

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION  
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

**17 APRIL 2019, 9:30 A.M.  
1515 ARCH STREET, ROOM 18-029  
EMILY COOPERMAN, CHAIR**

**CALL TO ORDER**

**START TIME IN AUDIO RECORDING:** 00:00:00

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:37 a.m. The following Committee members joined her:

<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Emily Cooperman, Ph.D., chair	x		
Jeff Cohen, Ph.D.	x		
Janet Klein		x	
Bruce Laverty		x	
Elizabeth Milroy, Ph.D.	x		
Douglas Mooney	x		

The following staff members were present:

- Jonathan Farnham, Executive Director
- Kim Chantry, Historic Preservation Planner II
- Laura DiPasquale, Historic Preservation Planner II
- Meredith Keller, Historic Preservation Planner II
- Allyson Mehley, Historic Preservation Planner I
- Leonard Reuter, Law Department

The following persons were present:

- Cathy and Jack Johnson
- Julia Gowe
- Jennifer Loustau
- Lee Berman
- Lucia Ester, WP/SP RCO
- Chuck Bode, WP/SP RCO
- Michael Nevadomski
- Lauren Kane
- John Gonzales
- Patrick Grossi, Preservation Alliance
- Steven Ford, Sharktown
- Katie VanVlier, Sharktown
- David Farlane, Sharktown
- Michael Fekete, Esq., Montgomery McCracken
- Tim Cooper, City Council
- Brendan O'Mara, Tacony Club
- David Traub, Save Our Sites
- Steven Peitzman, Drexel
- Paul Steinke, Preservation Alliance

Adam Hunt  
Oscar Beisert  
Celeste Morello  
Elizabeth Stegner, University City Historical Society  
Gregory Dietrich, WP/SP RCO  
George Poulin, University City Historical Society  
Alex Balloon, Tacony CDC  
Kevin McMahon, Powers & Co.  
Cesar Gonzales

**ADDRESS: 1135 and 1137 E BERKS ST**

Proposed Action: Rescission

Property Owner: Jack J. Johnson

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

**OVERVIEW:** This application proposes to rescind the designations of 1135 and 1137 E. Berks Street. The properties were designated and listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places in 1967. The properties at 1135 and 1137 E. Berks Street are individually designated although they are presently vacant lots. At the time of designation in 1967, 2 1/2 story brick buildings stood on these properties and were part of a contiguous row of buildings that were constructed in the early nineteenth century. In 1997, Historical Commission records show that the buildings at 1135 and 1137 E. Berks Street were declared “Imminently Dangerous” by the Department of Licenses and Inspections and then demolished. The current owner has requested their removal from the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. He lives adjacent to the properties at 1133 E. Berks Street. The owner acquired the vacant lots through Sheriff Sales, 1135 E. Berks in 2001 and 1137 E. Berks Street in 2000.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** The staff recommends that the Historical Commission rescind the designations for 1135 and 1137 E. Berks Street, pursuant to Section 5.14.b.1.a of the Historical Commission’s Rules & Regulations, as the resources have ceased to satisfy any Criteria for Designation because the qualities that caused their original entries have been removed through demolition.

**START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN AUDIO RECORDING:** 00:05:15

**PRESENTERS:**

- Ms. Mehley presented the rescission request to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Owner Jack Johnson represented the request.

**DISCUSSION:**

- Ms. Cooperman inquired if there were Criteria for Designation in the preservation ordinance that at the time of designation in 1967. The staff replied that there were no Criteria in the ordinance at that time. The Historical Commission was simply authorized to designate buildings that it deems historically significant to the City.
- Mr. Mooney stated that the historic buildings that originally stood on these lots were built in the 1820s by Dr. Thomas W. Dyott. He explained that this group of buildings was the original used as married-worker housing units for the people that worked at the Dyottville Glass Works. Mr. Mooney contended that from an archaeological

perspective there is a huge potential for artifacts associated with the Dyotteville Glass Works. He noted the Interstate 95 excavation is one block away and a number of properties associated with people who worked at Dyotteville have been excavated. He explained that the backyards contained an astonishing assortment of glass artifacts manufactured at Dyotteville, not only standard production items but also non-standard production items made by the workers for use in their own homes and to show off their skills as glassblowers. Mr. Mooney stated those artifacts are right now helping to rewrite the history of Philadelphia glass. He emphasized that these are resources that do not exist in any other location.

- Mr. Cohen asked about the open land associated with the lots and the sizes of the backyards. Mr. Mooney responded the buildings had small backyards. He explained that, even though the backyards are small, archaeologists are finding smaller shallow privy pits in this area. He continued that these pits are contain dense artifact deposits associated with the people who lived in the area.
- Ms. Milroy asked Mr. Mooney to explain what a privy pit is for the general public attending the meeting and describe the importance of privy pits to an archaeological investigation. Mr. Mooney explained that privy pits were outhouses but also were used to dispose of household trash and they hold artifacts related to the people that lived on a given property and as a result can provide information everyday life and the people that lived there. He noted the area is also important owing to the importance of the glass industry in this section of Philadelphia, which was known as the city's glass district, with approximately one dozen glass companies that existing during the eighteenth century and early nineteenth century in this area of the city. The earliest glass works in Philadelphia was established in 1772 about one block away from 1135 and 1137 E. Berks Street. It is possible there are artifacts from people who worked in that glass factory going back into the late eighteenth century.
- Mr. Farnham stated that the properties were designated in 1967, when the Historical Commission had the legal authority to designate buildings. The old ordinance did not give the Historical Commission the legal authority to designate archeological resources or anything but buildings. He pointed out that the Rules & Regulations allow for the rescission of a property from the Register when the resource has ceased to satisfy any of the qualities that caused its original entry on the Register. Mr. Farnham added that these properties could be nominated for designation for the likelihood of archeological resources. He stated that the Historical Commission could not simply convert the 1967 designation into a designation for archaeological resources without undergoing a process that included notice and a nomination.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

- None.

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:**

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The buildings at 1135 and 1137 E. Berks Street were added to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places in 1967. The Historical Commission only had the authority to designate buildings at that time. It did not have the authority to designate archaeological sites.
- The buildings located at 1135 and 1137 E. Berks Street were declared "Imminently Dangerous" by the Department of Licenses and Inspections in 1997 and were demolished soon thereafter.

- The properties were acquired by a new owner, who made this rescission request, at a Sheriff's Sale after demolition was completed. The owner was unaware until recently that these vacant lots were listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The owner is currently trying to sell the properties.
- The demolished buildings and associated lots are historically associated with the Dyottville Glass Works as worker housing. As a result, the backyards of the demolished buildings have a high potential for archaeological artifacts associated with the Dyottville Glass Works and the individuals who lived there.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The designations of 1135 and 1137 E. Berks Street should be rescinded, pursuant to Section 5.14.b.1.a of the Historical Commission's Rules & Regulations, because the qualities that caused their original designations have been lost through demolition.

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION:** The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the Historical Commission rescind the designations for 1135 and 1137 E. Berks Street, pursuant to Section 5.14.b.1.a of the Historical Commission's Rules & Regulations, because the qualities that caused the original designations have been lost through demolition. The Committee on Historic Designation noted that the properties likely hold significant archaeological artifacts and may be eligible for designation under Criterion I.

<b>ITEM: 1135 and 1137 E BERKS ST</b>					
<b>MOTION: Rescission of designations</b>					
<b>MOVED BY: Cooperman</b>					
<b>SECONDED BY: Cohen</b>					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Emily Cooperman, chair	x				
Jeff Cohen	x				
Janet Klein					x
Bruce Laverty					x
Elizabeth Milroy	x				
Douglas Mooney	x				
Total	4				2

**ADDRESS: 155-59 CECIL B MOORE AVE**

Name of Resource: The Columbia Works (also known as The Eagle Bolt Works)

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Sharktown, Inc.

Nominator: The Keeping Society of Philadelphia

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

**OVERVIEW:** This nomination proposes to designate the property at 155-59 Cecil B. Moore Avenue and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the building satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, D and J.

Under Criterion A, the nomination argues that the property is significant for its association with William P. Uhlinger, an inventor, machinist, industrialist, and the first manufacturer of the Jacquard Loom in the United States. The introduction of the Jacquard Loom represented an important technological advance during a time when Philadelphia was a national and

international center for the textile industry. Under Criteria C, the nomination contends the complex, most notably Building 1, reflects an era when industrial architecture was characterized by the use of pilaster and arcades as a distinctive architectural treatment for brick factory buildings. Under Criteria D, the nomination states that Building 5 embodies distinguishing characteristics of the Art Deco style as communicated through its parapet and brick detailing on an otherwise largely utilitarian building. Finally, the nomination asserts that under Criteria J, the property exemplifies the cultural, economic, and historical heritage of the industrial age in Kensington in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 155-59 Cecil B. Moore Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, D and J. The staff recommends that the non-historic one-story structures along N. Mascher Street, in between Buildings 1 and 5, are classified as non-contributing resources.

**START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN AUDIO RECORDING:** 00:15:45

**PRESENTERS:**

- Ms. Mehley presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Steve Ford and David Forlano of Sharktown Inc., the owner of the property.
- Oscar Beisert represented the nominator.

**DISCUSSION:**

- Mr. Ford stated that Sharktown Inc. is owned by three artists who bought the building in 1994, when Kensington was a neglected and dangerous neighborhood. He explained that it has served as an incubator for their own art businesses as well as many others, including preservationists like Materials Conservation Collaborative, for the last 25 years. Mr. Ford noted that it continues to be one of the last affordable spaces for young artists and new creative small businesses to get their start. He stated that having been good caretakers of the property for the last 25 years and they see no urgency for historic designation. He stated that they prefer that the Historical Commission reject the nomination. He objected to the nomination of this property, which was done aggressively and without the owner's consent or collaboration. He continued that the City offers many incentives to developers to demolish buildings, like 10-year tax abatements, but the local historic designation is all sticks and no carrots. Mr. Ford pointed out that their position continues to be one of maintaining the building while slowly improving spaces to make them useful and functional again. He continued that, as with any old building, maintenance is ongoing and expensive, adding that their taxes have skyrocketed with the City valuing the land at the highest and best use. Mr. Ford stated that their intention for the foreseeable future is to preserve Sharktown and make a small income from rents. Mr. Ford urged the Committee on Historic Designation to not approve the nomination against the will of the property owner.
- Ms. Cooperman pointed out that the Historical Commission would not require any particular work to the building if it were designated. The Historical Commission reviews work proposed by the owner but does not require work. Mr. Ford responded that he did understand that to be the case and had already met with the staff to discuss the implications of the potential designation.
- Mr. Beisert commented that he did not know how the Historical Commission went about designating the Wayne Junction Historic District but that he understood that the materials replacement requirements were less strict. He asked if a lower of

standards was possible for this property. Ms. Cooperman responded that she did not recall this. Mr. Farnham recalled that the Historical Commission directed its staff to allow for substitute materials and other methods of work on the industrial buildings in Wayne Junction to allow for less expensive alterations and rehabilitations. He continues that it was not explicit but implicit in the conversations held at the time. Ms. Cooperman added that this may be something that is appropriate in this instance but she does not know. She continued that this could be addressed by the Historical; the Committee could recommend such a scheme. Mr. Beisert commented that he hoped it would be something that would be recommended.

- Mr. Cohen stated that he thinks the nomination does an excellent job of ferreting out the story of the place. He added that it is a remarkably intact site and he does agree with the staff about the connecting buildings between Buildings 1 and 5 along N. Mascher Street not being considered contributing. Ms. Cooperman agreed with these buildings should be classified as non-contributing. Mr. Cohen complimented the nominator on the quality of the nomination and for exploring the notion of industrial vernacular. Mr. Cohen stated it is a significant site.
- Mr. Cohen and Ms. Cooperman noted that the clear annotations of the street names on the maps were helpful to orient the reader.
- Ms. Milroy stated that she understood the owners' concerns but contended that it is also important to recognize this is the site of important industrial history in the city. She added that coincidentally Philadelphia is home to some of the most cutting-edge textile technology in the twenty-first century, which is an interesting connection. Ms. Milroy contended that she does not see that declaring the significance of these buildings imposes any kind of undue hardship of the owners.
- Ms. Milroy pointed out that she wished to correct a point on page 23 in the nomination about population change during that period. She wished to point out that the city and county were consolidated at that time so this contributed to the dramatic increase in population rather than just the number of people moving into the city.
- Ms. Milroy stated she is in support of the nomination.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

- None.

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:**

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The current owner has owned the property for 25 years and is concerned about the potential for increased maintenance and upgrade costs resulting from a historic designation.
- The property is largely intact and continues to reflect its historic appearance when it operated as the Columbia Works and Eagle Bolt Works.
- The one-story buildings on N. Mascher Street, between Buildings 1 and 5, do not contribute to the overall history and significance of the property.
- The nomination makes a strong argument for historical significance.

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The nomination demonstrates that the property satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, D and J.
- The non-historic one-story structures along N. Mascher Street, in between Buildings 1 and 5, are non-contributing resources

- The Historical Commission should consider whether allowances for substitute materials and other measures to reduce the costs of future maintenance and repairs at this former industrial site should be built into the designation.

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION:** The Committee on Historic Designation recommends that the nomination demonstrates that 155-59 Cecil B. Moore Avenue satisfies A, C, D, and J; that the one-story buildings located along N. Mascher Street between Buildings 1 and 5 are classified as non-contributing; and that the Historical Commission address the request for allowances to offset costs.

<b>ITEM: 155-59 Cecil B. Moore Avenue</b>					
<b>MOTION: Designation, Criteria A, C, D, and J, with conditions</b>					
<b>Moved BY: Cooperman</b>					
<b>SECONDED BY: Cohen</b>					
<b>VOTE</b>					
<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>	<b>Recuse</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Emily Cooperman, chair	x				
Jeff Cohen	x				
Janet Klein					x
Bruce Laverty					x
Elizabeth Milroy	x				
Douglas Mooney	x				
Total	4				2

**CHESTER-REGENT HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Proposed Action: Designation

Nominator: University City Historical Society

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

**OVERVIEW:** This nomination proposes to designate a 41-property historic district along Chester Avenue and Regent Street between 45<sup>th</sup> and 46<sup>th</sup> Streets in West Philadelphia. The nomination contends that the district, constructed between 1889 and 1892 on the estate of J. Lewis Crew, is significant under Criteria for Designation C, D, E, and J. Under Criterion J, the nomination contends that the proposed district exemplifies the economic, social, and historical heritage of West Philadelphia as it transitioned from a pastoral landscape to a vibrant streetcar suburb. The residential properties that comprise the district present a typical urban hierarchy, with a single-family mansion and major twins on Chester Avenue, to smaller south-facing twins on Regent, and a north-facing set of rowhouses on Regent. The district, which was designed by preeminent local architect Willis G. Hale, satisfying Criterion E, further embodies distinguishing characteristics of the Queen Anne style, a popular late nineteenth-century style that lent itself well to the picturesque suburb of West Philadelphia, satisfying Criteria C and D.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the proposed district satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, and J.

