presented the application to the Historical Commission. Architect Richard Conway Meyer represented the application.

Mr. Meyer began by explaining that the charm of this building was the way Oscar Stonorov designed the corner. He said that Cypress Street was a beautiful street paved with Belgian block, and that there were two houses that were new in the context of the surrounding eighteenth century buildings. Mr. Meyer explained that Mr. Stonorov took this very seriously, and remarked that the corner from 4<sup>th</sup> Street into Cypress Street was so beautifully done that it was like the heart of the scheme. Mr. Meyer said that if you looked from this corner, one could see that the house started in a normal way, and then there was a bay window, and then the bay window was extended, amazingly, to the north and began to look around the corner. He continued on, explaining that then the whole house turned, and that everything at the top half of it was then eighteen inches out, and then suddenly one would find themselves at the door on Cypress Street, and then the house would go back to normal and calm down. Mr. Meyer described the house as delicate, lively and beautiful, stating it was at this point in the composition, the game was over, and that the composition ended there, and that anyone who wanted to become a Stonorov junior and try to see what he might have done was doomed to failure. He remarked that there was a beautiful background there, and if he chose to make an addition in kind with the background, it would result in a background building that did not speak very loudly, an almost shy, quiet and restrained building. Mr. Meyer said it would be an addition that was not in competition with Stonorov's original building. He explained that the charm of doing it that way was that all that would be seen was the original Stonorov building. He told the members of the Historical Commission that he had brought a drawing with him to the Architectural Committee because his model was not finished in time for that meeting. Mr. Meyer then pulled out a material sample that was a study of how the grid panel system that was proposed for the addition would be made, noting that the idea was for it to have a very low profile, so as to prevent any appearance of it competing with Stonorov's building, which he said he considered masterful and would be a mistake. He said that he thought the addition to be in scale, and that he had done four other versions until he arrived at the current one. Mr. Meyer thanked the Historical Commission members for the opportunity to speak.

Mr. Thomas suggested that Mr. Meyer turn his model around to allow the people in the audience to see it. Mr. Meyer used the model to explain to the public Oscar Stonorov's work and the proposed addition.

Mr. Thomas asked if there were any questions or comments. Mr. McCoubrey stated that he would reiterate what the Architectural Committee said about the design which was that they found it to be a very good outcome of a long process, and that the addition had been done very sensitively. He said that the comments about paint colors could be worked out with the staff, but overall, it was a very masterfully done design.

Ms. Cooperman remarked that she very much appreciated Mr. Meyer's subtle understanding of this building, which had been missing from earlier iterations that they had seen. Mr. Meyer commented that it was a good building to know.

Mr. Thomas asked if there were any further comments. Attorney Ross Weiss introduced himself as the representative of Herb Gunther, the owner of 320 South 4<sup>th</sup> Street, the house next door to the subject property, where he lived with his wife Doris. He said that though he was not an architect, he always enjoyed coming to these meetings where he learned so much. Mr. Weiss said that he had heard the comments, and that obviously there was some sensitivity by the architect to provide some relief to make the house a little larger than what Mr. Stonorov had designed. He noted, however, that he is surprised. He said that his client's four-story house was built in 1795 and had been there for centuries. Mr. Weiss explained that his client's problem with this addition was that it violated the windows on the Cypress side and it also blocked the windows facing down Cypress Street. He remarked that what was ironic about this was that the house designed by Mr. Stonorov was designed in 1970, and by the time he designed it, his client's house was there. Mr. Weiss explained that Mr. Stonorov specifically designed a house to not do what this current proposed addition would do. He said that Mr. Stonorov's house had certain lines from 4<sup>th</sup> Street and from Cypress Street, but now, the desire to get some additional space in the house has resulted in a box being added to it. Mr. Weiss said that his client was not happy about that. He said that when Stonorov designed the house almost 50 years ago, it was designed to have a certain square footage, and that square footage has worked and has been occupied until now. Mr. Weiss stated that the question now became, in looking at the Society Hill Historic District, and in looking at his client's house, whether the proposed addition would not only change Mr. Stonorov's house, but whether it would impact Mr. Gunther's house, and what impact would it have on the view seen from Cypress Street looking towards Mr. Gunther's house. Mr. Weiss said that, in addition, the cover sheet of the plans mentions an in-lot carport, but the plans themselves show neither a carport nor a curb cut. He stated that they would be very concerned if anything got approved that included a carport that was not on the plans. Mr. Weiss explained that they had had discussions with representatives of the owners of 318 S. 4<sup>th</sup> Street, most recently an email exchange between his associate and Mr. Meyer trying to reach an agreement to limit the depth of the addition so that it would not block Mr. Gunther's windows. He said that, unfortunately, the parties had run out of time and were unable to reach any kind of an agreement, but he wanted to respectfully request that the Historical Commission consider, not only the desire to create provide additional space at the existing house, but also its impact on his client's home which had been there since 1795. Mr. Weiss reiterated that Mr. Stonorov had respected his client's home at the time he designed the subject property.

Mr. Thomas thanked Mr. Weiss for his comments. He asked whether the issue of the carport had been raised at the Architectural Committee meeting. Mr. McCoubrey responded that he believed that the question of the carport had been brought up. Mr. Thomas remarked that he



had not seen anything about it on the plans. Ms. Schmitt said that she believed that the issue had been raised at the meeting, at which Mr. Meyer had clarified that the property owner did not intend to construct a carport. She asked Mr. Meyer if this was correct and he confirmed that it was; he was not proposing a carport.

Mr. Thomas remarked that the issue of light and air was certainly a zoning issue, and when a property owner undertakes construction, that construction has to meet all the zoning requirements. He said that new construction is also reviewed for the historic preservation requirements. Mr. Thomas observed that protecting the light and air of an adjacent property might be a zoning issue, but it is not a historic preservation issue. Mr. Thomas told Mr. Weiss that he understood that Oscar Stonorov may have taken the impact of his new building on the neighboring building into account, but whether he did or not is not a matter for the Historical Commission. Mr. Thomas offered the example of his own office building, although not historically certified. It is a building from the 1850s that was modified in the 1920s. Mr. Thomas explained that he and his business partner renovated it as a passive solar renovation. At the time, they examined the zoning requirements very carefully for their property as well as for the adjacent properties. He further commented that, while they were doing this renovation back in the 1980s, it seemed like nothing would ever happen at 15<sup>th</sup> and South Streets. Eventually change came, and they were faced with a four-story building being built at the adjacent property to the rear. Mr. Thomas explained that they were able to negotiate with the developer of the new building over their lost solar energy. He said that they had designed their building in such a way that it allowed for a building that complied with the zoning. They had to allow the neighbor to building to the zoning limit, but they opposed him building beyond the zoning limit. Mr. Thomas stated that they said that they would accept the four-story building next to their two-story addition, but not any more than that. He said that, when they negotiated in front of the Zoning Board of Adjustments, it worked. He suggested to Mr. Weiss that he address his zoning concerns to the City agency that regulates for zoning. The Historical Commission can consider historic preservation issues, but it cannot consider zoning issues, which fall within another agency's purview.

