

**THE MINUTES OF THE 676TH STATED MEETING OF THE
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

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

CALL TO ORDER

START TIME IN AUDIO RECORDING: 00:00:00

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. and announced the presence of a quorum.
The following Commissioners joined him:

Commissioner	Present	Absent	Comment
Robert Thomas, AIA, Chair	x		
Emily Cooperman, Ph.D., Committee on Historic Designation Chair	x		
Kelly Edwards, MUP	x		
Mike Fink (Department of Licenses & Inspections)	x		
Thomas McDade (Department of Public Property)	x		
Melissa Long (Division of Housing & Community Development)		x	
John Mattioni, Esq.		x	
Dan McCoubrey, AIA, LEED AP BD+C, Architectural Committee Chair		x	
R. David Schaaf (Philadelphia City Planning Commission)	x		
H. Ahada Stanford, Ph.D. (Commerce Department)	x*		*Arrived at 9:22am
Betty Turner, MA, Vice-Chair	x		
Kimberly Washington, Esq.	x		

The following staff members were present:

Jonathan E. Farnham, Ph.D., Executive Director
Randal Baron, Historic Preservation Planner III
Laura DiPasquale, Historic Preservation Planner II
Allyson Mehley, Historic Preservation Planner I
Leonard Reuter, Esq., Law Department

The following persons were present:

Thaddeus Squire, Overbrook Farms Club
Matt McClure, Esq., Ballard Spahr
Janine Hildebrand, CVM
Wadell Ridley, Saint Joseph's University
Keith Krasner, CVM
Joseph Menkevich
Suzanna Barucco, sbk + partners
Suzanne Hagner, Save Our Sites
Paul Steinke, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia
J.M. Duffin
Patrick Grossi, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia

Steven Peitzman, East Falls Historical Society
 David S. Traub, Save Our Sites
 Kathy Dowdell

ADOPTION OF MINUTES, 675TH STATED MEETING, 9 NOVEMBER 2018

START TIME IN AUDIO RECORDING: 00:01:52

The Chair asked for any additions or corrections to the minutes of the preceding meeting, the 675th Stated Meeting, held 9 November 2018, and then for a motion to approve the minutes.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

ACTION: Ms. Turner moved to approve the minutes of the 675th Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission, held 9 November 2018. Ms. Cooperman seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

ITEM: Adoption of Minutes, 675th Stated Meeting				
MOTION: Approval				
MOVED BY: Turner				
SECONDED BY: Cooperman				
VOTE				
Commissioner	Yes	No	Abstain/Recuse	Absent
Thomas, Chair	x			
Cooperman	x			
Edwards	x			
Fink (L&I)	x			
McDade (DPP)	x			
Long (DHCD)				x
Mattioni				x
McCoubrey				x
Schaaf (PCPC)	x			
Stanford (Commerce)				x
Turner, Vice-Chair	x			
Washington	x			
Total	8			4

OLD BUSINESS

ADDRESS: 5900 AND 5920 CITY AVE

Name of Resource: Louisa Baugh House
 Proposed Action: Withdrawal of nomination
 Property Owner: Saint Joseph's University
 Nominator: Staff of the Historical Commission
 Staff Contact: Jon Farnham, jon.farnham@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

OVERVIEW: In 2006, the Historical Commission's staff prepared and submitted the nomination for 5900 and 5920 City Avenue at the request of a near neighbor. The Historical Commission notified the property owner that it would consider the nomination, but, for reasons explained below, no action was taken on the nomination and it has been pending for 12 years. As the

nominator, the staff now requests that the Historical Commission withdraw the nomination because the building's condition is such that it no longer merits designation.

Former State Representative Louise Bishop, who owns an abutting property, contacted the Department of Licenses & Inspections and Historical Commission regarding her concerns about the condition and potential redevelopment of the property in the late 1990s. In 1998, the property owner defaulted on a mortgage and the bank holding the mortgage seized the property. In 1999, St. Joseph's University purchased the property from the bank.

At the request of the State Representative, the Historical Commission's staff prepared and submitted a nomination for the property in 2006. The Historical Commission notified the property owner of its pending consideration of the nomination in July 2006. After a continuance, the Committee on Historic Designation reviewed the nomination in March 2007. At that time, the Committee recommended that the property satisfied Criteria for Designation c, d, h, and j. The parties requested additional continuances and in June 2007 the Historical Commission granted an indefinite continuance to allow for the ongoing discussions between the university and the community regarding the reuse of the property with the understanding that the matter would be placed on a subsequent agenda at the request of party. Neither party requested a subsequent consideration of the nomination.