**START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN AUDIO RECORDING:** 00:28:52

**PRESENTERS:**

- Ms. DiPasquale presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.

- George Poulin and Jennifer Loustau represented the nominator, the University City Historical Society. Mr. Poulin noted that the nomination was a collaborative effort and thanked the Commission's staff for their assistance with the nomination.
- Property owner John Gonzales represented 4520-26 Chester Avenue, The Gables Bed & Breakfast. He read a prepared statement. He noted that his brother and co-owner, Cesar Gonzales, was not able to attend. He explained that they were informed of the potential nomination by Paul Steinke of the Preservation Alliance, who approached them about a preservation easement. He asserted that, although they attended two community meetings and submitted numerous questions, many of which were answered, they still do not feel they have enough information to make an informed decision. He opined that their insurance premium would increase or they would not be able to be insured. He requested that their property be excluded from the proposed historic district.

**DISCUSSION:**

- Ms. Cooperman asked whether the John Gonzales and/or his brother have spoken with the Historical Commission's staff. Ms. DiPasquale responded affirmatively.
- Ms. Milroy opined that it is an impressive nomination. She recognized the rarity of an intact district of this sort by a single architect.
- Ms. Milroy argued that designating a district and excluding one building, the bed and breakfast, would be inappropriate.
- Mr. Cohen opined that it is an elegantly written nomination and makes the case for a remarkable tiered development with everything from grand, elite houses to the back street of more modest homes. He noted that it is a remarkably cohesive development by an architect who was an endless font of invention. Mr. Cohen noted that Willis Hale did not however, "anticipate" the Art Nouveau, but was working in his own progressive mode.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

- Paul Steinke of the Preservation Alliance supported the nomination and commended the University City Historical Society and the staff of the Historical Commission for attending at least two community meetings prior to the designation process. He confirmed that he had offered the owners of The Gables an easement as an alternative to historic designation, and that they declined. He explained that he did additional research into the question of insuring historic buildings with the National Trust Insurance Services company and shared that information with the property owners in the proposed district.
- Tim Cooper, representing Councilwoman Blackwell, explained that his office has been contacted by the owners of The Gables, who have additional questions, and suggested that the Historical provide answers to the questions in writing. Ms. DiPasquale noted that the staff has spoken extensively both verbally and in writing with the owners of The Gables. Mr. Cooper noted that the Councilwoman understands that the majority of property owners in the district are in favor of designation.
- David Traub of Save Our Sites supported the nomination.

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:**

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The buildings in the proposed district were designed by preeminent architect Willis G. Hale and constructed between 1889-1892 on the estate of J. Lewis Crew.



The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The nomination demonstrates that the proposed district exemplifies the economic, social, and historical heritage of West Philadelphia, satisfying Criterion J.
- The nomination demonstrates that the properties that comprise the district present a typical urban hierarchy, with a single-family mansion and major twins on Chester Avenue, to smaller south-facing twins on Regent, and a north-facing set of rowhouses on Regent, embody distinguishing characteristics of the Queen Anne style, a popular late nineteenth-century style, satisfying Criteria C and D.
- The nomination demonstrates that the district was designed by preeminent local architect Willis G. Hale, satisfying Criterion E.

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION:** The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the Chester-Regent Historic District satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, and J, and that the district should be designated as historic and listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

<b>ITEM: Chester-Regent Historic District</b>					
<b>MOTION: Criteria C, D, E, J, rec. for designation</b>					
<b>MOVED BY: Cohen</b>					
<b>SECONDED BY: Milroy</b>					
<b>VOTE</b>					
<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>	<b>Recuse</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Emily Cooperman, chair	x				
Jeff Cohen	x				
Janet Klein					x
Bruce Laverty					x
Elizabeth Milroy	x				
Douglas Mooney	x				
Total	4				2

**ADDRESS: 4100 HAVERFORD AVE**

Name of Resource: West Philadelphia Railway Company Depot

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Michael Graves

Nominator: University City Historical Society

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

**OVERVIEW:** This nomination proposes to designate the property at 4100 Haverford Avenue and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the former West Philadelphia Railway Company Depot, constructed in 1876, satisfies Criteria for Designation A, D, and J. Under Criteria A and J, the nomination asserts that the building is the last vestige of the West Philadelphia Passenger Railway Company (WPPRC), the first and most significant streetcar company in West Philadelphia, the development of which is inextricably linked to the formation of streetcar lines during the nineteenth century. Under Criterion D, the nomination contends that the utilitarian building embodies distinguishing characteristics of the Neo-Grec style.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 4100 Haverford Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation A, D, and J.

**START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN AUDIO RECORDING: 00:48:27**

**PRESENTERS:**

- Ms. DiPasquale presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- No one represented the property owner. Ms. DiPasquale noted that the owner and his attorney had requested that the Historical Commission continue the review of the nomination to this date.
- Oscar Beisert and George Poulin represented the nominator, the University City Historical Society. Mr. Poulin thanked the staff of the Historical Commission for its assistance with the nomination. Mr. Poulin explained that 4100 Haverford is an important part of West Philadelphia's transportation history and is the last remaining structure that was once part of a larger complex. He noted that there are few industrial or transportation-related buildings left in West Philadelphia that can show this history.

**DISCUSSION:**

- The Committee members noted that the building appears to be architect-designed and discussed who the architect of the building may have been. They questioned whether there were any known associations between railway executives and local architects.
  - Mr. Beisert noted that he did go through the company's records at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania and only found one drawing of a building for which the railroad commissioned an architect, and it was from an earlier period and of a different style.
  - Mr. Cohen noted that, whoever the architect was, he was clearly influenced by Frank Furness and others of the period.
  - Ms. Cooperman noted that the building may have been designed by the Wilson Brothers, who were involved in many transportation-related designs.
- Mr. Cohen noted that the building is a remarkable survivor of West Philadelphia's transportation history.
- Mr. Cohen provided a few minor corrections for the nomination, noting that there is a reference to the Queen Anne style in the architectural description, but that the building is High Victorian at its most distinctive, rather than Queen Anne. He agreed that Neo-Grec does best describe the details of the building, although there are nuances to the design that define categorization.
- Mr. Cohen questioned whether any transportation-related structure can satisfy Criterion A.
  - Mr. Beisert responded that the streetcar system is critical to how this area developed historically.
  - Mr. Cohen opined that that might better satisfy Criterion J, but that he could be persuaded otherwise.
- Mr. Cohen noted that the nomination is well-researched and written, and that it was good that it notes the influences of the High Victorian and Neo-Grec on the design.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

- Joel Spivak commented on the potential economic hardship of designation.
- David Traub of Save Our Sites supported the nomination.

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:**

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The building at 4100 Haverford Avenue was constructed in 1876 as a depot for the West Philadelphia Passenger Railway Company.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The nomination demonstrates that the property exemplifies the development of West Philadelphia as a streetcar suburb, which is a significant part of the City’s development, satisfying Criteria A and J.
- The nomination demonstrates that the building embodies distinguishing characteristics of the Neo-Grec style, satisfying Criterion D.

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION:** The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that 4100 Haverford Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation A, D, and J, and that the property should be designated as historic and listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

<b>ITEM: 4100 Haverford Avenue</b>					
<b>MOTION: Criteria A, D, and J; rec. to designate</b>					
<b>MOVED BY: Cohen</b>					
<b>SECONDED BY: Milroy</b>					
<b>VOTE</b>					
<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>	<b>Recuse</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Emily Cooperman, chair	x				
Jeff Cohen	x				
Janet Klein					x
Bruce Laverty					x
Elizabeth Milroy	x				
Douglas Mooney	x				
Total	4				2

**ADDRESS: 915-25 BAINBRIDGE ST AND 610 S PERCY ST**

Name of Resource: Institute for Colored Youth

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owners: Various

Nominator: Philadelphia Historical Commission staff

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

**OVERVIEW:** This nomination proposes to designate the properties at 915-25 Bainbridge Street and 610 S. Percy Street and list them on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the former Institute for Colored Youth buildings, constructed in 1866 and 1888 respectively, satisfy Criteria for Designation A and J. Under Criterion A, the nomination asserts that the Institute, founded by a bequest from Quaker philanthropist Richard Humphreys in 1832, was at the forefront of African-American education in Philadelphia, as well as the United States more broadly. Although established as a school for boys, the Institute, which employed and was led exclusively by African-American faculty of both sexes, became co-educational in 1852. Chief among the Institute’s prestigious alumni and faculty, including Octavius Catto and Ebenezer Bassett, was the school’s longest-serving principal, Fanny Jackson Coppin, the first African-American woman to head an institution for higher learning in the United States. Under Jackson’s leadership, the Institute enlarged to include an Industrial Department to better serve a broader constituency of black students. Through the second half of the nineteenth century, the Institute served as a focal point for the intellectual, cultural, and

political life of the community, with many of its faculty and students becoming leaders in the fight for equality for African Americans, satisfying Criterion J. In 1903, the school moved to a larger campus in Delaware County, where it ultimately transformed into Cheyney University.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the properties at 915-25 Bainbridge Street and 610 S. Percy Street satisfy Criteria for Designation A and J.

**START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN AUDIO RECORDING:** 01:02:43

**PRESENTERS:**

- Ms. DiPasquale presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- No one represented the properties. Ms. DiPasquale noted that the property is divided into condominiums and that the staff has not heard from any condominium owners.

**DISCUSSION:**

- The Committee members agreed that the nomination is a “slam dunk” and that the properties are highly significant and deserving of designation.
- Mr. Cohen noted that 915 Bainbridge Street is a very sophisticated building. He postulated that it may have been designed by architect Samuel Sloan, or someone strongly influenced by Sloan, whose school house designs were constructed around the same time and contained similar plan, massing, and features to the Institute for Colored Youth building. Ms. Cooperman agreed. They noted that Sloan’s school house designs included staircase volumes appended to the sides of a rectangular building, with classrooms in the four corners. They noted that Sloan was particularly concerned about ventilation and heating. Mr. Cohen noted that, by 1866, the design may have been by Sloan & Hutton. The Committee members agreed that this point was not critical to the significance of the properties as laid out in the nomination.
- The Committee noted that the Industrial Department building, while utilitarian in nature, is not unembellished.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

- Celeste Morello supported the nomination. She noted that the building has a historical marker, one of four related to African-American history in the Bella Vista neighborhood. She opined that this is a site that should have been designated a long time ago.

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:**

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The building at 915-25 Bainbridge Street was constructed in 1866 for the Institute for Colored Youth, and organization founded by a bequest of Quaker philanthropist Richard Humphreys in 1832.
- The building at 610 S. Percy Street was constructed in 1888 as the Industrial Department of the Institute for Colored Youth as part of principal Fanny Jackson Coppin’s expansion of the school’s curriculum to serve a broader constituency of black students.
- The Institute for Colored Youth served as a focal point for the intellectual, cultural, and political life of the African-American community in the second half of the nineteenth century, with many of its faculty and students becoming leaders in the fight for equality for African Americans.

The Committee concluded that:

- The nomination demonstrates that the Institute for Colored Youth was at the forefront of African-American education in Philadelphia and the nation more broadly, and that principal Fanny Jackson Coppin was a person significant in the past, satisfying Criterion A.
- The nomination demonstrates that the Institute for Colored Youth served as a focal point for the intellectual, cultural, and political life of the African-American community in the second half of the nineteenth century, with many of its faculty and students becoming leaders in the fight for equality for African Americans, satisfying Criterion J.
- The nomination demonstrates that the nomination demonstrates that the properties at 915-25 Bainbridge Street and 610 S. Percy Street satisfy Criteria for Designation A and J.

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION:** The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the properties at 915 Bainbridge Street and 610 S. Percy Street satisfy Criteria for Designation A and J, and that the properties should be designated as historic and listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

<b>ITEM: 915 Bainbridge St and 610 S Percy St</b>					
<b>MOTION: Criteria A and J; rec. to designate</b>					
<b>MOVED BY: Cohen</b>					
<b>SECONDED BY: Mooney</b>					
<b>VOTE</b>					
<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>	<b>Recuse</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Emily Cooperman, chair	x				
Jeff Cohen	x				
Janet Klein					x
Bruce Laverty					x
Elizabeth Milroy	x				
Douglas Mooney	x				
Total	4				2

**ADDRESS: 726 CHESTNUT ST**

Name of Resource: Glenn & Co. Perfumery

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Bernice and Lauren Kane

Nominator: The Keeping Society of Philadelphia

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

**OVERVIEW:** This nomination proposes to designate the property at 726 Chestnut Street as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the commercial building, originally constructed between 1855 and 1856, satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, and J. The nomination notes that the façade may have been deconstructed and rebuilt to its historic appearance in 1892 when the south side of Chestnut Street was widened by five feet. Under Criterion C, the nomination argues that the brownstone façade reflects the evolution and development of commercial architecture in mid-nineteenth century Philadelphia. The nomination maintains that the brownstone façade is significant under Criterion E as the work of William Struthers of Struthers & Son, one of the most prominent stone masons in Philadelphia and nationally during the nineteenth century. Under Criterion D, the nomination

contends that the brownstone façade embodies distinguishing characteristics of the Gothic Revival and Italianate styles. The nomination separately addresses the storefront, installed in 1928, as Spanish Revival. Under Criterion J, the nomination provides a history of the Glenn & Company perfumery, for which the building was constructed, and briefly mentions the transition of Chestnut Street west of Independence Hall from a largely residential area to a fashionable commercial district in the 1850s.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 726 Chestnut Street satisfies Criterion for Designation E, but fails to make an adequate or accurate argument for Criteria C, D or J. The staff notes that the discussion under Criterion C could satisfy Criterion J.

**START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN AUDIO RECORDING:** 01:09:27

**PRESENTERS:**

- Ms. DiPasquale presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Oscar Beisert and Kevin McMahon represented the nomination.
- Owner Lauren Kane and attorney Michael Fekete represented the property owner and opposed the designation.

**DISCUSSION:**

- Ms. Fekete opined that the nomination lacks merit. He noted that it is not Notre Dame, but is a building that is and was historically used for commerce. He opined that there is nothing unique about soap or perfume in Philadelphia history or in the history of the world.
  - Ms. Cooperman responded that the Criteria do not require that a building be unique to qualify as historically significant.
  - Ms. Fekete replied that the nomination argues that there was some significance to the soap and perfumery business in the development of the Philadelphia economy, and that he disagrees that there was anything significant about the sale of soap or perfume to the economic or social history of the city.
- Mr. Fekete opined that no consideration is given to the challenges of owning such a property.
  - Ms. Cooperman responded that the Committee on Historic Designation has a narrow purview to discuss the technical merits of the nomination.
- Mr. Fekete opined that Struthers & Son were not significant because John Struthers was dead by the time 726 Chestnut Street was constructed. He opined that the nomination states that his son, William, had nothing to do with buildings of this type. He opined that someone who worked for Struthers may have designed the building. He opined that there is no connection established in the nomination.
  - Mr. McMahon responded that that is incorrect; there is no statement in the nomination that William Struthers was not involved in the design and construction of this building.
  - Mr. McMahon noted that the nomination explains that Struthers was not the architect of the building, but that a case is made for his significance in the Philadelphia building world as a mason and artist, and that his work on this building, which is not in question, makes the building significant.

- Mr. Fekete noted that some changes occurred to the building in the nineteenth century owing to the widening of Chestnut Street. He noted that the windows have been changed.
- Mr. Fekete opined that to “exemplify” the history of the community, there has to be something that is architecturally unique about the building that represents that history. This is just a commercial building, he stated.
- Mr. Fekete argued that there is a parking lot across the street and that other buildings on the block have been modified.
  - Ms. Milroy responded that those facts make it all the more important to preserve as much of the remaining historic fabric as possible.
- Ms. Milroy stated that there are countless commercial buildings listed on the Philadelphia and National Registers and listed as National Historic Landmarks. The argument against designation owing to its commercial use is a non-starter. Ms. Cooperman agreed. She noted that the association with history is the significance, not a building’s uniqueness, or the fact that it is the “first,” “last,” or “best.” Mr. Fekete argued that the building does not reflect anything significant about the history of Philadelphia. The Committee disagreed.
- Ms. Kane stated that the building has been in her family for 60 years and that it would be an extraordinary hardship for her to comply with historic requirements for renovating the building.
  - Ms. Cooperman responded that there is no requirement to rehabilitate a building once it is designated. The Historical Commission does not require owners to undertake work; the Commission reviews work proposed by owners.
- Ms. Kane argued that none of the other buildings on the block are designated as historic. She asserted that it is troublesome that one building on an entire block would be designated.
  - Ms. DiPasquale responded that numerous buildings on the 700 block of Chestnut Street are individually designated as historic.
- Mr. Cohen observed that the most significant aspect presented in the nomination has to do with the transformation of Chestnut Street in the middle of the nineteenth century from a brick row of houses with shops underneath to vivid buildings for commerce. During this period, buildings were designed to be unique and participate in a visually competitive streetscape. He stated that this is one of the best examples remaining.
- Mr. Cohen noted that there are a number of interesting documents cited in the nomination. He explained that a bizarre form of advertising in the mid-nineteenth century was to draw a whole street and then approach the store owners to have them advertise their names on their buildings in the streetscape in what was called a “commercial pictorial directory.” Mr. Cohen noted that pictorial directories were made for this block in the 1850s and then the 1860s, showing its transformation. Buildings during this period were purpose-built and designed to look different than their neighbors. Mr. Cohen observed that this building is the best surviving example of that transformation on the block.
- Mr. Cohen reported that this building was most certainly designed by a professional architect. He noted that for years he has thought that it was designed by John Fraser, who Frank Furness trained with, but the only reference he can find to that effect is in the first edition of the Biographical Dictionary of Philadelphia Architects, which lists the building under Fraser. That reference did not make it into the online version.

- The Committee addressed the question of style, noting that style is often a complicated game. Most buildings do not fall explicitly into one specific architectural style. Designers and craftsmen made their own choices. This building, Mr. Cohen opined, is eclectic. He noted that the description of the building as Gothic Revival and perpendicular is not accurate. He explained that the modernity in the free combination of styles is one of the strongest attributes of the design. The features used are meant to attract customers and be memorable, and to open up the façade to provide light to the deep floorplate.
- Mr. Cohen stated that the most remarkable fact is that, when Chestnut Street was widened, the façade was deconstructed and reconstructed faithfully to its appearance in the Baxter pictorial.
- Mr. Cohen opined that this building is the epitome of commercial architecture on a competitive street in the nineteenth century.
- Ms. Cooperman noted the importance of craftsmen such as Struthers, not just architects like Fraser, who were critical in forming the built environment during this period. She stated that Struthers was hugely important in the City of Philadelphia. Mr. Cohen agreed, noting that Struthers was the biggest stone mason in the city during a period when an increasing number of owners sought stone facades rather than brick facades.
- Ms. Milroy noted that this building is remarkable surviving example of an intact brownstone building.
- Mr. Cohen observed that the 1928 storefront tries to be tasteful in a whole different way than the earlier façade.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

- Celeste Morello supported the nomination.
- Alex Balloon supported the nomination.

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:**

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The building was constructed between 1855 and 1856 for the Glenn and Co. perfumery and the façade faithfully reconstructed in 1892 when the street was widened by five feet.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The eclectic brownstone façade exemplifies a type of commercial architecture during a transitional period in the mid-nineteenth century, satisfying Criteria for Designation C and D.
- The brownstone façade is the work of William Struthers, one of the most significant stone masons in Philadelphia in the nineteenth century, satisfying Criterion E.
- The building represents the historical commercial development of Chestnut Street in the mid-nineteenth century, satisfying Criterion J.

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION:** The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 726 Chestnut Street satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, and J, and should be designated as historic and listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.



<b>ITEM: 726 Chestnut St</b>					
<b>MOTION: Criteria C, D, E, and J; rec. to designate</b>					
<b>MOVED BY: Cohen</b>					
<b>SECONDED BY: Milroy</b>					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Emily Cooperman, chair	x				
Jeff Cohen	x				
Janet Klein					x
Bruce Laverty					x
Elizabeth Milroy	x				
Douglas Mooney	x				
Total	4				2

**ADDRESS: 4619-25 LONGSHORE AVE**

Name of Resource: Tacony Club

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Tacony Club

Nominator: Alex Balloon, Tacony Community Development Corporation

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

**OVERVIEW:** This nomination proposes to designate the property at 4619-25 Longshore Avenue and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the purpose-built Tacony Club building satisfies Criteria for Designation C and J. Under Criterion C, the nomination argues that the clubhouse, constructed in 1908, reflects the environment in an era characterized by the Italian Renaissance Revival style of architecture. The nomination further argues that the clubhouse, commissioned by the Tacony Club, a social and political organization founded in 1887, exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social, and historical heritage of Northeast Philadelphia and the Tacony neighborhood, satisfying Criterion J.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 4619-25 Longshore Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation C and J.

**START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN AUDIO RECORDING: 01:37:55**

**PRESENTERS:**

- Ms. Chantry presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Alex Balloon represented the nomination.
- Brendan O'Mara, treasurer of the Tacony Club, represented the property owner.

