

ADDRESS: 152-78 W BERKS ST

Name of Resource: Peter Woll & Sons

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: West Berks Community Development LLC

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 152-78 W. Berks Street and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the building satisfies Criteria for Designation G, H, and J. Under Criteria G and H, the nomination argues the buildings are part of a significant group of buildings that served as the industrial complex of Peter Woll & Sons Manufacturing Company, Curled Hair. Under Criterion J, the nomination contends that the company exemplified the cultural, economic, and historical heritage of Kensington in the industrial age in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

At the 12 March 2019 meeting of the Committee on Historic Designation, an attorney representing the property owner stated that the redevelopment of this property was underway and a demolition permit had been filed in April 2018, nearly one year before the property was nominated. The representative requested a continuance to allow the demolition, which had been legally permitted, to be completed. It was verified that the property owner held a valid demolition permit, which was applied for and issued before the Historical Commission's notice was sent to the property owner announcing the consideration of this nomination. The representative explained that the property owner intended to act on that demolition permit in the near future. The Committee recommended in favor of a continuance owing to the valid demolition permit. At the 12 April 2019 meeting of the Historical Commission, the Commission continued the nomination to a future meeting to allow for the demolition permit process to be completed. The demolition was undertaken soon thereafter. The Historical Commission staff visited the property on 20 August 2019 and confirmed that the building proposed for designation had been completely demolished. The nomination did not propose that the property had archaeological significance, or any other significance not associated with the building that was demolished.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the Historical Commission decline to designate the property at 152-78 W. Berks Street because it no longer satisfies Criteria for Designation G, H, and J, owing to the legal, permitted, complete demolition of the building.



152-78 W Berks Street.
Photo of site
taken on 20 August 2019.



MATTIONI
COUNSELORS AT LAW

PLEASE REPLY TO: Philadelphia Office
mmattioni@mattioni.com

www.mattioni.com

FILE NO: 38975-59100

March 6, 2019

VIA EMAIL: Jon.Farnham@phila.gov

Jonathan E. Farnham, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Philadelphia Historical Commission
1515 Arch Street, 13th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19102

Re: 152-78 W. Berks Street – Continuance Request

Dear Mr. Farnham:

We represent West Berks Community Development LLC (“West Berks”), the owner of the property located at 152-78 W. Berks Street (“Property”). This Property was nominated for inclusion on the Philadelphia Historic Register on February 8, 2019. The Property is listed on the agenda of the Committee on Historic Designation scheduled for March 12, 2019.

As counsel for the owner of the property, I am writing to request that consideration of the nomination be continued. On April 9, 2018, West Berks filed an application for building permit, No. 8395561, for the complete demolition of the structure located at 152-78 W. Berks Street. This application for demolition permit was filed well before the Property was nominated for inclusion on the Historic Register.

We are requesting a continuance to allow the demolition permit process to be completed. If the process is completed, the structure will be demolished and there will be no need to utilize the resources of the Historical Commission on this application as it will be moot. We have reached out to the nominator, The Keeping Society of Philadelphia, but have been unable to discuss the request to date.

Thank you in advance for your consideration. Please contact our office with any questions.

Very truly yours,

MATTIONI, LTD.

Michael Mattioni

MM:sm
cc: The Keeping Society of Philadelphia

MATTIONI, LTD.

PHILADELPHIA OFFICE | FEDERAL RESERVE BANK BUILDING | 100 NORTH INDEPENDENCE MALL WEST, SUITE 5A NW | PHILADELPHIA, PA 19106 | PHONE: 215-629-1600 | FAX: 215-923-2227
NEW JERSEY OFFICE | 1316 KINGS HIGHWAY, SWEDESBORO, NJ 08085 | PHONE: 856-241-9779 | FAX: 856-241-9989

**THE MINUTES OF THE 680TH STATED MEETING OF THE
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

**FRIDAY, 12 APRIL 2019
ROOM 18-029, 1515 ARCH STREET
ROBERT THOMAS, CHAIR**

CALL TO ORDER

START TIME IN AUDIO RECORDING: 00:00:02

Mr. Thomas, the chair, called the meeting to order at 9:06 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 | | |
| Steven Hartner (Department of Public Property) | x | | |
| Josh Lippert (Department of Licenses & Inspections) | x | | |
| Mark Dodds (Division of Housing & Community Development) | x | | |
| John Mattioni, Esq. | x | | |
| Dan McCoubrey, AIA, LEED AP BD+C, Architectural Committee Chair | | x | |
| Jessica Sánchez, Esq. (City Council President) | x | | |
| Meredith Trego (Philadelphia City Planning Commission) | x | | |
| H. Ahada Stanford, Ph.D. (Commerce Department) | | x | |
| 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
- Kim Chantry, Historic Preservation Planner II
- Laura DiPasquale, Historic Preservation Planner II
- Meredith Keller, Historic Preservation Planner II
- Allyson Mehley, Historic Preservation Planner I
- Megan Schmitt, Historic Preservation Planner I
- Leonard Reuter, Esq., Law Department