In September 2018, a contractor working for St. Joseph's University submitted a demolition permit application for the building to the Department of Licenses & Inspections, which was forwarded to the Historical Commission. The application included an engineer's report documenting the poor condition of the building, which had been vacant for years and recently hit by a falling tree. The Historical Commission scheduled a review of the demolition permit application, but it was subsequently put on hold at the owner's request until the designation matter was settled.

The staff visited the site in October 2018 and confirmed that the building is in very poor condition. In light of the condition, the staff, which nominated the property, asked the Historical Commission to accept its request to withdraw the nomination and to relinquish jurisdiction over the property at the Historical Commission's meeting on 12 October 2018. After discussing the matter, the Historical Commission tabled its consideration of the withdrawal request for 60 days.

On 1 November 2018, a structural engineer retained by the property owner inspected the building again and issued a new report enumerating the dangerous conditions at the building. An inspector from the Department of Licenses & Inspections visited the site and, on 8 November 2018, issued a violation stating that the building "is in imminent danger of collapse."

On December 4, representatives of the Overbrook Farms Club, the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia and their consultants, preservation architect Carl Dress and structural engineer Rick Ortega, visited the site with representatives of the University and its structural engineer. Following the site visit, Overbrook Farms Club informed the University that it did not disagree with the findings of the University's engineer and that "it would take an exceptional effort and cost to restore the current structure from its deteriorated state to a new use." The Overbrook Farms Club subsequently agreed not to oppose the withdrawal of the historic nomination, provided:

1. St. Joseph's University permits documentation of the building by the Historic American Building Survey (HABS).
2. St. Joseph's University retains and preserves the stone wall and gates along City Avenue.

3. St. Joseph's University permits an architectural salvage company to salvage as much historic fabric from the building as deemed feasible.
4. St. Joseph's University recognizes that the property will require zoning relief in order to allow for a non-single family home to be constructed on the property, and works with the community on the redevelopment plans.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN AUDIO RECORDING: 00:02:20

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Farnham requested that the Historical Commission allow for the withdrawal of the nomination of 5900 and 5920 City Avenue, which was prepared by the staff.
- Attorney Matt McClure represented St. Joseph's University, the property owner. Wadell Ridley of St. Joseph's University and engineers Keith Krasner and Janine Hildebrand of CVM accompanied him.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Thaddeus Squire, Overbrook Farms Club
- Paul Steinke, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia
- Aaron Wunsch
- David Traub, Save Our Sites
- Joseph Menkevich
- Steven Peitzman
- Suzanna Barucco
- Jim Duffin, The Keeping Society

HISTORICAL COMMISSION FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS:

The Historical Commission found that:

- The property at 5900 and 5920 City Avenue was nominated for designation as historic by the staff in 2006.
- The Historical Commission's jurisdiction over the property began on 21 July 2006, when the Commission notified the property owner in writing of the proposed designation.
- The Committee on Historic Designation recommended that the property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, H, and J on 12 March 2007.
- The Historical Commission tabled the review of the nomination on 1 June 2007 until the property owner and/or the nominator requested the resumption of the review.
- Neither the property owner nor the nominator ever requested the resumption of the review.
- The staff, which nominated the property, asked the Historical Commission to accept its request to withdraw the nomination and to relinquish jurisdiction over the property at the Historical Commission's meeting on 12 October 2018.
- At the request of the Overbrook Farms Club, which sought additional time to discuss the property with the property owner, the Historical Commission tabled the staff's request to withdraw the nomination for 60 days on 12 October 2018.
- On 1 November 2018, a structural engineer retained by the property owner inspected the property and issued an engineer's report enumerating the dangerous conditions at the building.
- On 8 November 2018, the Department of Licenses & Inspections issued a violation for the property, declaring it imminently dangerous.

- On December 4, representatives of the Overbrook Farms Club and the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia, and their consultants, visited the property with the property owner. Subsequently, the Overbrook Farms Club agreed not to oppose the withdrawal of the historic nomination in exchange for certain accommodations.
- The property at 5900 and 5920 City Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, H, and J.

The Historical Commission concluded that:

- The property does not merit designation as historic, owing to its imminently dangerous condition.

ACTION: Ms. Cooperman moved to affirm that the property at 5900 and 5920 City Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, H, and J, but to use its discretion with regard to designation, to grant the staff's request to withdraw the nomination, owing to the current circumstances of the property, and to relinquish its jurisdiction over the property. Mr. Schaaf seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

ITEM: 5900 and 5920 City Avenue				
MOTION: Grant request to withdraw nomination				
MOVED BY: Cooperman				
SECONDED BY: Schaaf				
VOTE				
Commissioner	Yes	No	Abstain/ Recuse	Absent
R. Thomas, Chair	x			
E. Cooperman	x			
K. Edwards	x			
M. Fink (L&I)	x			
T. McDade (PP)	x			
M. Long (DHCD)				x
J. Mattioni				x
D. McCoubrey				x
D. Schaaf (PCPC)	x			
H. A. Stanford (COMM.)	x			
B. Turner, Vice-Chair	x			
K. Washington	x			
Total	9			3

DISCUSSION OF PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS TO THE MEETING-MINUTE FORMAT

OVERVIEW: Over the last several years, the staff of the Historical Commission has found that it spends more and more time each month writing detailed meeting minutes, largely owing to an increase in contentious nominations and applications, in order to provide a clear record in case of appeal. As a result, the staff has less and less time to devote to other tasks, such as survey and designation. Although the detailed narrative minutes currently produced provide a thorough written record of the Commission's meetings, the staff now seeks to streamline the process while still fulfilling its obligations prescribed in the Rules & Regulations, providing the public with necessary information, and creating a solid record for appeals and posterity.

The staff requests that the Historical Commission authorize the staff to:

- Create “Action Format” minutes for Historical Commission meetings. A draft layout is attached.
 - Ensure that the Architectural Committee and Historical Commission cite the Standards/Guidelines in their discussions/motions.
- Produce more detailed staff overviews/reports.
- Supplement the record with audio and/or visual recordings made available on the Historical Commission website and/or other online platform, as practical.
- Consult with the Law Department on best practices for documenting for appeals and institute the Law Department’s recommendations.
 - Possibilities for additional documentation include transcriptions for appealed projects or nominations, or creating detailed narrative minutes and placing those minutes before the Historical Commission for adoption, as necessary.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN AUDIO RECORDING: 00:51:47

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. DiPasquale presented the request to modify the meeting-minute format to the Historical Commission.
- Mr. Reuter presented the Law Department’s opinions of the proposed modifications to the meeting-minute format.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Kathy Dowdell
- Patrick Grossi, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia
- Jim Duffin, The Keeping Society

COMMISSION FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS:

The Historical Commission found that:

- The proposed meeting-minute format represents an improvement over the current meeting-minute format with regard to clarity and efficiency.
- The proposed meeting-minute format satisfies the requirements of the City’s historic preservation ordinance and the Historical Commission’s Rules & Regulations as well as other applicable laws and regulations.

The Historical Commission took no official action, but concluded by consensus to authorize the staff to:

- Create “Action Format” minutes for meetings of the Historical Commission and its advisory committees.
- Produce more detailed staff overviews/reports.
- Supplement the record with audio and/or visual recordings made available on the Historical Commission website and/or other online platform, as practical.
- Consult with the Law Department on best practices for documenting for appeals and institute the Law Department’s recommendations.

ADOPTION OF NOMINATION FORMS

OVERVIEW: The Historical Commission has operated with a version of the same standard nomination forms since 2007, with the staff occasionally implementing minor revisions to the forms as needed. Standard nomination forms allow for ease in processing nominations and

determining whether they are correct and complete. They also increase the transparency of the nomination process to the public and to property owners. Per Sections 5.5 through 5.7 of the Historical Commission's Rules and Regulations, the Commission has the authority to prescribe the form in which nominations are submitted. The content of the nomination forms is also set forth in the Rules and Regulations.

The staff recently updated the individual nomination form and distributed it to the most frequent nominators. One of those nominators disputed the content of the forms, and the staff and Commission's authority to utilize a standard nomination form, and requested that the forms be discussed at a public meeting

The staff requests that the Historical Commission adopt the proposed standard nomination forms for individual, district, and interior nominations, which are in compliance with the requirements set forth in the Rules & Regulations, and require their use by all nominators. The staff also requests that the Historical Commission authorize the staff to make minor revisions to the nomination form templates and to the content of nomination forms submitted by nominators as necessary.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN AUDIO RECORDING: 01:24:03

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. DiPasquale presented the request to the Historical Commission.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Joseph Menkevich opposed the request. He distributed a letter to the Historical Commission and read the letter into the record.

COMMISSION FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS:

The Historical Commission found that:

- Sections 5.5, 5.6, and 5.7 of the Historical Commission's Rules & Regulations authorize the Commission to prescribe standardized nomination forms.
- Fields for the information required of nominations in Sections 5.5, 5.6, and 5.7 of the Historical Commission's Rules & Regulations are provided on the proposed standardized nomination forms.
- Standardized nomination forms are essential for efficiency, transparency, and clarity.
- Standardized forms do not proscribe the assertions that nominators may make about resources proposed for historic designation because they may include any information and arguments in their descriptions, statements of significance, and other sections of nominations.

The Historical Commission concluded that:

- The proposed standardized nomination forms comply with Sections 5.5, 5.6, and 5.7 of the Historical Commission's Rules & Regulations and should be adopted.

ACTION: Ms. Cooperman moved to adopt the proposed standard nomination forms for individual, district, and interior nominations as presented; to require their use by all nominators; and to authorize the staff to make minor revisions to the standard nomination forms and to the content of nomination forms submitted by nominators as necessary.

ITEM: Adoption of nomination forms				
MOTION: Adoption of nomination forms				
MOVED BY: Cooperman				
SECONDED BY: Fink				
VOTE				
Commissioner	Yes	No	Abstain/ Recuse	Absent
R. Thomas, Chair	x			
E. Cooperman	x			
K. Edwards	x			
M. Fink (L&I)	x			
T. McDade (PP)	x			
M. Long (DHCD)				x
J. Mattioni				x
D. McCoubrey				x
D. Schaaf (PCPC)	x			
H. A. Stanford (COMM.)	x			
B. Turner, Vice-Chair	x			
K. Washington	x			
Total	9			3

COMMENT ON NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATIONS

ADDRESS: 1907-25 COTTMAN AVENUE, FIRST FEDERAL SAVINGS & LOAN ASSOCIATION OF PHILADELPHIA, NORTHEAST BRANCH

OVERVIEW: The Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission (PHMC) has requested comments from the Philadelphia Historical Commission on the National Register nomination of 1907-25 Cottman Avenue, historically known as the First Federal Savings & Loan Association of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch. PHMC is charged with implementing federal historic preservation regulations in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, including overseeing the National Register of Historic Places in the state. PHMC reviews all such nominations before forwarding them to the National Park Service for action. As part of the process, PHMC must solicit comments on every National Register nomination from the appropriate local government. The Philadelphia Historical Commission speaks on behalf of the City of Philadelphia in historic preservation matters including the review of National Register nominations. Under federal regulation, the local government not only must provide comments, but must also provide a forum for public comment on nominations. Such a forum is provided during the Philadelphia Historical Commission’s meetings.

According to the nomination, the First Federal Savings & Loan Association, Northeast Branch, is significant under Criterion A in the Area of Commerce, as one of the most prominent residential mortgage lenders in the area, particularly within the Jewish community of Oxford Circle, and as such, the branch played a pivotal role in the development of Northeast Philadelphia during the 1950s and 60s; and under Criterion C in the Area of Architecture, as a notable work in the International Style.

ADDRESS: 6128-32 RIDGE AVENUE, ROXBOROUGH TRUST COMPANY

OVERVIEW: The Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission (PHMC) has requested comments from the Philadelphia Historical Commission on the National Register nomination of

6128-32 Ridge Avenue, historically known as the Roxborough Trust Company. PHMC is charged with implementing federal historic preservation regulations in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, including overseeing the National Register of Historic Places in the state. PHMC reviews all such nominations before forwarding them to the National Park Service for action. As part of the process, PHMC must solicit comments on every National Register nomination from the appropriate local government. The Philadelphia Historical Commission speaks on behalf of the City of Philadelphia in historic preservation matters including the review of National Register nominations. Under federal regulation, the local government not only must provide comments, but must also provide a forum for public comment on nominations. Such a forum is provided during the Philadelphia Historical Commission's meetings.

According to the nomination, the Roxborough Trust Company, located in the Roxborough neighborhood of Philadelphia, is significant under Criterion A in the Area of Commerce, as a commercial neighborhood bank that first served as an economic center of the community beginning in 1926 but which closed in 1931 as a result of the Great Depression.