Mr. Thomas said that he would like to hear more discussion, to which Mr. McCoubrey responded that it looked like there was a larger building on the site of the Stonorov building before 1970. In all likelihood, Mr. McCoubrey postulated, Mr. Gunther's windows did not have the view that they have today before 1970. Historically, Mr. Gunther's windows would have been more blocked, not less blocked, than they are today. Ms. Cooperman added that Mr. Gunther's property was one in a row, not a corner property. She remarked that, prior to the redevelopment of Society Hill in the 1960s and 1970s, there may never have been a view of that portion of the rear elevation of the adjacent building at 320 S. 4<sup>th</sup> Street. Ms. Cooperman reiterated that she was speaking without knowing what exactly was on this corner prior to the Stonorov-designed house was constructed, but the reason for the traditional design of rear ells, which are narrower than main blocks of rowhouses, was to get light and air into the rear portion of these historic buildings because of the immediate adjacency of the construction of the house next door. Mr. Thomas agreed that it was likely that there was another house the size of Mr. Gunther's house on the Stonorov site with a rear ell that stepped back to the north as well so that it had light. He said that though Mr. Gunther's house dates to the eighteenth century, the view from there probably dates to sometime in the mid twentieth century. Historically, Mr. Gunther's windows would have been more obstructed by the neighboring historic house than they are now or will be when the addition is constructed.

Mr. Farnham stated that the 1858-60 Hexamer & Locher map for the area shows that the block of Cypress Street that runs alongside the Stonorov house did not exist historically. He explained that there was an equally tall building at the site of the Stonorov building and then yet another building standing on what is now the street bed of Cypress Street. Therefore, historically, the view of the rear of the building at 320 S. 4<sup>th</sup> Street was not obtainable from the block of Cypress Street because this block of Cypress Street did not exist. Any argument that the historic view of the rear of Mr. Gunther's house needs to be maintained is incorrect.

Mr. Weiss asked whether a solution to his client's concern was to not have the addition be built out to the depth that it was proposed to be. He asked if there could be a compromise, so that there could be somewhat of an addition, but it would not block the windows of 320 S. 4<sup>th</sup> Street.

Mr. Thomas asked Mr. Meyer if the addition met the zoning requirements, and Mr. Meyer confirmed that it did. Mr. Thomas said that the addition complied with the current zoning for the site. The Historical Commission's concern is whether addition satisfies the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. Mr. Thomas opined that the addition does satisfy historic preservation standards. The issue of light and air is a matter between the two private parties. The Historical Commission cannot reach beyond its authority and protect Mr. Gunther's interests. The Historical Commission is authorized to review based on historic preservation standards. Mr. McCoubrey added that the addition had become much more modest over the evolution of the design. It satisfies the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.

Mr. Weiss said that he had heard that there had been a recommendation from the Architectural Committee to use the crawl space in the basement to get some additional space, but during the staff overview, it was stated that that aspect of the proposal was removed from the latest design. Mr. McCoubrey responded that that had been a very different scheme, which was a design that essentially proposed to replace the Stonorov house. The Architectural Committee had suggested that rather than replacing the historic house, the applicant use the crawl space. He further commented that the scale and square footage of the current proposal was substantially reduced from what they had seen in earlier iterations. The Historical Commission had no basis for rejecting it.

Mr. Thomas said that if the scheme satisfies the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, the Historical Commission cannot deny the application. He commented that there were projects that meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards that do not comply with zoning, in which case a variance might be required. Mr. Thomas remarked that, when a project met all of the requirements of all of the codes, it becomes a matter of negotiating between neighbors. He recounted that he had been doing some solar features at his own home that required work on the party wall, and that they had made some compromises and 30 years later they were still good with their neighbors.

Mr. Thomas asked if there was any further discussion, of which there was none.

**ACTION:** Mr. McCoubrey moved to approve the application, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standard 9. Ms. Cooperman seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**ADDRESS: 135 S 18TH ST**

Proposal: Modify entrance; install marquee, signage, lighting

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: 135 S 18th Street Associates, LP

Applicant: Ryan Lohbauer, Stanev Potts Architects

History: 1913; McIlvaine & Roberts, architects

Individual Designation: None

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

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 approval of the canopy and its signage; denial of the rooftop signage; and denial of the corner signage, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standards 6 and 9.

**OVERVIEW:** This application proposes to install a new canopy or marquee and lighting and replace windows and doors at the main entrance of the building, located on 18<sup>th</sup> Street. An existing banner sign that was installed without permission from the Historical Commission will be removed and light fixtures will be installed on both sides of the entrance. The proposed double-hung wood windows and the new entrance doors with sidelights are very similar if not identical to a 2008 Historical Commission approval that was never executed. The proposed dark metal-clad canopy or marquee will tie back with angled rods near the top of the two-story entrance way at the jamb. The details of the connection points are to be determined upon further inspection in the field and in coordination with the staff.

Two signs are proposed at the corner of the third story of the building, with one to be mounted on the Walnut Street façade and the other to be mounted on the 18<sup>th</sup> Street façade. These painted metal signs with cut out letters will be back-lit with LED lighting, and will be attached through existing mortar joints. A third sign is proposed at the same corner but on the roof, facing west. The sign will be mounted on to a steel support and will be set back from the existing parapet. The applicant has provided two options for lighting, the first being internally illuminated and the second being uplit from a light source that would attach to the steel support, not the contributing structure.

**DISCUSSION:** Ms. Schmitt presented the application to the Historical Commission. Architects Ryan Lohbauer and Stephen Potts represented the application.

Mr. Potts explained that the building was acquired by Korman Communities in 2006, and at the time, it was an apartment building that had fallen into quite a state of disrepair, owing to deferred maintenance. He said that the owners made a major investment into the property, on the interior but also on the façade, including cleaning, new Historic Commission-approved wood double-hung windows and the replacement of bronze detailing at the retail level. Mr. Potts stated that this was the first round of big investments into the building, which operated as an extended-stay apartment building until 2016. He explained that in 2016, the owners went through another round of investments to improve life safety throughout the building, including installing sprinklers, which allowed them to use it as a hotel. Mr. Potts stated that the fact that the building was used as a hotel remained unknown to most. He recalled that one of the interesting things that came up at the Architectural Committee meeting was that a member of the Committee claimed that it was not a hotel. Mr. Potts said that it was exactly the problem his client faced, explaining that the public did not really identify this building with any particular brand, and that the three components of the current proposal were addressing this issue in three different ways. He said that one problem was people having a hard time finding the

entrance, which was located further up 18<sup>th</sup> Street, so the canopy or marquee would really help create a sense of destination so people would know where to go. Mr. Potts remarked that, with the AKA name at the side of the canopy, it would help people on foot find the entrance.

Mr. Potts said that the signage at the second and third floors was a black metal sign placed a few inches off of the building that would light up from the back side so it would light up the stone through the cut out letters with a subtle glow. He explained that the idea was for people coming along in a taxi cab approaching the building from 18<sup>th</sup> Street or if a pedestrian was walking through Rittenhouse Square, the signage would allow people to identify the hotel and understand where they were going.

Mr. Potts said that the sign at the top of the building was intended to address the issue of identifying the building for the public. He said that he had to describe the building as the one that was located across from the Anthropologie or as the one that used to be the Kiehl's, but nobody thought of this as the AKA building, and that was at the heart of what the sign at the roof was about. Mr. Potts commented that it was intended almost to re-christen the building as the AKA building, which was a key part for the client to build brand recognition for the hotel. He said that each of the three elements addressed different concerns but all related to the question of finding the building and naming the building.

Mr. Thomas opened the floor for comment, asking if the Historical Commission members wanted to first discuss the canopy or marquee and then the signage. Mr. McCoubrey responded that the Architectural Committee thought that the canopy was certainly an appropriate addition, providing some sort of identity at the entrance, but that they really questioned the need for the additional signage. He said that the large, roof-mounted sign, although beautiful, would be highly visible from Rittenhouse Square, which was a largely residential environment. Mr. McCoubrey explained that the Architectural Committee thought that in a more commercial district of the city, a sign like this could be more understandable, but in this case, given the proximity and high visibility from Rittenhouse Square, the rooftop sign was not appropriate. He further commented that the Architectural Committee believed that the two signs mounted at the third level were not necessary because the canopy addition would provide a significant identity for the building.

Mr. Potts asked if he could follow up with a comment about the signage at the corner. He remarked that one of the things that was discussed at the Architectural Committee which he believed was an appropriate question to raise, was why were the proposed AKA logos at the corner needed when they already existed in the windows for the bar that was also run by the hotel. Mr. Potts explained that the signage that was within the bronze windows of the bar was in the same location as the signage for the Tumi and Lagos Jewelry stores, and that there was every possibility that the space might change over time and they could end up renting out the space to different tenants. Part of the idea was to install more permanent signage since what was there now could change over time. He said that, when this building was not a hotel, it was a different conversation, but as a hotel it needed the name somewhere on the building. Mr. Potts reminded the members of the Historical Commission of the tremendous examples of the Divine Lorraine and the Benjamin Franklin Hotel, both of which had large signs at the top of them.

Mr. Thomas responded that the Divine Lorraine is on Broad Street, which is a boulevard and an area that was the automobile district; one can really see the sign. He said that, with this case, even if they were to approve it, the traffic coming along Walnut Street would not see the proposed sign, and the only traffic going eastbound were pedestrians, and they would certainly

see the canopy. Mr. Thomas added that, with all of the trees, the upper floors of the subject property could not be seen, and since Rittenhouse Square was so heavily wooded, it did not have the openness that Broad Street had. Mr. Thomas told the applicants that he thought what they did with the canopy and the way it stuck out was something that people would see from 18<sup>th</sup> Street. He added that the iconic nature of the building, a corner building diagonally across from Rittenhouse Square, also helped. Mr. Thomas asked if the Bellevue Hotel had a sign on top, and Mr. Lohbauer responded by asking whether it had ever had a sign on top. Mr. Thomas said that he did not think it ever did, but that it was simply a corner building, not buried in the middle of the block, which was the benefit of the building under review also had.

Mr. Lohbauer stated that he thought the Benjamin Franklin Hotel was a good example because Chestnut Street was more similar to the urban conditions that they were dealing with at this building, explaining that both are linear streets with a lot of pedestrian traffic. He said that the tall, roof-mounted sign was visible from certain vistas. Mr. Lohbauer explained that when they studied their proposed sign, it really did get some visibility down the corridors of Walnut Street, especially from the west. However, as one got closer to the building, that visibility really dropped off. He commented that, as Mr. Thomas had said, the visibility from Rittenhouse Square was really obscured by the trees, so though the rooftop sign was really only an identifier from certain view corridors, it was still very effective. Mr. Thomas responded that they were not evaluating the effectiveness of the sign, but rather they were looking at its appropriateness in the context of the historic district as well as the historic building. He further commented that, while Walnut Street is a commercial street, as one arrives at Rittenhouse Square, even at other hotels, there is no large commercial signage. Mr. Thomas said that it is more of a park environment, which is why he believes some people do not think the proposal met the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, adding that, if they approved this rooftop sign, what would prohibit the Historical Commission from approving others, and then suddenly there would be a very different experience in the area. He added that Rittenhouse Square is historically certified, and so the Historical Commission has to be very careful with it.

Mr. Lohbauer responded that an alternate argument could be that the usage of the building in the historical context with the Divine Lorraine as an example of a multi-family building that underwent a conversion in 1900. He said that it was unclear when the rooftop sign was installed on the building, but that it could have been as late as the 1940s. Mr. Lohbauer suggested that perhaps the reason there are not many hotel signs in Rittenhouse Square is because there are not many hotels in the area, and that the Rittenhouse Hotel is a modern building with significant signage lower down on the building. He said that in this case, he feels that there is an historical argument and precedent, because this sign is something a previous developer would have done in the past.

Mr. Thomas responded that he was thinking about other hotels located on squares, mentioning the Logan, which was the Four Seasons, which seemed to do fine without a rooftop sign. He further explained that, although the Historical Commission is concerned about the hotel's economic success, part of what brought that is the fact that it is in a historic district and that it is located on one of the five squares, and that the Historical Commission is preserving these elements of these historic things which ultimately benefits everyone.

Mr. Potts commented that visibility from Rittenhouse Square is not really what the sign is designed for because it would be obscured behind trees. He said that the sign is really something meant to be seen from a distance. Mr. Potts said it is more about long views and identifying the building. He stated that he could imagine shifting the sign back on the roof

because it is really about visibility from afar, so maybe the way to address how the sign impacts Rittenhouse Square itself is to push it back. Mr. Thomas told Mr. Potts that there are buildings taller than his that would obstruct views of the sign from a distance, to which Mr. Potts replied that his point was that, from down on the ground, the sign would not be very visible and that the sign was really about being seen from a distance. Mr. Thomas responded that the sign would still be completely blocked by the taller buildings in the 1900 block of Walnut Street, and if they looked at the new buildings under construction, they would all block views of the sign.

Mr. McCoubrey pointed out that, although not in their purview, there was another large condominium building with many units two properties over that would be looking out their windows at the rooftop sign. He added that the discussion of N. Broad Street and the automobile was very appropriate because the Divine Lorraine sign was a large-scale sign and with the introduction of the car and Broad Street was a major gateway to the city by vehicle. Mr. McCoubrey pointed out that Rittenhouse Square is a very different environment. Mr. Thomas stated that squares and parks are different, citing the fact that LOVE Park is surrounded entirely with large-scale streets, while there are no big streets on any side of Rittenhouse Square. He said that, although they probably should not be doing it, many people jaywalk on every street, and the reality is that the area is very walkable.

Mr. Thomas asked the applicants if they had any further comments, and Mr. Potts requested that the discussion be turned to the signage at the second floor. He reiterated that the goal is to improve the visibility and the branding of the building. Mr. Schaaf asked Mr. Potts if they would be seeking a variance for the signs at the corner, and Mr. Potts confirmed they would. Mr. Potts then said that there would be other venues besides the Historical Commission where their proposal would be reviewed and other opportunities for discussion. Mr. Thomas responded that they still had to make a decision and that they could not just punt it to the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

Mr. Thomas asked if anyone had any comments about the signage proposed for the second floor, describing them as depicted in the plans as metal with cut out, back-lit letters and bolts that would be attached at the mortar joints. He asked Mr. McCoubrey what the Architectural Committee members had said about this signage, and Mr. McCoubrey said that they had wanted to know why there were two signs rather than just one. He explained that the members did not think that this signage was necessary because the canopy or marquee would provide the necessary signage and the identification of the entrance. Mr. Potts responded that it was important to consider someone approaching the building from down 18<sup>th</sup> Street because they would not be able to see the eight inch high letters at the side of the canopy, to which Mr. McCoubrey responded that people would use their cell phones to find the hotel, not the canopy signage.

Mr. Mattioni said that he looked at the rooftop sign and saw something that could become as iconic as the PSFS sign, and that he was sure that when that sign first went up, it created a certain degree of consternation amongst some people. He said that he looked at the proposed rooftop sign and could imagine people 10 or 20 years from now viewing it as an iconic part of the building. Mr. Mattioni stated that he understood they were talking about an historic building, and he had been listening to all of the comments from his fellow Commissioners, but he just viewed it as an addition to a building that seemed to fit. He further commented that he did not really know how much the signage proposed for lower down on the building would make a difference so he would defer to everyone else. However, for the rooftop sign, he believed that it would add something to the building.

**ACTION:** Mr. McCoubrey moved to approve the marquee, but deny the signage proposed for the rooftop and third floor, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standards 6 and 9. Ms. Cooperman seconded the motion, which passed by a vote of 8 to 2. Messrs. Fink and Mattioni dissented.

**ADDRESS: 2115 SPRUCE ST**

Proposal: Demolish garage; construct 4-story building

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Phillip, LLC

Applicant: Ryan Lohbauer, Stanev Potts Architects

History: 1890

Individual Designation: None

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

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

**ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:** The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval of the revised design, with the recommendation that the side elevation is clad in red brick for the first three stories with the fourth floor clad in a slate or slate-like material, and provided the pilot house is inconspicuous from the public right-of-way, with the staff to review details.

**OVERVIEW:** This application proposes to demolish a non-historic garage and to construct a four-story building on the rear of the parcel along Manning Street. The proposed building would feature a recessed first floor with a cantilevered brick façade above, and irregular fenestration. The fourth floor would feature a slightly angled façade clad in horizontal metal panels.

The staff notes that the use of a recessed first floor, sliding doors, irregular fenestration, a faux mansard roof without a cornice, and metal panels is incompatible with the historic district and the historic property in massing, materials, and architectural features.

**DISCUSSION:** Ms. DiPasquale presented the application to the Historical Commission. Architects Ryan Lohbauer and Maribeth Rentschler represented the application.

Mr. Lohbauer noted that the Architectural Committee approved of the overall concept, but that one thing they had asked the applicants to consider was wrapping the mansard roof around the side elevation, which is described as Option A. He noted that they studied that in-house, but would like for the Commission to consider an alternative proposal, Option B, that maintains the side wall, which is adjacent to the property line. He explained that the mansard creates an asymmetrical roof line. He noted that, traditionally, where a building with a mansard roof extends property line to property line, it is typical to maintain the party walls straight up. Mr. Thomas agreed that that is correct from a historic point of view. He also questioned whether there would be issues from a building code standpoint in terms of the mansard on the side wall. Mr. Lohbauer responded that he believes there are ways that they could get an approval for the mansard, but from a historic perspective, it seems incongruous. Mr. Thomas agreed that a continuous party wall is more traditional. He also noted that this is not a heavily trafficked street.

Mr. McCoubrey asked whether the wall would be articulated as a party wall. Mr. Lohbauer responded affirmatively.

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

**ACTION:** Mr. McCoubrey moved to approve the application, with Option B, the masonry party wall, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standard 9. Ms. Cooperman seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **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

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION:** The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 230-36 and 238 Vine Street and 255 Bodine Street satisfies Criteria for Designation E, F, H and J.

**OVERVIEW:** This nomination proposes to designate the property at 230-36 and 238 Vine Street and 255 Bodine Street as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that Painted Bride Art Center is significant under Criteria for Designation E, F, H and J. Under Criterion F, the nomination argues that the mosaic façade of the building is one of artist Isaiah Zagar's defining works. The Painted Bride's 1991 commission to create a public face for their organization represents a pivotal moment in Zagar's artistic development. The exterior facade is the artist's first use of his innovative "total embellishment" style, mosaics that encompass a building's exterior walls from street to roofline. Since the late 1960s, Zagar has created hundreds of murals in Philadelphia. Using donated and recycled materials, the artist's community-based works enliven building walls throughout Philadelphia with imagery, stories, portraiture, and word play, satisfying Criterion E. Under Criterion H, the nomination argues that the vibrant mosaic façade of the building is inextricably linked to history of the Painted Bride and is a singular visual feature of the Old City arts district. Under Criterion J, the nomination contends that the property exemplifies the Painted Bride's influence on the cultural, economic, and social heritage of Old City and Philadelphia.

**DISCUSSION:** Ms. Mehley presented the nomination to the Historical Commission. Painted Bride board member Harriet Rubenstein and Painted Bride executive director Laurel Raczka represented the property owner. Emily Smith, executive director of Philadelphia's Magic Gardens, and attorney Sharon Erwin represented the nomination.

Harriet Rubenstein, a member of the Painted Bride Board of Directors, stated that she was filling in for the board chair, Joan Sloan. She noted that she would speak first, followed by the Painted Bride executive director, Laurel Raczka, then independent structural engineer Diane Goschler. Ms. Rubenstein continued that then former Painted Bride board chair Sharon Barr would speak, followed by Philadelphia historian Helen Heinz, and then Ursula Rucker, Philadelphia poet and activist. Ms. Rubenstein stated that the Painted Bride opposes the designation of their building. She asked that all hear them out fully because the decision of the Historical Commission provides the opportunity to send a message to the residents of Philadelphia about the City's commitment to promoting equity, accessibility, inclusivity, diversity in arts in arts and culture resources.



Ms. Rubenstein stated that the historic designation application for the Painted Bride appropriates the organization's legacy and history and focuses on the building and mosaic mural. She contended that historic designation is not appropriate and would make the Painted Bride a prisoner of their own building. She described the history of the organization as one not anchored to a building, as evidenced by the multiple moves since its founding and the focus has been on their mission, values, and programming. Ms. Rubenstein pointed out that there are 220 Zagar mosaics in Philadelphia and that the artist has acknowledged that the methods and techniques are not sufficient for exterior installation, resulting in the current deteriorated condition of the mosaic and related safety concerns. She stated that historic designation would prevent the Painted Bride from receiving full market value of the building and would not allow for the realization of creating an endowment to bring arts and culture to neighborhoods throughout the city. Ms. Rubenstein requested that, should the Commission conclude that the Painted Bride's Isaiah Zagar mosaic mural is historic, then the Commission should exercise its discretion and oppose the nomination because designation would not be in the public or community interest.

Ms. Rubenstein stated that the Magic Gardens' nomination of the Painted Bride building apparently was in reaction to the November 2017 announcement of the plan to sell the building. She clarified that this decision was made after three years of consideration of numerous factors—a changing neighborhood, audience demographics, artistic needs, and funding challenges. She contended that the Painted Bride needs to be forward thinking and selling their building at full market value is the key to financial sustainability. She continued that their process included working with nonprofit finance experts, strategic planners, consultants, national and local thought leaders in the arts, and architects and developers. Ms. Rubenstein noted that when they announced the decision to sell the building, the Painted Bride received positive responses from organizations, artists, and potential partners across the city, offering performance space and opportunities to collaborate and strategize on programming. She referenced a letter signed by more than 70 artists in support of the Painted Bride's future vision. Ms. Rubenstein noted they have also received some pushback from individuals who believe they should have a fixed venue and who have a nostalgic connection to the Painted Bride's early years.

Ms. Rubenstein stated that the nomination for historic designation submitted by the Magic Gardens' blindsided the organization's leadership. She explained that, when they first began considered leaving 230 Vine St, the Executive Director, Laurel Raczka met with Isaiah Zagar out of respect for their friendship and his history with the Bride, to explain why they were contemplating selling the building. She noted that Mr. Zagar, while saddened by the situation, appeared to understand the rationale and acknowledged that maybe the mosaic was not supposed to last forever. She continued that, several months after the Magic Gardens filed its nomination with the Historical Commission, Mr. Zagar told Ms. Raczka that he had changed his mind. She noted that the Historical Commission had already designated the Bride building, with its completed mosaic façade, "non-contributing" when it established the Old City Historic District in 2003.

Ms. Rubenstein stated the building was listed with a real estate broker in November 2017 and had received several full market value offers when the Magic Gardens first notified them of the nomination in March of 2018. She noted that at that time, the Painted Bride was in negotiations with an entrepreneur who wanted to purchase the building to house part of his business and who intended to preserve the mosaic façade for as long as he owned the building. Ms.

Rubenstein stated that when the potential buyer learned of the potential designation, he suspended negotiations.

Ms. Rubenstein stated that the building's mosaic mural and the Zagar Method relied on materials such as low-fired ceramic plates and shards and mirror tiles, as well as water-based adhesives, which are unacceptable practice for exterior application. She pointed to the report by noted mosaic conservation expert John Carr dated 18 June 2018 that was submitted at the Historic Designation Committee hearing. Ms. Rubenstein continued that Mr. Carr raised concerns about the Zagar Methods use of materials and lack of metal lathe or armature to secure the tiles to the brick and concrete block substrate. She stated that Mr. Carr's review of the Bride façade revealed delamination and tile failure including severely deteriorating low-fired interior tiles; cracked tiles; cracks in the assembly due to a lack of expansion joints; detached areas of grout and tiles, and falling projecting ceramic tiles and objects and the report concluded that the materials are not intended for exterior use and it can be assumed that observed conditions will continue to become worse and will require complete replacement and/or extensive conservation efforts. Ms. Rubenstein noted that the report estimated that conservation would cost between \$850,000 and \$1.4 million and that after conservation treatment the façade would still require yearly inspection and maintenance including replacement of tile units and glazes. She contended that as a result of concerns about the potential safety hazards raised in the Carr report, the Painted Bride engaged the engineering firm of Joseph B. Callaghan to survey the entire façade. She continued that they found multiple areas of mosaic mural suffering from delamination, cracked tiles, loss of tile glazing, failing repairs and missing tiles with the Northwest elevation completely delaminated from the backup and an immediate safety concern.

Ms. Rubenstein stated that the Magic Gardens told them that the Magic Gardens is prepared to preserve the Zagar mosaic in perpetuity and that it will provide repair and restoration services for free and that nothing in either the Carr or Callaghan reports is something they have not successfully worked on. She continued that they had recently met with Magic Gardens executive director Emily Smith and preservation and facilities manager Stacey Holder. She noted that, although the meeting was cordial, the Painted Bride was not reassured that the Magic Gardens has the financial resources, expertise, or experience needed for safe, effective, and long-lasting preservation of the mosaic. Ms. Rubenstein explained this was due to their presentation of a simplistic outline of a generalized maintenance plan for the mosaic, their inexperience working on a wall that is 100% delaminated, inability to provide an estimate of initial and ongoing costs of preservation, and lack of dedicated funding for Painted Bride mural. She noted they also had questions about the training and qualifications of the staff that would do the mural work, requirements of Historical Commission and Department of Licenses & Inspections if building was designated, and concerns about priority of the Painted Bride work versus the needs of other Zagar mosaics.

Ms. Rubenstein pointed out the nomination states there are 220 Isaiah Zagar mosaics in Philadelphia. She noted that the Magic Gardens website pinpoints most if not all of them and she shared photos of some of the mosaics from the web site with the Commissioners. She continued that, as far as they know, the Bride façade is the only Zagar mosaic for which the Magic Gardens has sought historic preservation recognition and not even the Magic Gardens itself has been designated historic. Ms. Rubenstein pointed out that, of the 220 mosaic facades, many are virtually indistinguishable from the Painted Bride mosaic, and are newer and are in far better condition than the Bride façade. She pointed to the elaborate mosaic wrapping Isaiah Zagar's studio on Watkins Street, which is profoundly similar to the Painted Bride façade and is two years old. She noted there are alternative methods of documenting and sharing the

mosaic including photogrammetry, narrated video photography, 3D laser scanning, and other digital methods used by museums and notable artists. She continued that these digital methods would expand the artist's reach to millions and, in light of the deteriorated condition of the mosaic, would do more to save the Zagar mosaics than historic designation.

Ms. Rubenstein stated the Painted Bride has experienced setbacks due to the nomination application including significant unanticipated expenses and lost rental revenue because of the historic nomination. She noted that the potential buyer who was committed to preserving the mosaic for as long as his business occupies the building has suspended negotiations pending the outcome of the designation hearing while other bidders are taking a wait-and-see approach.

Ms. Rubenstein contended that designation would not only harm the Bride but would also have a chilling effect on the creation and preservation of murals throughout the City. She continued that, if any building could be designated because it has a mural, property owners would likely be reluctant to allow murals to adorn their buildings and might even preemptively remove murals.

Ms. Rubenstein stated the Painted Bride will be in a profoundly "tough spot" if they are unable to sell their building for full market value because of historic designation. She contended that they remain committed to fulfilling their mission of creating safe spaces for people from diverse backgrounds to come together to explore challenging issues, share in the joys and sorrows their artists' works present, and engage in thoughtful dialogue. She concluded that these conversations and safe spaces are needed now more than ever.

Ms. Raczka, executive director of the Painted Bride, stated that she will speak to the programs, mission, and the legacy of the Painted Bride. She noted that she has been the executive director for 19 years and has worked for the organization for 26 years. Ms. Raczka contended that the historic designation would hinder their ability to reach people and change lives. She stated that she believes more than anyone that the Painted Bride is more than just a building and that it is a set of values that connects people through the arts, led by artists' visions. She continued that the Painted Bride's legacy is supporting the work of living artists, and has never been about permanence rather that the organization presents performances that live in the moment. She stated that the Painted Bride believes in the power of the arts to bring people together, with the possibility of transformation. She pointed out that they do not collect or deal in art and the most important reason the organization is relevant is because they respond to the times.

Ms. Raczka stated the Painted Bride has been committed to diversity and serving all citizens of Philadelphia throughout its 50-year history. She continued that the Painted Bride started out as an alternative space to give voice to underrepresented artists. She noted that in 2018 it is not enough to simply offer diverse programming and the issues now facing underserved neighborhoods are equity and access. Ms. Raczka referenced a November 2014 study by the University of Pennsylvania Social Impact of the Arts Project and Reinvestment Fund that focused and reported on the inequity of arts funding in Philadelphia. She pointed out that one-third of city's population receives approximately 90% of arts and culture grants. She continued that disadvantage neighborhoods or 26% of the city's population received 5% of the grants and 1% of the funding. Ms. Raczka stated that, in the face of the deeply troubling statistics, their vision is to present work in public spaces and partner facilities around the city, making the work accessible to a much greater cross-section of the city. She noted that a limited number of people have the luxury and the means to travel to Old City.

Ms. Raczka stated that in 1995, the Painted Bride's introduced a program called Philadelphia Community Arts Network. She explained that through this program, the Painted Bride took artists' work to cultural centers throughout Philadelphia and presented programs at those sites. She continued that, ultimately, the Painted Bride had to discontinue the program because our resources were spread too thin but it continues to take artists into schools and communities when it can. Ms. Raczka stated that they launched a project in 2014 that looked at Philadelphia as a place and held events and artistic experiences throughout the city. She noted that this program was assisted with a multi-year grant from the Pew Center for Arts & Heritage and the experience helped them understand what it takes to reach people in disadvantaged and underserved communities.

Ms. Raczka stated that the Painted Bride believes that significant change is needed to engage with those communities that are thirsty for relevant arts and cultural interaction and that their most effective and important role is bringing work to different neighborhoods where access to the arts is limited, if the arts are available at all. She noted that because the arts and cultural resources are concentrated in a small area of the city, access is dependent on individuals having sufficient time, money, and a level of trust that institutions exist to welcome and serve them. She continued that they know that art is a powerful tool to bring people together and have an impact on how people see, experience, and participate in the world around them. She pointed out that in Philadelphia they have seen public art inspire social interaction, and creating opportunities for exchange between strangers, neighbors, or loved ones. Ms. Raczka stated that real change can happen by creating cultural experiences and opportunities to engage with different kinds of people. She continued that art has the power to strengthen community.

Ms. Raczka stated that developing and implementing the Painted Bride's new vision has been a multi-year process with the staff, board, and stakeholders involved in this process from the beginning. She continued that they researched various models and how they can interact with target audiences. She noted they spent a year working with an independent consultant and we have looked at the numbers from every angle. Ms. Raczka stated that to carry out their vision to its fullest the Painted Bride needs to realize the full market value of their building. She contend that designating the building as historic would impede the Painted Bride's ability to deliver art and culture to the underserved communities in Philadelphia, an outcome that is clearly not in the public interest. Ms. Raczka continued that in a place that prides itself as a world class arts and culture city it is unacceptable for the Painted Bride not to be doing everything they can to produce art in every community. She explained that the essence of the Painted Bride is using the arts as a tool to impact the lives of people in Philadelphia.

Ms. Raczka noted that she is aware that some people are sad to see the Painted Bride shed its skin and evolve into its next phase. She stated if anyone has a demonstrable emotional attachment to the building on 230 Vine Street it would be her. Ms. Raczka commented that she has invested half her life in the Painted Bride, where she has raised her daughter, found family, learned from artists, and learned from Gerry Givnish how to be a strong and visionary leader. She concluded that the Painted Bride's mission no matter where it is located is to continue to create welcoming and safe environments for diverse audiences, to confront social injustice through the arts, and now more than ever, provide accessibility to creative arts and other forms of expression.

Diane Goschler, a representative from Joseph B. Callaghan Consulting Engineers, spoke about the mural conditions survey she performed and documented for the Painted Bride. She stated that her company was retained by the Painted Bride to do a façade survey and this survey

consisted of sounding almost 100% of the façade, except for one small area on Bodine Street. Ms. Goschler commented that there is nothing mounting the northeast façade to the backup wall and noted that pieces of tile have fallen from 12 feet above the sidewalk, creating a safety issue. She continued that the northwest façade is almost completely delaminated from the wall and pointed out that it could come off in one large section, failing in a larger way rather than just smaller pieces breaking off. Ms. Goschler stated that the delaminated tiles are a safety concern from a structural standpoint. She noted that her company was not hired to provide a solution but rather to sound the building and make an assessment. Ms. Goschler summarized that Joseph B. Callaghan Consulting Engineers had sounded the overall building façade and reached the conclusion that 100% of the northwest façade is delaminated and 50% of the overall building is delaminated.

Sharon Barr, former Painted Bride Board chair, stated that she wished to submit testimony in support of the Painted Bride Arts Center and in opposition to the proposed designation. She spoke as a former member and chair of the Painted Bride Board of Directors, who served during the time that the mosaic was installed on the walls of the Vine Street building. Over the last 30 years, she has worked as a real estate attorney and project developer, and also served on the boards of other organizations. She first attended the Painted Bride performance when it was housed on Bread Street, after it moved from bridal shop on South Street. Ms. Barr noted that she joined the Painted Bride Board during a time of growth and innovation. She explained what drew her to the Painted Bride, then and now, was not just the innovation and programming but the deep commitment to community and to reaching out to artists making art far beyond the walls of the building. She noted her experience with a range of artistic performances and experiences within the Painted Bride building and throughout the city. Ms. Barr stated that at that time, very few arts organizations were bringing diverse audiences together the way Gerry Givnish and his team were.

Ms. Barr spoke about the financial challenges then and today related to support an arts organization and she noted that it requires continuous fundraising. She commented that building costs almost never go down and maintenance requirements never give you a break. Ms. Barr stated that a building can be an enormous drain on resources and was not surprised with the Board's decision to sell 230 Vine Street. She noted that although she reminisces with a twinge of sadness about the end of one era, when she learned of the Painted Bride's plans for the future, she was taken with the Bride's courage to confront the need for change. Ms. Barr stated that the vision to create an endowment from the sale of the building, so that the Painted Bride can continue to incubate, curate, and promote art in community that is both far reaching and consistent with the Bride's mission.

Ms. Barr stated that she opposes the historic designation not because she questions the artistic merit of Isaiah Zagar's work rather but rather she believes this particular mosaic was created as part of a particular building and a particular time in the life of an organization. She pointed out that, today, the building rather than serving the artistic mission of the Painted Bride is limiting its possibilities. She pointed out that the Historical Commission has the power to weigh and to balance the competing interests of preservation with change, and service to the city as a whole. Ms. Barr stated that she believes that the cultural life of Philadelphia would be best served if the Painted Bride can take its new and visionary steps towards the next 50 years with a permanent endowment. She urged the Commission to allow the Painted Bride Arts Center to continue to fulfill its mission of bringing art to the community by being able to sell its building at fair market value without the historic designation.