The following persons were present:

- Justin Detwiler, John Milner Architects
- Raymond Rola, Raymond F. Rola Architect
- James Baylor
- Wilber Winborne
- Celeste Morello
- Cliff Eyler
- Joe Strampello, Mattioni, Ltd.
- Pat Henningsen
- Peter A. Lamlein

Jacob Cooper
Johnette Davies, Amtrak
Sue Patterson, Penn Knox Neighborhood Association
Paul Steinke, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia
Amelia Riley
David S. Traub, Save Our Sites
Steven Peitzman
Michael Phillips, Esq., Obermayer
Ben Leech, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia
J.M. Duffin
Oscar Beisert
Aaron Wunsch
Elizabeth Stegner, University City Historical Society
Michael Caine, Old First Church
Simon Kaufman, Partners for Sacred Places
Gabor Antalics
Anthony Jacobbe
Cindy Hamilton, Heritage Consulting Group
David La Fontaine, Community Ventures
Irwin Trauss, Penn Knox Neighborhood Association
Mark Sandberg
Marc Cam, Action News
William McGurrin
John Brady
Deja Lynn Alvarez
Faye Anderson, All That Philly Jazz
David Gest, Esq., Ballard Spahr
Matt McClure, Esq., Ballard Spahr
Arwa Abdelmoula, Esq., Ballard Spahr
Al Fuscaldo, Esq.
Philip Rosenzweig, Esq.
Caitlin McCabe, Philadelphia Inquirer
Robert Tunick
Josh Yeager
Wylie McDermott
Kyle Thorp
Danya Pilgrim
David Ertz, Cope-Linder-Nelson
Venice Whitaker
Craig Shelter, Shelter & Associates
John Turchi, Turchi Inc.
Robert Bowes
Doug Seiler
Robert Kramer
Ian Cope, Nelson
Richard DeMarco, Esq.
Paul Boni, Esq., Boni Law

CONTINUANCE REQUESTS

ADDRESS: 152-78 W BERKS ST

Name of Resource: Peter Woll & Sons

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: West Berks Community Development LLC

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 152-78 W. Berks Street and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the building satisfies Criteria for Designation G, H, and J.

Under Criteria G and H, the nomination argues the buildings are part of a significant group of buildings that served as the industrial complex of Peter Woll & Sons Manufacturing Company, Curled Hair. Under Criterion J, the nomination that Peter Woll & Sons Manufacturing Company, Curled Hair exemplified the cultural, economic, and historical heritage of the industrial age in Kensington in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff acknowledges that the property at 152-78 W. Berks Street, as part of the former Peter Woll & Sons Manufacturing Company, shares in the same industrial history as the building across the street at 173 W. Berks Street, but suggests that that industrial history of the manufacturing firm is better memorialized and conveyed by the building at 173 W. Berks Street. The staff recommends that the Historical Commission considering designating only the Berks Street façade with the ghost sign at 152-78 W. Berks Street as a structure and not the entire building and site. The staff questions the value to the public of compelling a private property owner to retain and preserve a non-descript, modest industrial building of low integrity and limited reuse potential in perpetuity.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend continuing the review of the nomination of 152-78 W. Berks Street to the 17 April 2019 meeting of the Committee on Historic Designation.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN AUDIO RECORDING: 00:02:30

RECUSALS:

- Mr. Mattioni recused because his law firm represents the property owner.

PRESENTERS:

- None.

REASON FOR REQUEST: Mr. Farnham stated that the property owner holds a valid demolition permit, which was applied for and issued before the Historical Commission's notice was sent to the property owner announcing the consideration of this nomination. He stated that the property owner intends to act on that demolition permit in the near future. Mr. Farnham noted that if this matter is continued, it will be moot by the time the Historical Commission takes it up again. He concluded that the Historical Commission has no jurisdiction to review, approve, or deny that demolition permit because it was applied for prior to the Historical Commission indicating its interest in considering the property for designation.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