ADDRESS: 5829 WISSAHICKON AVENUE, OAKS CLOISTER

OVERVIEW: The Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission (PHMC) has requested comments from the Philadelphia Historical Commission on the National Register nomination of 5829 Wissahickon Avenue, known as the Oaks Cloister. PHMC is charged with implementing federal historic preservation regulations in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, including overseeing the National Register of Historic Places in the state. PHMC reviews all such nominations before forwarding them to the National Park Service for action. As part of the process, PHMC must solicit comments on every National Register nomination from the appropriate local government. The Philadelphia Historical Commission speaks on behalf of the City of Philadelphia in historic preservation matters including the review of National Register nominations. Under federal regulation, the local government not only must provide comments, but must also provide a forum for public comment on nominations. Such a forum is provided during the Philadelphia Historical Commission's meetings.

According to the nomination, the Oaks Cloister, located in the Germantown neighborhood of Philadelphia, is significant under Criterion C in the Area of Architecture, as an extraordinary example of early twentieth-century architecture, incorporating Tudor Revival, Renaissance Revival, Colonial Revival, Craftsman and Neoclassical styles, and as a domestic adaptation of architect Joseph M. Huston's most important commission, the Pennsylvania State Capitol.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN AUDIO RECORDING: 01:58:34

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Mehley presented the National Register nominations to the Historical Commission.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

COMMISSION FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS:

The Historical Commission found that:

- The First Federal Savings & Loan Association, Northeast Branch, at 1907-25 Cottman Avenue is significant under National Register Criterion A in the Area of Commerce, as one of the most prominent residential mortgage lenders in the area, particularly within the Jewish community of Oxford Circle, and as such, the branch

played a pivotal role in the development of Northeast Philadelphia during the 1950s and 60s; and under Criterion C in the Area of Architecture, as a notable work in the International Style.

- The Roxborough Trust Company, located at 6128-32 Ridge Avenue in the Roxborough neighborhood of Philadelphia, is significant under National Register Criterion A in the Area of Commerce, as a commercial neighborhood bank that first served as an economic center of the community beginning in 1926 but which closed in 1931 as a result of the Great Depression.
- The Oaks Cloister, located at 5829 Wissahickon Avenue in the Germantown neighborhood of Philadelphia, is significant under National Register Criterion C in the Area of Architecture, as an extraordinary example of early twentieth-century architecture, incorporating Tudor Revival, Renaissance Revival, Colonial Revival, Craftsman and Neoclassical styles, and as a domestic adaptation of architect Joseph M. Huston's most important commission, the Pennsylvania State Capitol.

The Historical Commission concluded that:

- The staff should be directed to convey the Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission that the Historical Commission recommends that the First Federal Savings & Loan Association, Northeast Branch, at 1907-25 Cottman Avenue; the Roxborough Trust Company, at 6128-32 Ridge Avenue; and the Oaks Cloister, at 5829 Wissahickon Avenue merit listing on the National Register of Historic Places for the reasons enumerated.

REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE HISTORICAL COMMISSION STAFF

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN AUDIO RECORDING: 02:03:40

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Farnham presented the staff report and permit log for the month of November 2018 and information on the Mayor's Task Force on Historic Preservation to the Historical Commission.

ADJOURNMENT

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN AUDIO RECORDING: 02:08:33

Upon completing the discussions of the matters on the agenda, the Chair requested a motion to adjourn.

ACTION: At 11:19 a.m., Mr. Schaaf moved to adjourn. Mr. Fink seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

ITEM: Adjournment				
MOTION: To adjourn				
Moved BY: Schaaf				
SECONDED BY: Fink				
VOTE				
Commissioner	Yes	No	Abstain/ Recuse	Absent
Thomas, Chair	x			
Cooperman	x			
Edwards	x			
Fink (L&I)	x			
McDade (DPP)	x			
Long (DHCD)				x
Mattioni				x
McCoubrey				x
Schaaf (PCPC)	x			
Stanford (Commerce)	x			
Turner, Vice-Chair	x			
Washington	x			
Total	9			3

PLEASE NOTE:

- Minutes of the Philadelphia Historical Commission are presented in action format. Additional information is available in the audio recording for this meeting. The start time for each agenda item in the recording is noted.
- Application materials and staff overviews are available on the Historical Commission’s website, www.phila.gov/historical, under “Current Applications.”