**DISCUSSION:**

- Mr. O'Mara provided some information not contained in, or different from, the nomination. He explained that the Tacony Club is a private club, so most information was never released to the public. He stated that the copy of their charter, which is not public, states that the Tacony Club was formed for the purpose of the maintenance of a club, and social enjoyment, for the purpose of literary and musical advancement and enjoyment of the members thereof. He explained that it was never a political party, was always private, and never did anything social with the existing area, all of which the nomination wrongly claims. He continued that he has several letters from the architect dating to 1908. He explained that those letters outline how

- the building was built with a very minimal budget and with builders' grade materials. He opined that the information contained in the nomination about the earlier design which was never realized is not pertinent to the discussion of significance.
- Ms. Cooperman observed that value-engineering a project is not uncommon.
  - Mr. O'Mara explained that the Tacony Club is opposed to the historic designation of the building because there is a pending agreement of sale from December 2018 with the Keystone Academy Charter School. The attorney representing that school has informed the Tacony Club that it will not move forward with the purchase of the property if the property is listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. He commented that the school is a highly-rated math and science school and would feature a new roof with playground and green roof and would be allowed to serve 400 children at this site.
    - Mr. Cohen wondered if the school believes that the designation will restrict what it can do at the site. He suggested that significant restrictions are unlikely.
    - Mr. O'Mara responded that the school has the option to back out of the agreement of sale, and has indicated that it will do so, should the building receive historic designation.
  - Mr. Balloon stated that the building is contributing to the Tacony Disston Community Development National Register Historic District. He asserted that the charter members of the Club helped to shape the development of the Tacony neighborhood, and that it could be considered the Union League of Tacony.
    - Mr. O'Mara responded that the charter was from 1891, and the building was constructed in 1908. He stated that they have no record of anyone who was part of the original membership at the time of the construction of the building.
  - Mr. Cohen commented that no new information was presented which would have a bearing on the designation at this time. He stated that the case for historic designation was well-made in the nomination, and the Criteria were well-chosen. He agreed that the building may have been value-engineered but stated that it is still a remarkable design and ties into the community identity of Tacony. Ms. Cooperman agreed.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:**

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The building reflects the environment in an era characterized by the Italian Renaissance Revival style of architecture, satisfying Criterion C.
- The building exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social, and historical heritage of Northeast Philadelphia and the Tacony neighborhood, satisfying Criterion J.

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION:** The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 4619-25 Longshore Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation C and J, and should be designated as historic and listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

<b>ITEM: 4619-25 Longshore Ave</b>					
<b>MOTION: Recommendation to designate, Criteria C and J</b>					
<b>MOVED BY: Cohen</b>					
<b>SECONDED BY: Milroy</b>					
<b>VOTE</b>					
<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>	<b>Recuse</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Emily Cooperman, chair	x				
Jeff Cohen	x				
Janet Klein					x
Bruce Laverty					x
Elizabeth Milroy	x				
Douglas Mooney	x				
Total	4				2

**ADDRESS: 917 S 47TH ST**

Name of Resource: Saint Francis de Sales Church

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Archdiocese of Philadelphia

Nominator: Corey Loftus

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

**OVERVIEW:** This nomination proposes to designate Saint Francis de Sales Church, one building on a larger parcel at 917 S. 47<sup>th</sup> Street, and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the church, built between 1907 and 1911, satisfies Criteria for Designation A, D, E, F, H, and J. Under Criterion A, the nomination argues that the church is associated with the lives of numerous persons of historic significance, including its designers, music directors, and parishioners. Under Criterion D, the nomination contends that the church building embodies distinguishing characteristics of the Byzantine Revival style. Under Criterion E, the nomination explains that the church building is a result of the work of many design professionals whose work has significantly influenced the historical and architectural development of the City, Commonwealth, or Nation, including Henry D. Dagit (architect), Nicola D’Ascenzo (stained glass) and Rafael Guastavino (tile artist and dome engineer). Under Criterion F, the nomination argues that the grand Guastavino dome contains elements of design, detail, materials and craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation. Under Criterion H, the nomination contends that the church with its great dome represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood. Lastly, under Criterion J, the nomination contends that the church’s musical heritage associated with its organ, choirs, and music directors exemplifies the social and historical heritage of the community.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that Saint Francis de Sales Church at 917 S. 47<sup>th</sup> Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, D, E, F, H, and J.

**START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN AUDIO RECORDING:** 01:46:45

**PRESENTERS:**

- Ms. Chantry presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- No one represented the nomination.
- Michael Nevadomski, facilities manager at St. Francis de Sales Church, represented the property owner.

**DISCUSSION:**

- Ms. Chantry noted that an email received the night prior from Annabelle Radcliffe-Trenner, the preservation architect who has worked on the restoration of the church for over ten years, was distributed to the Committee. She explained that the email outlines several minor corrections and an offering of supplemental information, with the clarification that Ms. Radcliffe-Trenner was not writing as a representative of the church.
- Mr. Nevadomski asserted that the address used in the nomination is incorrect, and that the correct address for the church is 4516-25 Springfield Avenue. He claimed that the address for the school is 917 S. 47<sup>th</sup> Street.
- Mr. Nevadomski opined that there is no arguing with the significance of Saint Francis de Sales Church.
- Mr. Nevadomski asked that the review of the nomination be continued to the next Committee on Historic Designation meeting, scheduled for 19 June 2019, owing to the busyness of the Lenten season and Holy Week, and to allow time to present the nomination to the parishioners for discussion.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:**

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- It typically supports continuance requests proffered by property owners.
- The Commission may vote to allow for a longer continuance if requested by the property owner.
- The property would remain protected by the Historical Commission during the continuance period.

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION:** The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend continuing the review of the nomination of 917 S. 47<sup>th</sup> Street, Saint Francis de Sales Church, to the 19 June 2019 meeting of the Committee on Historic Designation.

<b>ITEM: 917 S 47<sup>th</sup> St</b>					
<b>MOTION: Recommend continuing the nomination review to the June 2019 meeting</b>					
<b>MOVED BY: Milroy</b>					
<b>SECONDED BY: Mooney</b>					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Emily Cooperman, chair	x				
Jeff Cohen	x				
Janet Klein					x
Bruce Laverty					x
Elizabeth Milroy	x				
Douglas Mooney	x				
Total	4				2

**ADDRESS: 6658 KEYSTONE ST**

Name of Resource: St. Leo the Great Roman Catholic Church

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Archdiocese of Philadelphia

Nominator: Celeste Morello

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

**OVERVIEW:** This nomination proposes to designate the property at 6658 Keystone Street and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that St. Leo the Great Roman Catholic Church satisfies Criteria for Designation E and J. Under Criterion E, the nomination argues that Frank Watson, following his apprenticeship with renowned ecclesiastical architect Edwin Forrest Durang, designed St. Leo's Church relatively early in a long career that encompassed the design of numerous church buildings throughout the Philadelphia region. Under Criterion J, the nomination contends that St. Leo's Church provided the first place of worship for the growing Catholic workforce in Tacony.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 6658 Keystone Street satisfies Criteria for Designation E and J; however, the staff suggests that the boundary include only the church and a small buffer. The boundary as outlined in the nomination includes a large, nonadjacent vacant lot. The staff further recommends that reference to Annunciation BVM Church, which is identified in the nomination as being designed by Frank Watson, be removed. The church was designed by John Notman and constructed between 1860 and 1865.

**START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN AUDIO RECORDING: 01:53:38**

**PRESENTERS:**

- Ms. Keller presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Celeste Morello and Alex Balloon, Tacony Community Development Corporation, represented the nomination.
- No one represented the property owner.

**DISCUSSION:**

- Ms. Morello apologized if she did not make clear that the only part of the property nominated is the church building.
  - Ms. Keller responded that the boundary description provided in the nomination includes a non-adjacent vacant lot.
  - Mr. Balloon commented that he is amenable to revising the boundary to exclude the vacant lot.
- Ms. Cooperman asked whether the Archdiocese still owns the property.
  - Mr. Balloon affirmed that it does.
  - Ms. Morello added that the church has been deconsecrated.
- Ms. Cooperman asked whether anyone representing the property was present.
  - No one came forward. Ms. Morello noted that the attorney who represents the Archdiocese was not present. She then likened deconsecrating to neutering.
- Mr. Balloon thanked the staff and stated that the building contributes to the National Register historic district in Tacony, adding that it is a prominent site visible to those who travel by train along the Northeast corridor. The church's history, he added, is very significant.

- Ms. Morello stated that she wanted to emphasize how the architect used that type of design for the building because it fits into the neighborhood's character. She called it a quaint church in a late-Victorian, working-class community.
- Mr. Cohen commented that the building most reflects St. James-the-Less near Nicetown with its open-air bell. He contended that the church features a rural design and noted that, when the church was built, Tacony was rural. He opined on the church's visibility and symmetry, which he found unusual for a rural church, noting that rural churches are typically rambling. He then observed that Watson designed the 1890s church to resemble an 1840s church and that the architect was deliberate in creating such visibility in an almost theatrical manner. Mr. Cohen commended Ms. Morello on presenting the site's social history while describing Watson's work.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:**

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- Architect Frank Watson afforded St. Leo the Great Roman Catholic Church great visibility in a then-rural setting.
- The nomination fully explores the church's early social history.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- Architect Frank Watson's prolific career included the design of numerous church buildings throughout Philadelphia, satisfying Criterion E.
- The nomination details the history of Tacony's Catholic mill workers who established St. Leo's in 1884, satisfying Criterion J.

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION:** The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that St. Leo's Church, located at 6658 Keystone Street, satisfies Criteria for Designation E and J; that the boundary include only the church and a small buffer; and that reference to Annunciation BVM Church, which is erroneously identified in the nomination as being designed by Frank Watson, be removed.

<b>ITEM: 6658 KEYSTONE ST</b>					
<b>MOTION: Designate, E, J, with revisions to boundary and narrative</b>					
<b>MOVED BY: Cohen</b>					
<b>SECONDED BY: Milroy</b>					
<b>VOTE</b>					
<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>	<b>Recuse</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Emily Cooperman, chair	x				
Jeff Cohen	x				
Janet Klein					x
Bruce Laverty					x
Elizabeth Milroy	x				
Douglas Mooney	x				
Total	4				2

**ADDRESS: 1616 S 17TH ST**

Name of Resource: St. Thomas Aquinas Roman Catholic Church

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Archdiocese of Philadelphia

Nominator: Celeste Morello

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

**OVERVIEW:** This nomination proposes to designate St. Thomas Aquinas Church and Rectory at 1616 S. 17th Street and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. While the larger parcel includes several buildings, the nomination proposes exclusively to designate the church building and rectory. The nomination contends that the church building and rectory satisfy Criteria for Designation E and J. Under Criterion E, the nomination argues that architect Edwin Forrest Durang is significant as one of the most prolific designers during the Archdiocese of Philadelphia's "Golden Age" of church construction. Under Criterion J, the nomination contends that the construction of St. Thomas Aquinas Church galvanized development of this predominantly industrial part of South Philadelphia.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the church and rectory located at 1616 S. 17<sup>th</sup> Street satisfies Criteria for Designation E and J.

**START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN AUDIO RECORDING:** 02:01:45

**PRESENTERS:**

- Ms. Keller presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Celeste Morello represented the nomination.
- No one represented the property owner.

**DISCUSSION:**

- Ms. Morello called the buildings Durang masterpieces, which he designed later in his career, in 1904. She added that the buildings create a sense of awe.
- Mr. Cohen questioned why the church was begun in 1889 and then quickly abandoned, only to be picked up again 11 or 12 years later at a new site without the foundations of the church that had been started. He asked whether the 1889 church was a Durang design, noting that it was clearly intended to be a much larger church.
  - Ms. Morello answered that she did not know.
- Mr. Cohen offered several minor corrections.
- Mr. Cohen commented that the school was amazing and asked whether it has been demolished.
  - Ms. Morello affirmed.
- Mr. Cohen commended Ms. Morello on the nomination's neighborhood social history, adding that the neighborhood transitioned from the city's periphery to being effectively dense. Mr. Cohen further commented that Ms. Morello is strong in writing about the competition between denominations.
  - Ms. Morello responded that the competition was a national issue at the time.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:**

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The church and rectory were late works designed by influential architect Edwin Forrest Durang.
- The nomination presents a detailed overview of the neighborhood’s evolution and the church’s role in the growth of the area.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- Architect Edwin Forrest Durang was significant for his ecclesiastical designs constructed throughout the City of Philadelphia, satisfying Criterion E.
- St. Thomas Aquinas church galvanized development of the area, helping transform it from a predominantly industrial section at the city’s periphery to a dense residential neighborhood.

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION:** The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that St. Thomas Aquinas Church and rectory, located at 1616 S. 17<sup>th</sup> Street, satisfy Criteria for Designation E and J.

<b>ITEM: 1616 S 17<sup>TH</sup> ST</b>					
<b>MOTION: Designate, E, J</b>					
<b>MOVED BY: Milroy</b>					
<b>SECONDED BY:</b>					
<b>VOTE</b>					
<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>	<b>Recuse</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Emily Cooperman, chair	x				
Jeff Cohen	x				
Janet Klein					x
Bruce Laverty					x
Elizabeth Milroy	x				
Douglas Mooney	x				
Total	4				2

Mr. Mooney excused himself from the meeting at 11:46 a.m.

**ADDRESS: 8500 FRANKFORD AVE**

Name of Resource: St. Dominic’s Roman Catholic Church

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: St. Dominic’s Roman Catholic Church

Nominator: Celeste Morello

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

**OVERVIEW:** This nomination proposes to designate St. Dominic’s Roman Catholic Church at 8500 Frankford Avenue and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. While the larger parcel includes several buildings and an expansive cemetery, the nomination proposes exclusively to designate the church building. The nomination contends that the church building satisfies Criterion for Designation C. The nomination argues that St. Dominic’s architect, Henry Roby, whose office was located in Lebanon, Pennsylvania, would have been influenced by the Gothic churches designed by prominent Philadelphia architects, including Edwin Forrest Durang.



**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that St. Dominic’s Church located at 8500 Frankford Avenue satisfies Criterion for Designation C.

**START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN AUDIO RECORDING:** 02:07:58

**PRESENTERS:**

- Ms. Keller presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Celeste Morello represented the nomination.
- No one represented the property owner.

**DISCUSSION:**

- Ms. Morello stated that she is suspicious as to why the attorney for the Archdiocese is not present to speak on behalf of the client, Archbishop Chaput.
  - Ms. Cooperman responded that the Committee cannot speculate on the reason.
  - Ms. Morello asked whether the staff heard from the attorney, and the staff stated it had not.
- Ms. Morello commented that she was advised to write the nomination with focus given to a distinctive architectural style, which she determined to be Victorian Gothic.
- Mr. Cohen remarked that the building is interesting, with flying buttresses only on the front façade and noting that the church has two doorways rather than one or three, which is typical for a Catholic church. He noted the strange features flanking the doorways, which begin as buttresses and become turrets. He observed that the features have a late-Gothic quality in the diagonal buttresses as opposed to flat buttresses. He noted the ogee curve at the base of the tower, the blind clerestory, the strong horizontal element above the huge circular window, which he called structurally adventurous. Because the building is late-Victorian Gothic, he noted that it is more eclectic. The horizontality above the rose window, he continued, is French in origin.
- Ms. Morello stated that she did not have many buildings with which to compare Roby’s past work. Roby, she continued, was a Confederate soldier who was captured and who later became an architect. She noted that he was always a practicing Catholic. Ms. Morello explained that Roby moved from Baltimore to Lebanon, Pennsylvania, though the archives in Baltimore had little information about Roby and his practice. She conjectured that Roby, while living in Lebanon, was commissioned by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia to design St. Dominic’s Church and likely drew inspiration from the Durang churches that would have been on Roby’s commute by either train or the Lancaster Turnpike. She contended that Roby’s church is a composite of churches he saw while traveling to Philadelphia.
  - Mr. Cohen responded that Lebanon is, in some ways, closer to Baltimore than to Philadelphia and that Ms. Morello may want to compare St. Dominic’s to Baltimore churches. He added that Roby is a figure about which little is known, aside from a church in Wayne, Pennsylvania. He noted that Ms. Morello attributes all influence to Durang and Furness and contended that the assumption is likely incorrect. Mr. Cohen argued that Roby was probably more familiar with Baltimore or Harrisburg churches and explained that architects “ate and drank” architectural journals and were much more aware of architecture beyond what they could see in any given neighborhood. Roby, he continued, is clearly someone who is looking beyond the examples of

Durang or Furness, adding that St. Dominic's is a surprisingly French building coming from the Lebanon architect.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

- David Traub of Save Our Sites exclaimed: "Criterion C and how!" He called the church an architectural specimen and asked Ms. Morello if she knew who the architect was. Ms. Morello noted Henry Roby designed the church and pointed out that she and the Committee have been discussing the architect for several minutes. Mr. Traub stated that Roby did a wonderful job. In light of the fire at Notre Dame cathedral, he continued, the church has a vaguely French character with the rose window and flying buttresses. Mr. Cohen clarified that the buttresses are only located at the front and not the sides of the church. Mr. Traub argued that the building satisfies Criterion H, because the church stands as a landmark in the neighborhood. Save Our Sites, he stated, emphatically endorses the nomination. He later contended that the church is an example of Venturi's contradiction and complexity in architecture, which gives the church great interest. Others disagreed with the assertion.

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:**

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- Roby's church design is a late-Victorian Gothic compilation of interesting and unusual features with a subtle French influence and is therefore architecturally significant.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The church represents the late-Victorian Gothic style of architecture and reflects late-nineteenth-century churches in Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Harrisburg, satisfying Criterion C.

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION:** The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that St. Dominic's Church located at 8500 Frankford Avenue satisfies Criterion for Designation C.

<b>ITEM: 8500 Frankford Avenue</b>					
<b>MOTION: Designate, C</b>					
<b>MOVED BY: Cohen</b>					
<b>SECONDED BY: Milroy</b>					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Emily Cooperman, chair	x				
Jeff Cohen	x				
Janet Klein					x
Bruce Laverty					x
Elizabeth Milroy	x				
Douglas Mooney					x
Total	3				3

**ADDRESS: 3201-45 MIDVALE AVE**

Name of Resource: McMichael Park

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: City of Philadelphia

Nominator: Beth Gross-Eskin, Friends of McMichael Park

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

**OVERVIEW:** This nomination proposes to designate the property at 3201-45 Midvale Avenue, McMichael Park, and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the property satisfies Criteria for Designation B and I.

Under Criterion B, the nomination argues that the property “Is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation,” an encampment of the Continental Army in 1777. The nomination claims that “It is likely that this land once contained the Morgan House, which is said to have been the headquarters of the Marquis de Lafayette for two days in September 1777.” However, the nomination demonstrates neither that the Morgan House stood on the land that is now McMichael Park nor that Lafayette was billeted at the Morgan House. Both are conjectural.

The nomination cites the Scull & Heap map of 1753 to pinpoint the location of the Morgan House, but the map is not nearly accurate enough to be used in that way. The nomination also identifies a building on the 1884 Hopkins Atlas as the Morgan House, but provides no basis for the identification. The nomination also provides an 1876 drawing of the house and an 1880s photograph of the house, but neither can be used to precisely locate the house. Moreover, the building identified by the nomination as the Morgan House on an 1884 map is described on a very detailed 1886 topographical survey by City surveyors laying out streets as “Ruin,” but the house in the photograph dated to the 1880s is clearly not in ruins. They are unlikely the same building. Finally, without access to the photograph, the information on the reverse of the 1880s photograph cannot be interrogated or verified. The staff has reviewed numerous documents including deeds, real estate advertisements, and newspaper articles and has been unable to identify the location of the Morgan House. Likewise, the nomination provides no evidence that Lafayette was billeted at the Morgan House and, in fact, concedes in Footnote 1 that “No firm evidence has been found which places the Marquis de Lafayette in the Morgan House.” The nomination’s claim that the property satisfies Criterion B because it “Is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation” is untenable.

The nomination makes no direct argument for the satisfaction of Criterion I, that the site “Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in pre-history or history.” The nomination implies that the site may yield archaeological artifacts related to Lafayette and the encampment in 1777. However, the nomination fails to demonstrate that Lafayette or any Revolution War figures occupied this plot of land or that, even if they had, artifacts would remain at the site.

Finally, the nomination seems to assert that, if McMichael Park is designated, no playground could be constructed at the site. In fact, the designation of this park would not preclude any potential future construction including the construction of a playground, provided that the playground satisfied the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** The staff recommends that the nomination fails to demonstrate that the property at 3201-45 Midvale Avenue, McMichael Park, satisfies Criteria for Designation B or I.

**START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN AUDIO RECORDING: 02:17:28**

**PRESENTERS:**

- Mr. Farnham presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- No one represented the nomination.
- No one represented the property owner.

**DISCUSSION:**

- The Committee discussed the nomination with the staff. Mr. Cohen stated that he agrees with the staff's recommendation. Ms. Cooperman concurred and noted that Mr. Mooney, the archaeologist on the Committee, who excused himself from the meeting earlier, had apprised her that he agrees with the staff as well. Ms. Milroy contended that the nomination fails to demonstrate that the site Satisfies Criteria for Designation B and I but observed that the famous Kelly family lived adjacent to the park.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

- None.

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:**

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The exact location of the Morgan House is unknown. It may or may not have stood on the land now comprising McMichael Park. The nomination speculates on its location but does not provide any compelling evidence that the house stood at the site in question.
- The nomination speculates that Lafayette and other Revolutionary War figures occupied the site in question but does not provide any compelling evidence that they did in fact occupy the site.
- The nomination provides no information explicitly supporting the claim that the site "has yielded or may be likely to yield" archaeological artifacts.
- The nomination provides no information about grading or excavation at the site that would demonstrate that subsurface artifacts could have survived there.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The nomination does not demonstrate that the property satisfies Criteria for Designation B or I.

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION:** The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination does not demonstrate that the property satisfies Criteria for Designation B or I.

<b>ITEM: 3201-45 Midvale Ave, McMichael Park</b>					
<b>MOTION: Recommend that the site does not satisfy Criteria B or I</b>					
<b>MOVED BY: Cooperman</b>					
<b>SECONDED BY: Cohen</b>					
<b>VOTE</b>					
<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>	<b>Recuse</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Emily Cooperman, chair	x				
Jeff Cohen	x				
Janet Klein					x
Bruce Laverty					x
Elizabeth Milroy	x				
Douglas Mooney					x
Total	3				3

**ADJOURNMENT**

The Committee on Historic Designation adjourned at 12:03 p.m.

**PLEASE NOTE:**

- Minutes of the Committee on Historic Designation 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.

**CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION**

§14-1004. Designation.

(1) Criteria for Designation.

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

- (a) Has significant character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth, or nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past;
- (b) Is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation;
- (c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style;
- (d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen;
- (e) Is the work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or designer, or professional engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth, or nation;
- (f) Contains elements of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship that represent a significant innovation;
- (g) Is part of or related to a square, park, or other distinctive area that should be preserved according to a historic, cultural, or architectural motif;
- (h) Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community, or City;
- (i) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in pre-history or history; or
- (j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social, or historical heritage of the community.