Dr. Helen Heinz, a historian, stated that she is a professor at Temple University and has served for over 30 years on a historical commission. She spoke of her experience serving on a historical commission and noted her familiarity with the challenges commission members face. Dr. Heinz stated that she has come to appreciate the over 50-year litmus test that historic property designation imposes as it allows for the perspective of time. She commented that only the finest building examples deserve the kind of attention and respect associated with designation. Dr. Heinz pointed out that mural wall applications, the exterior facade on a non-descript, generic industrial building from the late 1940s-50s does not meet the criteria and the burden of proof has not been met. She also noted that the nomination does not have the support of the owner, so this is two strikes against the proposed designation. Dr. Heinz stated that Zagar's work is well represented with over 200 works within Philadelphia. She commented that this designation may deter building owners to allow any future artistic use of blank walls on buildings in Philadelphia with the potential for negative consequences to the Mural Arts Program. Dr. Heinz stated that the Painted Bride building does not yet deserve historic designation. She continued that hopefully a new owner may find a way to stabilize some of the façade, but if not, there are better examples of Mr. Zagar's work and they will only appreciate in value over time. Dr. Heinz concluded that a Painted Bride designation presents a risk to historic preservation from having an unsustainable designation and the potential for harm to Painted Bride Arts Center organization.

Ursula Rucker, Philadelphia poet and activist, spoke of her long-time experience with the Painted Bride Arts Center. She stated that she first began working there at 25 years old and has been now been associated with the organization for over 25 years. Ms. Rucker explained that she came to the Painted Bride as a fledgling artist and was nurtured by the organization. She continued that the Painted Bride encouraged her artistic growth and has meaning beyond just as a building. Ms. Rucker described the Painted Bride as a beacon for art with a community that is inclusive and accessible; that she learned about art and community while working there. Ms. Rucker pointed out that the Painted Bride was seeking a change not through adaption but through leadership. She noted that the Painted Bride provides safe, inclusive space for all and that the focus should be on the ongoing work of artists rather than the building.

Mr. Thomas stated that the Commission would now hear from the nominator.

Sharon Erwin, an attorney, stated that she represents Philadelphia Magic Gardens. She noted that she was accompanied by Emily Smith, executive director of the Magic Gardens, who nominated the building for designation on behalf of her organization. Ms. Erwin commented that everyone in the room respects the Painted Bride, the organization, what it has done, and its mission. She continued that what they are discussing today is whether or not it should be designated as a historic building under the criteria set forth in Philadelphia's preservation ordinance. Ms. Erwin pointed out that the only thing she had heard in the eloquent and passionate speeches from the Painted Bride's representatives that seemed to relate to designation was the public interest. Ms. Erwin stated that the public interest is expressed in the preservation ordinance, which declares as matter of public policy, on behalf of the people of the city of Philadelphia, that the preservation and protection of historical buildings or buildings that are historic, educational, cultural, and of aesthetic merit are public necessities, and are in the best interest of the health, welfare, and prosperity of the people of Philadelphia. She noted that Ms. Smith will state in a few minutes that the Philadelphia Magic Gardens believes that the Painted Bride building is a matter public necessity and is in the best interest of all of the people of Philadelphia. Ms. Erwin stated that, while it is true that the Painted Bride is not just a building, it is also true that the Painted Bride building is not just the Painted Bride organization. Ms. Erwin

continued that Ms. Smith will explain why the Criteria for Designation in the case of the Painted Bride are important.

Emily Smith, executive director of The Magic Gardens, stated that she is the nominator for the Painted Bride application. She noted that she would review the four designation criteria that apply to the building and discuss some of the topics raised by the earlier speakers. Ms. Smith stated that the history of the Painted Bride, Isaiah Zagar, and the Philadelphia's alternative arts culture have been interwoven for 50 years and the Painted Bride building is the physical manifestation of that history. She contended that the building is an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood and the City owing to both the singular physical character of its façade and its unique location in Old City, which is Criteria H under the preservation ordinance.

Ms. Smith pointed out that even 25 years ago news reports already referred to this building's near landmark status, owing to Zagar's art. She explained that this is outlined in the nomination application under Criteria E. She continued that Isaiah Zagar and the Painted Bride's significantly influenced the cultural development of the city; both were leaders in the 1960s Cross-town Expressway protests and were key players in the South Street renaissance of the 1970s. Ms. Smith stated that the Painted Bride was the first to showcase alternative arts in Philadelphia and was known for its progressive programming and opportunities for underrepresented artists. She noted that, when it moved to Old City in the 1980s, it helped usher in a second neighborhood boom.

Ms. Smith stated that Isaiah Zagar began working on mosaics in 1968, and by the time of the Painted Bride's move to Old City his reputation as a cultural icon was emerging. She continued that when he started the Painted Bride project in 1991, he was both thirsty for a canvas and excited to pay tribute to the organization that meant so much to him and the other artists that called it home. Ms. Smith stated that the Painted Bride building has become known as his masterpiece. She pointed out that he has received numerous prestigious awards including from the National Endowment for the Arts and Pew Charitable Trust; his work is in institutions such as the Philadelphia Museum of Art and Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. Ms. Smith pointed out that the artist's largest public site is Philadelphia Magic Gardens and boasts over 155,000 visitors a year resulting in over \$7 million in economic impact for the city.

Ms. Smith contended that it is important to talk about Isaiah Zagar's techniques because of the concerns raised by earlier speakers. She noted the distinctive connection between his techniques and the Painted Bride; this being one of the main reasons the Painted Bride's façade is so exceptional and should be designated under Criterion F and Criterion J of the preservation ordinance. Ms. Smith contended that the design, detail, materials, and craftsmanship each represent a significant innovation while also exemplifying the historic and cultural heritage of the community, Ms. Smith stated that Isaiah Zagar is considered an outsider artist and an art environment creator. She continued that it is important to understand that his techniques are incredibly innovative and were developed over many years of trial, error, and experimentation. Ms. Smith pointed out that this is known in mosaicking communities as the Zagar Method and key elements of this work and method are monumental scale, representation of the community, and the use of unorthodox materials.

Ms. Smith responded to questions about the unique and special nature of the Painted Bride mural since hundreds of Zagar mosaics exist in Philadelphia. She contended that the building is one of the finest examples of the Zagar Method and also documents the Painted Bride as an

organization, the history of South Street and Old City, and the artists who shaped the City's alternative art scene. She pointed out that each of the five walls of the façade contain specific references to the Painted Bride—its work, artists, community, history and more—and that these are hyper-specific references that Isaiah Zagar made to show the public the impact of the Painted Bride. Ms. Smith stated that the mosaic was designed to prove that the Painted Bride is a jewel in the crown of cultural Philadelphia.

Ms. Smith addressed concerns raised that the façade cannot be preserved. She stated that this is not true. She noted that the mission of the Philadelphia Magic Gardens is to preserve Isaiah Zagar's work and the staff is working on preservation projects every single day. She explained that the staff has been trained by the artist himself, as well as art environment preservationists. Ms. Smith stated that they are the experts in preserving this specific type of art and that while Isaiah Zagar's methods are definitely unique, caretaking them is possible. She stated that she has read both conditions reports provided by the Painted Bride and there were no conditions in the reports that the Magic Gardens staff are unfamiliar with. She noted that she believed that the reports are being used to dramatize the situation and the findings are quite standard for a mosaic that has received little to no maintenance in over 25 years.

Ms. Smith stated the Magic Gardens has offered ongoing maintenance for free to the Painted Bride or any future owner of the building. She confirmed that the Magic Gardens staff had met with the Painted Bride, Materials Conservation, and Preservation Alliance in July. She continued that they determined that the mosaic cannot be reasonably removed from the façade without damage to the mosaic. Ms. Smith noted that, when the mosaic was added, it became an integral part of the building. Ms. Smith stated that more recently, she and Magic Gardens preservation staff met with the Painted Bride to discuss a preservation plan as a group, should designation occur. She continued that she left the meeting knowing there was a clear path forward to document, assess, and maintain the building. She explained that Magic Gardens offered its services free of charge regarding preservation of the façade if it is designated, covering all of expenses, materials, assessments conducted, and equipment used.

Ms. Smith concluded that she believes that this building is worthy of being taken care of and that places matter; that important places deserve to live and outlive us. She stated that 50 years from now, someone will turn the corner of Vine Street and stumble upon the Painted Bride for the first time. Ms. Smith contended that places only continue to exist because people care about them. She contended that the Painted Bride is worthy of designation as tells an important story and that it is impossible to get these places back once they are gone. Ms. Smith stated that it is buildings like the Painted Bride with the Zagar mural that make "Philly so Philly" and that there will never again be a building like the Painted Bride.

Stacey Holder, manager of preservation and facilities at Philadelphia Magic Gardens, stated that she has been on the preservation team since 2011 and was made manager of preservation in 2014. She continued that the three-person preservation team has developed and perfected an in-depth approach to the maintenance and conservation of Isaiah Zagar's mosaics. Ms. Holder noted that like any outdoor public art work or building, the artist's mosaics need care and maintenance and the Painted Bride team has been trained to preserve this unusual type of art by the artist himself and by the most qualified preservation experts in this field. She contended that working with a living artist is one of the most vital steps in conservation as restoring, maintaining, and preserving this type of work requires flexibility and thinking outside the box and an understanding of the artist's desire and expectations.



Ms. Holder stated that she has worked closely with Isaiah Zagar to develop aesthetic guidelines for repairs and maintenance. She pointed out that the preservation staff have been trained to preserve mosaics like the one at the Painted Bride. She explained that after conducting a visual and sound assessment of the Painted Bride at ground level and reading reports by John Carr of Materials Conservation and Joseph B. Callaghan Consulting Engineers, she believes that there are issues that need to be addressed but none of these relate to the satisfaction of the criteria for the historic designation of the building and the mosaic can be preserved. Ms. Holder continued that the preservation team has created a sample maintenance plan, which would include an initial in-depth documentation and assessment report, repairs as-needed, full scale cleaning and prevention treatments. She noted that these are all things the preservation team does on a daily basis in Philadelphia's Magic Gardens.

Ms. Holder confirmed that the Magic Gardens team has met with the Painted Bride to explain how they would approach the Painted Bride project. She noted she is 100% confident that the mosaic façade of the Painted Bride can be preserved; the mosaic just needs attention and care. Ms. Holder concluded that it important to have public markers in our communities to remind us that art matters and people matter; that self expression is important and community history should be recognized and celebrated.

Ms. Erwin noted that Ms. Holder's statement completes the presentation by the representatives of The Magic Gardens. Ms. Erwin asked the Commission to consider the facts. She noted that the Commission and public had heard a lot of emotion, a lot of supposition, there is nothing to suggest that is an either/or proposition. She contended that designation does not mean the Painted Bride organization will be stopped in its tracks. Ms. Erwin pointed out that if the building were to be designated, there are processes and procedures before the Commission that are designed to address any issues that may occur if there turn out to be buyers that are offering less than whatever the fair market value but no evidence has been heard of what that might be. She asked that the Commission not to put any weight on a lot of the hearsay by earlier speakers.

Mr. Thomas asked the Commissioners if they had any comments or questions before the meeting moved to public comment.

Ms. Edwards asked for clarification on the proposed designation. She asked if the only the mural is proposed for designation or the entire building. Mr. Thomas confirmed that the nomination proposed to designate the entire property with the building, not just the mural. Ms. Edwards inquired about the type of alterations that could be done to the building if designated. She inquired if a residential developer purchased the property and wanted to build a tower, would the designation prevent them from doing the project. Mr. Thomas, Ms. Cooperman, and Mr. McCoubrey responded that this is not necessarily true. Mr. Thomas noted that any proposed project would have to conform to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. He explained that any proposal, such as a tower on the back of the existing building, would have to undergo review but the applicant would not be automatically turned down just because the building is designated. Ms. Cooperman added that it also depends on the basis of which the building is designated, such as the wording of the designation and how its framed.

Mr. Thomas invited members of the public speak and the following individuals provided public comment.

Dr. Judith Stein, curator and art critic, spoke in support of the designation.

Paul Steinke, executive director of the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia, spoke in support of designation.

Kathleen Foster, senior curator of American Art at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, spoke in support of proposed designation.

Venise Whitaker, local preservationist and activist, spoke in support of proposed designation.

Charles McMahon, artistic director of the Lantern Theater, spoke in support of proposed designation.

Jonathan Stein, an attorney and community and arts advocate, spoke in support of proposed designation.

Faye Anderson, activist and citizen preservationist, spoke in support of proposed designation.

Noah Smalls, MFA in Museum Exhibition Planning & Design, spoke in opposition of proposed designation.

Gabriela Raczka, spoke in opposition of proposed designation.

Joel Spivak, historic preservation advocate. Mr. Spivak spoke about the financial impact of designation versus no designation for the Painted Bride. He encouraged the community to work together to save the mural.

Mark Lord, Philadelphia artist and teacher, spoke in support of proposed designation.

Terri Fox, director of Philadelphia Dance Projects and teacher, spoke in support of proposed designation.

Stacy Dutton, executive director of the Lantern Theater, spoke about her organization's interest in purchasing the Painted Bride. Ms. Dutton stated that, if her organization can purchase the building, it would use it as a theater while preserving the building and mural.

Richard Snyderman, one of the founders of the Old City Arts Association, spoke in support of proposed designation.

Claire Kane spoke about the Painted Bride's challenge in continuing to be a relevant arts organization in a gentrified neighborhood.

Dan Mayette stated that, although individuals associated with the Philadelphia Museum of Art spoke in support of the designation, the museum has not formally supported the designation. Mr. Mayette also pointed out that the Historical Commission should decide what is historic now rather than what will be historic in 50 years.

**FAILED MOTION:** Ms. Cooperman moved to find that the property at 230-36 and 238 Vine Street and 255 Bodine Street satisfies Criteria for Designation E, F, H, and J and to designate it as historic, listing it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Mr.

McCoubrey seconded the motion, which failed by a vote of 5 to 4. Commissioners Cooperman, Edwards, Mattioni, and McCoubrey voted in favor. Commissioners Fink, Hartner, Schaaf, Stanford, and Washington dissented. Commissioner Thomas abstained.

Mr. Thomas announced to the audience that the motion had failed and the Historical Commission had declined to designate the property.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

At 2:07 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: Identifying, retaining, and preserving roofs—their functional and decorative features—that are important in defining the overall historic character of the building. This includes the roof's shape, such as hipped, gambrel, and mansard; decorative features such as cupolas, cresting, chimneys, and weathervanes; and roof material such as slate, wood, clay, tile, and metal, as well as its size, color, and patterning. 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.