ACTION: Ms. Cooperman moved to continue the review of the nomination of 152-78 W. Berks Street to a future meeting of the Committee on Historic Designation with the understanding that the building is subject to an active demolition permit which may render the question of designation moot. Ms. Turner seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

| | | | | | |
|--|------------|-----------|----------------|---------------|---------------|
| ITEM: 152-78 W BERKS ST | | | | | |
| MOTION: Continue review to June CHD meeting | | | | | |
| MOVED BY: Cooperman | | | | | |
| SECONDED BY: Turner | | | | | |
| VOTE | | | | | |
| Commissioner | Yes | No | Abstain | Recuse | Absent |
| Thomas, Chair | x | | | | |
| Cooperman | x | | | | |
| Edwards | x | | | | |
| Hartner (DPP) | x | | | | |
| Lippert (L&I) | x | | | | |
| Dodds (DHCD) | x | | | | |
| Mattioni | | | | x | |
| McCoubrey | | | | | x |
| Sánchez (Council) | x | | | | |
| Trego (PCPC) | x | | | | |
| Stanford (Commerce) | | | | | x |
| Turner, Vice Chair | x | | | | |
| Washington | x | | | | |
| Total | 10 | | | 1 | 2 |

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

**12 MARCH 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 9:35 a.m. The following Committee members joined her:

| Committee Member | Present | Absent | Comment |
|-------------------------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| 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
- Megan Schmitt, Historic Preservation Planner I

The following persons were present:

- Patrick Grossi, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia
- Paul Steinke, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia
- Ben Leech
- David S. Traub, Save Our Sites
- Oscar Beisert
- Johnette Davies, Amtrak
- Tania Nikovic, Amtrak
- Alex Balloon, Tacony CDC
- Elizabeth Stegner, UCHS
- George Poulin, UCHS
- Michael Mattioni, Mattioni Ltd.
- Clifford L.
- Claudia Lyles
- Daniel Saidel
- Peter A. Lamlein
- Antonette Hubbard
- Georgette Bartell, Penn Knox Neighborhood Association
- Celeste Morello
- Mary McGettigan

Oscar Beisert
Julia Marchetti, Preservation Alliance
Sue Patterson, Penn Knox Neighborhood Association
Troy Hannigan, Old First UCC
Nick Kraus, Heritage Consulting
Reverend Michael Caine, Old First UCC
David Traub, Save Our Sites
Steve Peitzman

152-78 W BERKS ST

Name of Resource: Peter Woll & Sons

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: West Berks Community Development LLC

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 152-78 W. Berks Street and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the building satisfies Criteria for Designation G, H, and J.

Under Criteria G and H, the nomination argues the buildings are part of a significant group of buildings that served as the industrial complex of Peter Woll & Sons Manufacturing Company, Curled Hair. Under Criterion J, the nomination that Peter Woll & Sons Manufacturing Company, Curled Hair exemplified the cultural, economic, and historical heritage of the industrial age in Kensington in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff acknowledges that the property at 152-78 W. Berks Street, as part of the former Peter Woll & Sons Manufacturing Company, shares in the same industrial history as the building across the street at 173 W. Berks Street, but suggests that that industrial history of the manufacturing firm is better memorialized and conveyed by the building at 173 W. Berks Street. The staff recommends that the Historical Commission considering designating only the Berks Street façade with the ghost sign at 152-78 W. Berks Street as a structure and not the entire building and site. The staff questions the value to the public of compelling a private property owner to retain and preserve a non-descript, modest industrial building of low integrity and limited reuse potential in perpetuity.

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

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Farnham presented the request to continue the review of the nomination of 152-78 W Berks Street to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Attorney Michael Mattioni represented the property owner.
- Nominator Oscar Beisert represented the nomination.

DISCUSSION:

- Mr. Mattioni stated that the developer applied for the demolition permit in May 2018 and has been pursuing it ever since. He stated that they also received approval for the redevelopment of the property from the Zoning Board; an appeal of the variance granted that has slowed down the demolition process. He added that the project has been in process and is requesting a continuance to allow the demolition permit process to be completed. Mr. Mattioni pointed out that this process was started long before the nomination was submitted to the Historical Commission.
- Mr. Beisert stated he had no objection to the continuance. He noted that the staff recommendation focused on the protection of the W. Berks Street façade, specifically the wall with the ghost signage. Mr. Beisert asked that, if the current demolition permit is not valid, the developer consider preserving the signage portion of the façade because it is a visual feature that is appreciated by the neighbors.
- Ms. Cooperman acknowledged the receipt of a packet of information related to the developer’s project submitted by Mr. Mattioni to the Committee at the meeting. She stated that this type of information is typically submitted in advance of the meeting. Ms. Cooperman stated that supporting information should be submitted in advance of a meeting so that Committee members and the public have time to review.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- No public comment.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The Committee concluded that it would support a continuance to the next Committee on Historic Designation meeting.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend continuing the review of the nomination of 152-78 W. Berks Street to the 17 April 2019 meeting of the Committee on Historic Designation.

| | | | | | |
|--|------------|-----------|----------------|---------------|---------------|
| ITEM: 152-78 W Berks Street | | | | | |
| MOTION: Recommend continuing the nomination review to the April 2019 meeting. | | | | | |
| MOVED BY: Cohen | | | | | |
| SECONDED BY: Milroy | | | | | |
| 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 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |